



SALLY de la RUE BROWNE

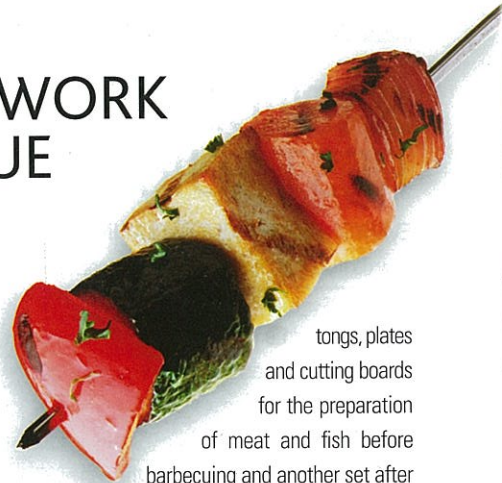
EVERYONE LOVES THE BEGINNING of summer and the opportunity to enjoy outdoor barbecues in restaurant settings. However, it is important to focus on the correct methods of handling and cooking foods on the barbecue, especially meat and fish.

What is the most important detail to remember when preparing menu items for the barbecue? Temperature control is one of the best lines of defence in preventing food poisoning. Cooking foods internally to 74°C (165°F) will help destroy food-poisoning organisms such as E. Coli and salmonella. Proper handwashing before preparation, and during and after serving the food will help reduce contaminants on one's hands.

TAKE THE GUESSWORK OUT OF BARBECUE SAFETY

Cross-contamination occurs frequently when workers handling raw meats don't wash their hands or change their gloves afterwards. Blood from raw meat is easily passed on to other foods and foodservice equipment. Plastic non-latex gloves are a major source of cross-contamination. Not only do they spread contaminants such as blood from food to food, but hands perspire and grow bacteria while the gloves are worn. Food handlers should not wear the same pair of gloves throughout the day and simply wipe the gloves on a towel; regular handwashing using liquid soap and hot water is essential.

Staff should remember to code-date foods in the refrigerator and walk-in cooler and freezer. Temperature checks, as requested by the health authority, should be carried out on hazardous items such as hamburger meat when frozen, refrigerated, defrosted, cooked, cooled and reheated. Further reduce the risk of cross-contamination and food poisoning by using one set of



tongs, plates and cutting boards for the preparation of meat and fish before barbecuing and another set after barbecuing.

Taking the guesswork out of barbecue safety is easier than you think. Remember to have staff follow the food safety tips to ensure that customers will enjoy a safe and tasty barbecue during the summer months.

As a Registered Public Health Inspector and Food Safety Consultant with ENVIRO-FOOD CONSULTING, Sally de la Rue Browne provides training, writing and consulting services to the restaurant and food-service industry. Visit www.envirofood.net or e-mail sally@envirofood.net for further information.