To minimize the possibility of outbreaks caused by a foodborne illness, here are a few tips on proper food handling and personal hygiene to follow:

**Food Preparation**

- If you have an illness, such as a cold sore, infected cut, colds, etc, do NOT prepare food since it can lead to the spread of illnesses to others.
- If you are purchasing the food product (pre-made or requiring further preparation), ensure that the source is a licensed retail establishment that has a valid health permit with the local Health Department.
- Prior to any food handling, wash your hands thoroughly for 10-15 seconds with warm water and soap being sure to get between your fingers and thumb.
- Clean and sanitize all surfaces where food will be prepared.
  - To make a sanitizing solution, use 1 cap of bleach per gallon of water.
- Thoroughly wash all raw fruits and vegetables before serving to eliminate the potential risk of food-borne outbreaks.
- Separate raw meats from cooked food items while prepping food and during food storage.
- Cook meats to appropriate temperatures.
  - Eggs, fish and whole pieces of meat including beef, lamb and pork - 145°F
  - Ground up meats like sausages or hamburgers - 155°F
  - Poultry like chicken or turkey, foods that are stuffed - 165°F
- Do not allow food to sit out of temperature control (refrigeration or hot holding) for over 2 hours.
- Store and transport all food in clean, appropriate containers and cover the container - e.g. with plastic wrap when on display. Do not store any food product in the original container since many of these containers were not originally designed for food STORAGE.

**Safe Food Serving**

- Wash hands thoroughly for 10-15 seconds before serving food.
- Use chafing dishes or crockpots to help maintain hot food temperature. Hot food should remain at 135°F or hotter.
- Ice bowls, coolers or other insulated dishes should be used with cold dishes to keep food temperatures 41°F or colder.
  - Avoid temperature danger zone between 42-134°F where bacteria can multiply quickly.
- Do not keep perishable food items at room temperature for more than 2 hours.
- If serving outdoors, use lids or foil to cover food that is not being served to prevent exposure to...
contaminants.

• Have appropriate serving utensils and back up for each dish so guests aren’t tempted to use their hands to serve food.

• Whenever using an open flame or electrical appliances to either cook or hold hot food at your venue, be sure to have a 2A10BC fire extinguisher readily available to use in case of an emergency.

Leftovers

• Perishable food (dairy, poultry, eggs, fish, meat, etc.) shall not be served once it has been “out of temperature” for longer than 4 hours (danger zone between 42-134°F). WHEN IN DOUBT THROW IT OUT.

• If food is still holding 41°F it may be kept.

• Reheat leftovers to 165°F. Once reheated, discard any leftovers.

For additional information on safe food handling, visit: Orange County Health Care Agency; Food Safety Programs; FoodSafety.gov; Center for Disease Control and Prevention - Basic Food Safety

For any questions or concerns, email safety@uci.edu or call EHS at 949-824-6200