

 West Lothian Council	Environmental Health		SUBJECT: DONER KEBABS
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		Public Health	
STATUS: TRADE ADVICE Data label: Public		Pollution Control	
		Pest Control/Dog Warden	

Information Sheet FH05

Doner Kebabs

Introduction

Doner Kebabs - where thin slices are cut from a large block of reformed meat, cooked on a vertical turning spit – are a safe food provided that a few basic food safety rules are followed. If these rules are ignored, then serious food poisoning can easily be caused.

Because harmful bacteria can live and grow in the reformed meat, and because contaminated salad can cause illness, kebabs are classed as a High Risk Food and you must take special care to follow the right methods. To ensure good hygiene in the preparation and cooking of doner kebabs we strongly recommend that you follow the advice given in this Information Sheet. Further information is available from the Food Standards Agency's E. coli O157 Control of Cross- contamination Guidance for food business operators and local authorities. The online page is -

<http://www.food.gov.uk/business-industry/guidancenotes/hygguid/ecoliguide>

Kebab Supplies & Storage

If you make your own kebabs, then wash your hands thoroughly before touching any ingredients and prepare them in a clean, hygienic area using good quality ingredients. Follow the E. coli O157 guidance on separation between raw and ready to eat foods.

If you buy ready-made kebabs, then use a supplier with a good reputation who operates to high standards of hygiene. You can check this by either visiting their premises yourself, asking to see their last inspection report, or by contacting your local Environmental Health Office for advice. **See information sheet FH07**

Frozen and chilled kebabs must be transported in a hygienic way, which will not contaminate meat, or allow it to defrost. It is best to have deliveries made by the supplier using a refrigerated vehicle. When kebabs are delivered, check that they are in good condition, are within the date code and have been stored at the right temperature. Do not accept any unrefrigerated chilled kebab, or kebab which is only partly frozen. You will not know how much it has been defrosted, or for how long - so the meat may not be safe to use. The kebab should come wrapped, suitably labelled (including any food allergens), with traceability information and delivery note.

Storage

Store kebabs either frozen (colder than minus 18 degrees centigrade (-18°C)) or chilled (+1°C to +5° C). We recommend that you measure the storage temperatures daily and keep a written record. **See information sheet FH21.** Label your kebabs with the date of purchase so you know which order to use them in and how long to keep them.

Cooking, Hot Holding and Serving

Place the spit in the cooker and begin cooking immediately. Do not leave meat at room temperature for any longer than is necessary. Do not turn the cooker off for long periods once cooking has begun, as this will allow bacteria in the meat to continue growing and multiplying. The length of the burners should be the same or longer than the meat on the spit, so do not cook a large kebab using a single burner. Make sure that the outside is thoroughly & quickly cooked, then cut into thin slices. Do not cut too many slices at one time.

Your bain marie should be hot before any hot food is placed in them. Meat in the hot holding pans must be kept above +63 degrees centigrade. Check this with a probe thermometer regularly, say every half-hour. If the temperature falls below this then it may not be safe and must be thrown away.

Use a size of kebab which can all be used in a day. It is dangerous to store a part used kebab overnight – even if you put it in the freezer – because the middle of the meat block stays warm for a long time. Suppliers can provide you with ready made frozen kebabs in a variety of sizes, so you can buy a size which suits your business and minimises waste.

If you have part of a kebab left at the end of service then you can do one of two things:-

- throw it away
- cook and slice it all and save it for the next day using the method below

If you decide on keeping it for use the next day, then follow this method carefully:-

- Cook the remaining meat thoroughly and slice it from the block in the normal way.
- Put the meat into clean shallow trays and place in a cool area so that it cools quickly, preferably within 90 minutes and periodically check and record the cooled temperature to demonstrate your cooling system works.
- As soon as it has cooled to a reasonable level, put it into the freezer or refrigerator overnight.
- The next day, reheat the meat to at least +82°C either in a microwave or in a pot on the cooker and use it first before starting on a new kebab. Use a probe thermometer or a meat thermometer to check the temperatures. Do not reheat any meat more than once. It must be reheated quickly – not warmed gently in a bain-marie. **See information sheet FH21.**

General Hygiene

Clean and disinfect all equipment thoroughly. A combined detergent and disinfectant may be used for this – usually called a bactericidal detergent. **See information sheet FH06.**

Remember that uncooked kebabs are raw meat and so bacteria will contaminate everything which comes into contact with them, so separation is critical to food safety. **See information sheet FH30.**

Bacteria can also be passed on in the salad, so always wash it carefully. Keep salad cool, and use tongs to avoid touching it with bare hands when serving. Keep the salad covered and well away from raw meat. **See information sheet FH13.**

Hands can easily carry large amounts of bacteria, even if you wear gloves, so wash hands thoroughly and often, under warm running water, with antibacterial hand soap and disposable paper towels. Turn off the tap using a paper towel. **See information sheet FH09.** Avoid touching food with your bare hands. Whenever possible use tongs, spoons and clean paper napkins instead.

General Safety

Provide fire-fighting equipment and train your staff in its use. The Fire Prevention Officer at the Craigshill Fire Station (0131 228 2401) can give you advice on this.

- Ensure that the grill is regularly serviced to the manufacturer's instructions, by a competent person registered with GAS SAFE. The GAS SAFE Register is available online at <http://www.gassaferegister.co.uk/>
- Electric kebab shavers must be stripped down and all parts thoroughly cleaned and disinfected using a suitable disinfectant.

If these simple rules are followed then doner kebabs are safe to sell. However, as with any other form of meat preparation, bad practices are likely to lead to food poisoning. If your sales of kebabs is not high enough for you to follow the cooking method in the guidance note then you may be putting your customers' health at risk by continuing to sell them.

Further help

Remember it is your responsibility to ensure that doner kebabs served to your customers are safe. If you would like help, or need any further advice, then please contact us on 01506 280000 or environmentalhealth@westlothian.gov.uk