REHS Food Protection Practice Exam (Sample)

Study Guide

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Questions

1. What is the major reason for the regulation of food establishments?

A. Increase profitability

B. Improve customer service

C. Prevent foodborne illness

D. Reduce food production costs

2. What characteristic indicates that fish is no longer good to eat?

A. Firm texture

B. Cloudy eyes

C. Bright red gills

D. Mild smell

3. What type of contamination is caused by microorganisms?

A. Chemical contamination

B. Biological contamination

C. Physical contamination

D. Radiological contamination

4. All meat and poultry plants must develop and implement a system of preventative controls known as what?

A. ISO 9001

B. GMP

C. HACCP

D. FMEA

5. Which of the following is a common practice to prevent cross-contamination in seafood preparation?

A. Using same cutting board for all foods

B. Thoroughly washing hands before handling fish

C. Storing fish with poultry

D. Using unclean utensils

6. What is the function of food safety training for staff?

- **A. To teach staff new recipes**
- **B. To educate employees on preventing foodborne illnesses**
- **C. To improve menu knowledge**
- **D. To increase customer service skills**

7. What is the most common source of chemical contamination in food?

- **A. Foodborne viruses**
- **B. Cleaning supplies and pesticides**
- **C. Undercooked meats**
- **D. Improper food storage**

8. Which bacteria's growth is inhibited at 41 degrees Fahrenheit besides Staphylococci?

- **A. Escherichia coli**
- **B. Bacillus cereus**
- **C. Clostridium perfringens**
- **D. Salmonella**

9. What should be done if a food item is found with an expired date?

- **A. Use it immediately**
- **B. Dispose of it immediately**
- **C. Recheck the date after a few hours**
- **D. Repack it for sale**

10. What is server hygiene, and why is it important?

- **A. Proper training of servers to greet customers**
- **B. Proper cleaning and sanitization of servers to prevent contamination**
- **C. Ensuring servers wear uniforms**
- **D. Keeping servers informed about menu changes**

Answers

1. C
2. B
3. B
4. C
5. B
6. B
7. B
8. D
9. B
10. B

Explanations

1. What is the major reason for the regulation of food establishments?

A. Increase profitability

B. Improve customer service

C. Prevent foodborne illness

D. Reduce food production costs

The major reason for the regulation of food establishments is to prevent foodborne illness. Food safety regulations are designed to ensure that food is prepared, handled, and served in a manner that minimizes the risk of contamination. Foodborne illnesses can arise from improper food handling practices, inadequate cooking temperatures, cross-contamination, and other factors related to food safety. By enforcing regulations, health departments aim to protect public health and ensure that consumers are not exposed to potentially harmful pathogens that can lead to illness. Regulations put in place often include guidelines on sanitation practices, food storage temperatures, employee hygiene, and safe food preparation techniques, all aimed at reducing the risk of outbreaks. This focus on prevention is essential for ensuring that food establishments maintain a safe environment for food service, directly impacting public health and safety. The other options, while they may have some relevance to the operation of a food establishment, do not serve as primary reasons for the stringent regulations in place. For example, increasing profitability and reducing food production costs are business objectives that do not necessarily align with ensuring food safety. Similarly, improving customer service is important for business success but is not the core objective of food regulations. The paramount concern remains the prevention of foodborne illness to safeguard the health of the community.

2. What characteristic indicates that fish is no longer good to eat?

A. Firm texture

B. Cloudy eyes

C. Bright red gills

D. Mild smell

A cloudy appearance in fish eyes is a significant indicator that the fish may no longer be safe to eat. Fresh fish typically has clear, bright eyes, reflecting its quality and freshness. When fish is no longer good, the eyes can become dull, opaque, or cloudy due to the breakdown of tissues and the process of spoilage. This change can signal that the fish may have begun to deteriorate, making it unsuitable for consumption. Other factors, while important for evaluating fish freshness, do not indicate spoilage as directly. For instance, a firm texture is a sign of freshness rather than deterioration, while bright red gills indicate that the fish is fresh. A mild smell is also associated with fresh fish, as fish that has started to spoil would generally have a strong, unpleasant odor. Thus, cloudy eyes serve as a clear and specific characteristic of potential spoilage.

3. What type of contamination is caused by microorganisms?

A. Chemical contamination

B. Biological contamination

C. Physical contamination

D. Radiological contamination

Biological contamination occurs when microorganisms such as bacteria, viruses, parasites, or fungi contaminate food or water. These pathogens can cause foodborne illnesses, making this type of contamination a significant concern in food protection. Microorganisms can originate from various sources, including improper handling, poor sanitation practices, or contaminated ingredients. Understanding the risks associated with biological contamination is crucial for implementing effective food safety measures, such as proper cooking, storage, and personal hygiene practices. By focusing on preventing biological contamination, food handlers and establishments can significantly reduce the risk of foodborne diseases. Other types of contamination, such as chemical, physical, and radiological, do not involve microorganisms. Chemical contamination refers to harmful substances like pesticides or food additives. Physical contamination can occur from foreign objects, such as hair or glass, while radiological contamination involves materials emitting radiation.

4. All meat and poultry plants must develop and implement a system of preventative controls known as what?

A. ISO 9001

B. GMP

C. HACCP

D. FMEA

HACCP, which stands for Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points, is a thorough preventative control system that is specifically designed for meat and poultry plants, among other food production facilities. This systematic approach focuses on identifying, evaluating, and controlling hazards that could compromise food safety. The HACCP system involves seven principles: conducting a hazard analysis, determining critical control points, establishing critical limits, establishing monitoring procedures, identifying corrective actions, verifying the system, and keeping records. These principles guide food producers in implementing effective safety measures to ensure the safety and quality of the meat and poultry they process. The other options, while relevant in the context of quality and safety management, do not specifically address the unique requirements and hazards associated with meat and poultry processing. For instance, ISO 9001 is a standard for quality management systems but does not focus solely on food safety. Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) set general guidelines for food production but do not provide the same structured approach for hazard prevention as HACCP. Failure Mode and Effects Analysis (FMEA) is more common in risk management contexts and is not specifically tailored for food safety in meat and poultry facilities. Hence, HACCP is the required system that all meat and poultry plants must develop and implement to ensure food

5. Which of the following is a common practice to prevent cross-contamination in seafood preparation?

A. Using same cutting board for all foods

B. Thoroughly washing hands before handling fish

C. Storing fish with poultry

D. Using unclean utensils

Thoroughly washing hands before handling fish is essential in preventing cross-contamination. This practice reduces the risk of transferring harmful bacteria or allergens from the hands to the seafood. Since hands can come into contact with a variety of foods and surfaces throughout food preparation, it is crucial to ensure that they are clean before handling any food items, especially raw seafood, which can harbor pathogens. By washing hands, food handlers minimize the potential for pathogens from other food sources or surfaces to contaminate the seafood, thereby protecting public health and ensuring food safety. In seafood preparation, where there are significant risks associated with foodborne illnesses like those caused by bacteria such as Vibrio, maintaining proper hygiene is critical. Practicing this method contributes significantly to safe food handling protocols, creating a safer food preparation environment.

6. What is the function of food safety training for staff?

A. To teach staff new recipes

B. To educate employees on preventing foodborne illnesses

C. To improve menu knowledge

D. To increase customer service skills

The function of food safety training for staff primarily focuses on educating employees on preventing foodborne illnesses. This training is vital as it provides employees with the knowledge and skills necessary to handle food safely, understand the importance of hygiene practices, recognize potential hazards, and implement appropriate food handling procedures. By equipping staff with this critical information, a business can significantly reduce the risk of contamination, thus protecting both customers and the establishment from foodborne illnesses. The other options, while relevant to the overall operation of a food service establishment, do not directly address the primary objective of food safety training. Teaching new recipes, improving menu knowledge, and enhancing customer service skills are essential components of staff training overall, but they do not specifically target the crucial prevention of foodborne illnesses. Therefore, the emphasis on health and safety is what makes the correct choice stand out as the primary focus of food safety training.

7. What is the most common source of chemical contamination in food?

A. Foodborne viruses

B. Cleaning supplies and pesticides

C. Undercooked meats

D. Improper food storage

Cleaning supplies and pesticides are indeed the most common source of chemical contamination in food. This is primarily because various chemicals used for sanitation and pest control can inadvertently end up on food surfaces or in food products themselves. For example, if cleaning supplies are not properly rinsed off equipment or if foods are stored near pesticides, there is a high risk of chemical residues contaminating the food. This type of contamination can pose serious health risks to consumers, potentially leading to foodborne illnesses or toxic reactions. In contrast, foodborne viruses, undercooked meats, and improper food storage are primarily associated with biological contamination or improper handling, rather than chemical contamination. While these issues are significant in their own right, they do not relate to the introduction of harmful chemical substances into food in the same way that the use of cleaning supplies and pesticides does.

8. Which bacteria's growth is inhibited at 41 degrees Fahrenheit besides Staphylococci?

A. Escherichia coli

B. Bacillus cereus

C. Clostridium perfringens

D. Salmonella

The correct answer highlights that Salmonella is a type of bacteria whose growth can be inhibited at temperatures at or below 41 degrees Fahrenheit. The temperature of 41°F is significant in food safety, as it is a critical threshold for controlling the growth of various pathogens. Salmonella is known to proliferate at warmer temperatures, particularly in the range of 70°F to 120°F, where conditions are often more favorable for bacterial growth. When food is stored at temperatures of 41°F or lower, it helps to slow down the metabolic processes of Salmonella, significantly reducing its ability to multiply. Proper refrigeration practices are essential in preventing foodborne illnesses caused by Salmonella and other similar pathogens. In contrast, other bacteria mentioned in the choices have a different response to cooler temperatures. For example, while Escherichia coli can survive at low temperatures, it is not as inhibited as Salmonella at 41°F. Bacillus cereus and Clostridium perfringens also have varying growth characteristics, but they do not fall under the same category of temperature sensitivity as Salmonella in this context. Hence, focusing on preserving food at or below 41°F effectively limits the growth of Salmonella and contributes to food safety.

9. What should be done if a food item is found with an expired date?

A. Use it immediately

B. Dispose of it immediately

C. Recheck the date after a few hours

D. Repack it for sale

The appropriate action when a food item is found with an expired date is to dispose of it immediately. This is essential for several reasons. First, food items that are past their expiration date can pose significant health risks, as they may harbor harmful bacteria or have undergone spoilage that is not always visible. Consuming such items can lead to foodborne illnesses, which can be especially dangerous for vulnerable populations such as the elderly, children, and immunocompromised individuals. Additionally, the expiration date is set for a reason, often determined by the manufacturer based on factors like safety, quality, and nutritional value. Once that date has passed, it is no longer guaranteed that the food will meet safety standards or provide the intended quality. Using an expired item immediately does not address the potential risks involved, while checking the date again after a few hours or repacking it for sale does not ensure consumer safety and can lead to regulatory violations. Proper disposal aligns with best practices in food safety management, helping to maintain a safe environment for both consumers and businesses.

10. What is server hygiene, and why is it important?

A. Proper training of servers to greet customers

B. Proper cleaning and sanitization of servers to prevent contamination

C. Ensuring servers wear uniforms

D. Keeping servers informed about menu changes

Server hygiene refers to the practices and protocols that food service employees must follow to maintain cleanliness and prevent the transfer of harmful microorganisms to food and surfaces. This includes proper cleaning and sanitization of hands, work areas, and any tools or utensils that servers might use. The importance of proper cleaning and sanitization is crucial in a food service environment as it directly affects food safety. It helps in reducing the risk of foodborne illnesses, which can be caused by cross-contamination from servers who may carry pathogens on their hands or clothing if not properly sanitized. By focusing on this aspect of hygiene, food establishments can ensure that the food served to customers is not only safe to consume but also maintains a high standard of quality. This practice is vital in protecting public health and ensures compliance with health regulations, which are designed to provide safe dining experiences for customers.