

Spring Cleaning Tips for Kitchens

Spring is here, which means it's time to clean the winter dirt and grime away. In addition to clearing out clutter, the **U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS)** encourages everyone to **Be Food Safe** by giving their kitchens a thorough cleaning. Refrigerators and freezers need to be regularly cleaned, especially the areas where raw meat, poultry and seafood are stored, to avoid the spread of bacteria. Spring is a good time to inventory your freezer and fridge to dispose of items that are losing their quality or have spoiled. Unnoticed spills and lingering odors should be cleaned up to make your food storage areas safe and tidy. FSIS is providing simple steps to help you spring clean your kitchen, prevent cross contamination, and reduce the risk of foodborne illness. For more information, visit the MGA's website at <http://www.mngrocers.com/index.php/consumers/> or <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/food-safety-education/get-answers/food-safety-fact-sheets/safe-food-handling/cleanliness-helps-prevent-foodborne-illness/>.

Wash, Sanitize, Replace.

Bacteria can be transferred by hands, cutting boards, and knives and quickly spread to all kitchen surfaces.

Frequent cleaning can keep that from happening.

- **Keep countertops clean** by washing with hot soapy water before and after preparing food.
- **Keep the refrigerator clean** at all times. Wipe up spills immediately and clean surfaces thoroughly with hot, soapy water, and rinse them well.
- If spoiled food has left an odor in your refrigerator or freezer as a result of a power outage, **wash and sanitize** shelves, crispers, and ice trays, as well as the door and gasket. Leave the door open for about 15 minutes to allow free air circulation. FSIS has more tips on how to remove kitchen odors at https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/food-safety-education/get-answers/food-safety-fact-sheets/emergency-preparedness/removing-odors-from-refrigerators-and-freezers/ct_index
- **Sanitize surfaces and utensils** with a solution of 1 tablespoon of unscented, liquid chlorine bleach per gallon of water.
- **Wash cutting boards with hot, soapy water after each use.** Rinse with clear water and air dry or pat dry with clean paper towels. Nonporous acrylic, plastic, or glass boards and solid wood boards can be washed in a dishwasher (laminated boards may crack and split).
- **Replace cutting boards** that are excessively worn or have developed hard-to-clean grooves where bacteria can live. Go to https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/wcm/connect/ffab12f8-7762-4bd1-a6f6-d8d08a33948f/Cutting_Boards_and_Food_Safety.pdf?MOD=AJPERES for more information.



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