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# **ServSafe**

## **ServSafe-Manager**

### **ServSafe Manager Exam**



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# Latest Version: 6.0

## Question: 1

Which food must be stored at a temperature of 41°F (5°C) or lower?

- A. Ham-and-cheese sandwich
- B. Beef jerky and cracker appetizers
- C. Cookies-and-brownies tray
- D. Fruit basket with uncut fruit

**Answer: A**

Explanation:

According to the ServSafe Manager curriculum and the FDA Food Code, foods that require Time/Temperature Control for Safety (TCS food) must be stored at an internal temperature of 41°F (\$5°C) or lower to inhibit the growth of pathogenic bacteria. A ham-and-cheese sandwich is a prime example of a TCS food because it contains protein-rich ingredients (meat and dairy) that are moist and neutral or slightly acidic—the ideal environment for bacterial multiplication. Ham is a processed meat that, while cured, still requires refrigeration to remain safe. Cheese is a dairy product that is also classified as a TCS food. When combined in a sandwich, the product becomes a "ready-to-eat" TCS food. If left in the Temperature Danger Zone—defined as the range between 41°F and 135°F (\$5°C and \$57°C)—bacteria such as *Staphylococcus aureus* or *Listeria monocytogenes* can grow to dangerous levels. In contrast, beef jerky is a shelf-stable dried meat with low water activity ( $a_w$ ), cookies and brownies are low-moisture baked goods, and uncut fruit (except for certain melons, tomatoes, and leafy greens once cut) is generally not considered a TCS food. Proper storage at 41°F or lower ensures that the sandwich remains safe for the duration of its shelf life, which is typically a maximum of seven days if prepared on-site. Managers must ensure that refrigerated storage units are calibrated and that the internal temperature of the food, not just the ambient air of the cooler, remains at or below the 41°F threshold.

## Question: 2

Which is an example of "cleaning"?

- A. Checking the final rinse temperature in the dishwasher
- B. Spraying a solution of bleach on a cutting board
- C. Removing food bits from a slicer with a wiping cloth
- D. Using a dry towel to remove spots from wine glasses

**Answer: C**

Explanation:

In a professional foodservice environment, ServSafe makes a critical distinction between "cleaning" and "sanitizing." Cleaning is the physical process of removing food, dirt, and other visible soil from a surface. Removing food bits from a slicer with a wiping cloth is a direct example of cleaning. This step is the essential first phase in the five-step process for cleaning and sanitizing: (1) Scrape or remove food bits, (2) Wash the surface, (3) Rinse the surface, (4) Sanitize the surface, and (5) Allow the surface to air-dry. Without the initial cleaning step, the subsequent sanitizing step will be ineffective. Soil and food particles can neutralize chemical sanitizers like chlorine or quaternary ammonium, or they can act as a physical shield that prevents the sanitizer from reaching and killing microorganisms. Options A and B describe monitoring and the act of sanitizing, respectively. Option D is a cosmetic action (polishing) that does not necessarily meet the hygienic definition of cleaning in a food-safety context. Effective cleaning requires the use of a detergent and physical labor (scrubbing or wiping) to break the surface tension of the soil. For equipment like meat slicers, this process is high-risk and must be performed at least every four hours if the equipment is in constant use. Managers must verify that staff are not skipping the "wash and rinse" phases before applying sanitizer. By removing the visible "bits" and "grease," the food handler ensures that the environment is prepared for the reduction of pathogens to safe levels.

### Question: 3

Which of the following practices of dispensing single-service items prevents contamination?

- A. Provide individually wrapped ware.
- B. Place unwrapped items in clean and sanitary dispensers.
- C. Distribute the unwrapped items to the customer upon request.
- D. Display unwrapped and left upright in containers with handles down.

### Answer: A

Explanation:

Single-service items, such as plastic forks, spoons, and knives, are designed to be used once and then discarded. Because they cannot be cleaned and sanitized after being touched by a customer, they must be protected from contamination before use. Providing individually wrapped ware is the most effective method for preventing contamination. The wrapping acts as a physical barrier against dust, droplets from coughs or sneezes, and, most importantly, the hands of other customers or employees.

The ServSafe standards emphasize that the "Flow of Food" includes the service stage, where crosscontamination

is a frequent risk. If items are not wrapped, they must be dispensed in a way that the customer touches only the item they are taking. Placing unwrapped items in a bin where customers must reach in (Option D) is a major violation, as it allows for "hand-to-item" contamination. Even if items are placed "handles down," there is a high risk that a customer will accidentally touch the "business end"

(the tines of a fork or the bowl of a spoon) of an adjacent utensil. While sanitary dispensers (Option B) are an approved method if they dispense 1 item at a time by the handle, individual wrapping (Option A) provides a superior level of protection during transport, storage, and customer self-service. Managers are responsible for ensuring that any single-service items that become soiled or are touched by customers are discarded immediately. This protocol is part of a larger strategy to minimize bare-hand contact with surfaces that will touch a customer's mouth.

## Question: 4

Barracuda is a type of predatory tropical reef fish implicated as a source of which kind of toxin?

- A. Fungal
- B. Ciguatera
- C. Histamine
- D. Scombroid

**Answer: B**

**Explanation:**

Barracuda is the most common fish associated with Ciguatera Fish Poisoning. Ciguatera is a biological contaminant caused by a toxin produced by certain marine algae (dinoflagellates) found in tropical and subtropical waters. This toxin is fat-soluble and heat-stable, meaning it cannot be destroyed by cooking, freezing, or any other food preparation method. The toxin moves up the food chain through "bioaccumulation." Smaller herbivorous fish eat the algae, and then larger predatory reef fish—such as barracuda, grouper, snapper, and amberjack—eat those smaller fish, concentrating the toxin in their flesh.

When a human consumes a fish containing high levels of Ciguatoxin, they may experience severe symptoms, including nausea, vomiting, and neurological issues like a reversal of hot and cold sensations (where cold things feel hot and vice versa). Because the toxin cannot be detected by smell or sight and is not neutralized by heat, the only way to prevent Ciguatera poisoning is to purchase seafood only from approved, reputable suppliers. These suppliers monitor the waters where the fish are harvested and avoid areas known for Ciguatera outbreaks. Managers must be aware that predatory reef fish are a highrisk category and must strictly vet their seafood sources. This falls under the "Biological Contamination"

section of "Providing Safe Food," highlighting that some hazards are inherent to the source of the food rather than a result of poor handling in the kitchen. Unlike Scombroid (Histamine) poisoning, which results from time-temperature abuse of fish like tuna or mahi-mahi, Ciguatera is a naturally occurring environmental hazard.

## Question: 5

The water temperature in the first compartment of a three-compartment sink should be at least:

- A.  $110^{\circ}\text{F}$  ( $43^{\circ}\text{C}$ ).
- B.  $135^{\circ}\text{F}$  ( $57^{\circ}\text{C}$ ).
- C.  $171^{\circ}\text{F}$  ( $77^{\circ}\text{C}$ ).
- D.  $180^{\circ}\text{F}$  ( $82^{\circ}\text{C}$ ).

**Answer: A**

**Explanation:**

The three-compartment sink is the standard for manual warewashing in a professional kitchen. According to the FDA Food Code and ServSafe guidelines, the first sink is dedicated to washing. The water in this compartment must be at a minimum temperature of  $110^{\circ}\text{F}$  ( $43^{\circ}\text{C}$ ). This specific temperature is required because it is the threshold at which most commercial detergents become effective at breaking down food fats and greases. If the water is too cold, the detergent will not emulsify the grease, leaving a film on the dishes that prevents the sanitizer in the third sink from working effectively.

Managers must ensure that the sink is equipped with a thermometer to monitor the temperature throughout the cleaning process. If the water temperature drops below  $110^{\circ}\text{F}$ , it must be drained and refilled. The wash sink must also contain a detergent solution that is changed frequently to prevent the buildup of organic soil. For comparison,  $171^{\circ}\text{F}$  (Option C) is the minimum temperature required for heat-based sanitizing in the third compartment if chemicals are not used, and  $180^{\circ}\text{F}$  (Option D) is the required temperature for the final sanitizing rinse in a high-temperature commercial dishwasher. The  $110^{\circ}\text{F}$  requirement for the first sink balances the need for chemical activation with the safety of the employee, as higher temperatures could cause burns during manual scrubbing. Maintaining this temperature is a critical "Active Managerial Control" point to ensure that the initial cleaning phase of warewashing is performed correctly, setting the stage for successful rinsing and sanitizing.

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