



Keeping Food Safety in Mind with Cutting Boards

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Cutting Board Composition

Cutting boards come in all shapes, sizes, colors, and are comprised of various materials such as wood, bamboo, acrylic, plastic, glass, marble, and pyroceramic¹. When choosing a cutting board, it is safest for consumers to select one with a nonporous surface.

Stay Bacteria-Free

Nonporous surfaces can be easier to clean and safer for cutting meat and poultry. Even though some harder-surfaced cutting boards show bacteria-resistant qualities, it has been found that bacteria can become trapped in these surfaces over time as the surface breaks down and knife-grooves develop². These microorganisms can be difficult to dislodge by washing and rinsing alone. Once trapped, bacteria survive in a dormant stage for long periods of time. The next time the cutting board is used, these bacteria can contaminate other foods, potentially causing a food-borne illness.

Current Cutting Board Recommendations for Keeping Food Safe

1. Use a separate cutting board for foods that require cooking¹. For example, use one for raw meat, poultry or fish, and then use a second one for cooked or ready-to-eat foods such as fruits, vegetables, or bread. This will prevent bacteria on a cutting board that is used for raw meat products from contaminating a food that requires no further cooking.
2. Keep all cutting boards clean by washing with hot, soapy water and then sanitize them by using 1 tablespoon of unscented, liquid chlorine bleach in a gallon of water^{1,3}. Flood the surface with the sanitizing solution and allow it to stand for several minutes, then rinse and air dry or pat dry with paper towels. Non-porous cutting boards can be washed in an automatic dishwasher, however laminated boards are not dishwasher safe. It is always best to read the care instructions before use.

Cutting boards are an important part of preparing food safely; however, all cutting boards wear out over time. Once a cutting board develops hard-to-clean grooves or becomes excessively worn, it is important to discard and replace it to ensure continued food safety with your cutting board^{1,3}.

References

1. United States Department of Agriculture Food Safety and Inspection Service. (2013) Cutting Boards and Food Safety. http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/food-safety-education/get-answers/food-safety-fact-sheets/safe-food-handling/cutting-boards-and-food-safety/ct_index
2. Rossvoll, E., Langsrud, S., Bloomfield, S., Moen, B., Heir, E. and Moretro, T. (2015) The effects of different hygiene procedures in reducing bacterial contamination in a model domestic kitchen. *Journal of Applied Microbiology*, 119: 582–593.
3. United States Department of Agriculture Food Safety and Inspection Service. (2013) Be Smart. Keep Foods Apart. Don't Cross Contaminate. http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/food-safety-education/get-answers/food-safety-fact-sheets/safe-food-handling/be-smart-keep-foods-apart/CT_Index



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