

# Frequently Asked Questions

## Safe Food Handling Practices

Appropriate food handling and health protection are a priority of your school and community. The Health Protection Unit of Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living encourages schools to consult with their regional public health inspector if they have any questions related to safe food handling practices in your classroom.

### **Are food and nutrition classrooms inspected by public health inspectors?**

No, there is no requirement in *The Public Health Act* for food-related classroom inspections to take place.

### **Are food and nutrition teachers required to have a current Food Handler Training Certificate?**

No. This is not a Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living requirement, but may be a school division employment requirement. It is recommended for teachers to consider attaining a Food Handler Training Certificate.

### **Do students have to wear hair nets and food preparation gloves while preparing food as part of the food and nutrition course?**

No. The food is being prepared with the intention for the product to be consumed by the students in the class. Food and nutrition courses provide students with essential knowledge and transferable skills that are applicable to their personal lives, families, and communities.

### **Are commercial dishwashers, three-compartment sinks, and stainless-steel countertops and/or seamless counters required as standard equipment for food and nutrition classrooms?**

No. Some school divisions/schools may decide to retrofit the food and nutrition classroom with these items as the classroom may also be used for other purposes.

### **Will a public health inspector make a site visit to the school/classroom if there is a public food safety complaint?**

The public health inspector will determine if a phone call or site visit is required based on the nature of the public complaint.

### **Can a food and nutrition teacher request a public health inspector visit to provide advice?**

Yes. The Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living website provides a contact page with direct phone numbers, or a request can be sent to [health.protection@gov.mb.ca](mailto:health.protection@gov.mb.ca).

### **What would the public health inspector look for when visiting a food and nutrition classroom?**

The inspector will ask questions to determine if best practice related to food handling is being followed.

# FAQs

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### What general food safety advice would a public health inspector provide?

The inspector might offer advice such as the following:

- Purchase food from grocery stores, and store meat and dairy in fridge at 4°C/40°F.
- Wash and sanitize food preparation surfaces before use.
- Wash hands before handling food.
- Hand sinks should have liquid soap dispensers and paper towel.
- Clean dishes using at least a two-sink method.
- If bleach is not allowed, use quaternary ammonia (i.e., quats).
- Keep hot foods at 60°C or higher.
- Monitor temperatures with a metal stem probe thermometer.

### The Grades 5 to 12 Food and Nutrition courses are to provide hands-on learning opportunities. The culture of students in my school community use ingredients that are grown/harvested and caught. Can the students prepare and consume food made with non-store-bought/inspected products?

Yes. The ingredients can be brought into the classroom, used in a recipe, and consumed during the same day. The leftover food products are not to remain in the classroom/school.

### Can the food and nutrition classroom be used to prepare food for school bake sales?

The *Farmers' Market Guidelines* are applicable to food items prepared for bake sales. These guidelines can be found online at [https://www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/environmentalhealth/protection/docs/farmers\\_market.pdf](https://www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/environmentalhealth/protection/docs/farmers_market.pdf).

### Can the food and nutrition classroom be used by outside groups after school hours?

If the food is being prepared for public consumption (e.g., community dinner, Folklorama) then your local public health inspector is to be contacted to discuss the nature of the food being prepared and if a permit is required.