



FOOD SAFETY CONCERNS WITH MEAT SLICERS

Improper cleaning and sanitizing of meat slicing equipment can lead to foodborne illness outbreaks caused by *Listeria* bacteria. *Listeria* bacteria are particularly difficult to control because they multiply in cold temperatures. Other disease-causing bacteria can also grow on equipment and utensils when they are not properly cleaned and sanitized.

During the use of meat slicers, food debris may become trapped within the inner workings of the equipment. Any equipment used for slicing or processing of ready to eat and raw meat products must be properly cleaned and sanitized to adequately destroy any microbes within them. Ensure the manufacturer's specifications and directions are followed carefully to ensure equipment is cleaned and sanitized appropriately.

PREVENTING THE SPREAD OF BACTERIA

Meat slicers used at room temperature should be **cleaned** and **sanitized** frequently to prevent the growth of disease-causing bacteria like *Listeria*.

- Cleaning is the removal of visible food debris, grease and other materials. This may require the use of physical energy (scrubbing), heat or chemicals.
- Sanitizing means to treat by a process in which bacteria are destroyed to a safe level. This is done with chemicals meant for use around food or with hot water.

PUBLIC HEALTH

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The logo for York Region, featuring a stylized star or leaf shape above the text "York Region".

CLEANING AND SANITIZING STEPS FOR MEAT SLICERS

Meat slicers are dangerous machines to use and clean. Always follow your workplace safety procedures when using cleaning equipment and utensils, and when working with chemical sanitizers. The following suggested steps are not meant to replace the manufacturer or workplace approved policies and procedures.

1. Always unplug the machine; use a lockout box where necessary; set blade control at zero; and wear safety gloves
2. Remove excess food waste by wiping or pre-rinsing and disassemble the meat slicer, where possible
3. Once disassembled, wash in hot soapy water, rinse and then sanitize using one of the following:
 - a. Immerse in clean water at a temperature of at least 77°C, or more, for at least 45 seconds; or
 - b. Immerse in a clean chlorine solution of not less than 100 parts per million (ppm) of available chlorine at a temperature not lower than 24°C for at least 45 seconds; or
 - c. Immerse in a clean quaternary ammonium compound solution of not less than 200 ppm at a temperature not lower than 24°C for at least 45 seconds; or
 - d. Immerse in a clean solution not less than 25 ppm of available iodine at a temperature not lower than 24°C for at least 45 seconds
4. Allow to air-dry prior to reassembly. If possible, cover the meat slicer when not in use

Parts of the meat slicer that cannot be cleaned in the dishwasher or sink shall be washed or scrubbed with a detergent solution, rinsed with clean water and sanitized with one of the solutions listed above.

These requirements for proper cleaning and sanitizing of equipment in your facility are minimum requirements under the [Ontario Food Premises Regulation \(O. Reg 493/17\)](#).

In addition to these minimum requirements, operators are strongly encouraged to keep track of their cleaning and sanitizing schedule on a daily basis.



QUESTIONS

If you have any questions regarding cleaning, sanitizing or any other food safety topic, please call York Region Health Connection at 1-800-361-5653.