

Putting your customers' health on the

FRONT BURNER

Fall '03

FROM YOUR LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR



PROTON Food Safety Certification

For many of us, our education in food handling began at home. While some good lessons may have been learned, some risky habits might also be carried into workplace kitchens. On-the-job training, together with PROTON — a self-study food safety course — is a powerful one-two punch against the threat of food poisoning.

Since the beginning of PROTON, we have had thousands enrol and over 2,500 food-handlers in Simcoe County, from dishwashers to chefs, have successfully completed and received their food safety certificate!

WHAT IS PROTON?

PROTON is an education program that has been developed to increase awareness of food safety in food premises, such as restaurants, institutions and in the community. It consists of a self-study booklet, which is bought from the health unit for the low cost of \$10.00 and an exam.

The PROTON program was designed to help persons qualify for a Food Handler Training Certificate. This self-study guide helps you to prepare at your own pace to write the Food Handler Training Certification Exam.

PROTON emphasizes H.A.C.C.P. (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point) concepts, which are an important part of the food service industry. There are many advantages in becoming a certified food handler. For instance, many food premise operators will hire a certified food handler over someone who is not. Managers in the food industry

can also use PROTON to monitor their areas of food safety.

The exam consists of 50 multiple choice questions and should take no more than one hour to complete. The minimum passing mark is 70% (35/50).

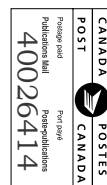
PREPARES STAFF

PROTON covers safe food handling procedures, such as proper handwashing, the proper use of a probe thermometer to check internal cooking temperatures, and the cooking and storage of hazardous foods.

The benefits are far reaching. Your food safety certificate can be taken anywhere within the food industry in Ontario and reflects well in your work experience, and in that next job interview! Employers will find benefits through reduced spoilage and inventory waste, lower energy costs and repeat business, and of course reduces and eliminates the risk of food poisoning. Having trained and skilled food handlers keeps your customers healthy and coming back for more. Contact your health inspector, get PROTON and be in the picture!



SIMCOE COUNTY DISTRICT HEALTH UNIT
Health Protection Service
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Answers To Go

HOW DO I SAFELY TRANSPORT FOOD WHEN OFFERING A CATERING SERVICE?

Keep cold food cold. Place cold food in cooler with a cold source, such as plenty of ice or commercial freezing gels. Cold food should be held at or below 4°C (40 °F).

Hot food should be kept hot, at or above 60°C (140 °F). Wrap well and place in an insulated container.

When you have arrived at your destination, foods that have been cooked ahead and cooled should be reheated to at least 74°C (165 °F). Reheat sauces, soups, and gravies to a rolling boil.

OUTBREAK FILES

PLAYING HOT POTATO

Eating a baked potato normally is a safe and enjoyable experience. Unfortunately, this was not the case for one Ontario diner who ate a baked potato at a restaurant, and ended up in a hospital suffering from paralysis and having difficulty breathing. Botulism food poisoning was suspected as having caused the symptoms, and the baked potato served for dinner was implicated as having had botulism toxin inside.

Botulism is a rare but serious illness caused by a nerve toxin that is produced by the bacterium *Clostridium botulinum*. It occurs when people eat foods that contain the botulism toxin. Cases of botulism are rarely seen in Ontario because modern canning methods are now safer than ever. At one time, botulism was closely associated with the eating of improperly canned commercial foods and home preserves.

Botulism spores are commonly found in the natural environment, especially in soil. If botulism spores are present on the surface of a potato, toxin can be produced if the potato is processed or handled improperly. If a potato is wrapped in aluminum foil, baked and held at room temperature for an extended period of time, the foil will hold in moisture. This may cause the bacteria spore, if present, to germinate in the warm moist environment and low oxygen level, and allows the bacteria to secrete the toxin that causes illness.



If someone does ingest botulism toxin, symptoms can include droopy eyelids, double vision, nausea, vomiting, and dizziness which progresses to paralysis. It can take between 12 – 36 hours from the time of eating the toxin until the first symptoms appear. This disease can result in death if the patient is not treated quickly with botulism antitoxin.

If serving baked potatoes to customers right away, aluminum foil wrapping of potatoes for baking is acceptable. If you intend to keep potatoes warm or reheat, there are safety measures recommended by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency that you should follow to avoid the risk of botulism:

- wash potatoes thoroughly before wrapping in foil (do not use soap), and
- immediately serve and eat the baked potatoes, or
- hot hold at 65C(150F) or higher, or
- remove aluminum foil after baking or hot holding the potatoes and refrigerate all leftover potatoes

A good practice for any leftover potatoes would be to quickly refrigerate, regardless of how they have been cooked.



the STOCK POT

Want to read more about botulism and how you can prevent passing it on to your customers?

Check out the following website:

Canadian Food Inspection Agency

<http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/corpaffr/foodfacts/botulisme.shtml>

Call your local inspector to find out about PROTON—a Food Handler Certification course. Get your study-at-home workbook for \$10 and take the one hour exam when you're ready.

Call 721-7520
(1-877-721-7520) or click
www.simcoehealth.org

HEALTH CONNECTION
Your Link to Health Information



RECIPE MAKEOVER

LAMB LOIN WITH DIJON MUSTARD SAUCE AND SWEET POTATOES

1 pkg (500g) frozen boneless lamb loins (8 loins) thawed and trimmed to remove all visible fat

Sweet potato puree

2 large sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into 1 inch pieces
1 clove of garlic, minced
1-2 tbsp olive oil
¼ tsp salt

Dijon mustard sauce

2 shallots
4 tbsp Dijon mustard
3 oz. dry red wine
¼ cup chicken stock
1 cup cooked lentils
2 tbsp Sharwoods curry powder
1 clove garlic, crushed
1 can coconut milk
vegetable oil
white wine

Wash hands thoroughly before, during and after food preparation, as well as all surfaces.

In saucepan of boiling water simmer potatoes, covered, about 25 minutes or until tender. Drain, then puree in food processor with olive oil, garlic and salt. Keep warm.

In a no-stick pan, sear thawed lamb loins on both sides, then transfer and place on baking sheet in oven at 213C (425F) for about 8-10 minutes. In the pan where you seared the lamb, sautee the shallots on medium heat. Add your red wine and let reduce a little, add dijon mustard and chicken stock and lower heat to a simmer for about 3 - 4 minutes.

Slice lamb 2 loins per serving on each plate, and spoon sauce over top of the lamb. Using a piping bag, pipe sweet potato puree into a rosette in the centre of lamb. Serve with fresh vegetables.

Original recipe courtesy of Chef Chris Buurs, Ossawippi Express Dining Cars, Orillia

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