

Grades 3–5

Farm to Fork: Where Food Comes From

Safe and Delicious

Understanding food safety

Farmers and food production facilities have a responsibility to produce safe foods. Discuss with students that our modern food production system has many rules and regulations to ensure that food is farmed, processed, packaged, stored, and delivered in a safe manner.

Explain to students that *bacteria* are microorganisms found everywhere, including in the air and soil. Microorganisms that can make people sick are called *pathogens*. One job that food producers and safety inspectors do is to detect pathogens growing in foods to ensure people don't get sick. Give each student a copy of the "farm to fork" cards. Have them cut the cards apart and glue them to a large sheet of paper. As a group, brainstorm ways that pathogens can get into foods at each stage and things producers and others can do to ensure that foods are safe. For example, on the farm once a cow is milked the milk cannot touch anything that hasn't been sanitized. At the store, managers must watch sell-by dates and remove outdated foods from the shelves.

To close, share some basic food safety guidelines like these with students:

- Meats must be cooked to specific temperatures to ensure that they are safe. A food's temperature can be measured using a food thermometer (for adult use only). Steaks, chops, and roasts should be cooked to 145 °F. and should rest for three minutes before serving. Ground beef, pork, lamb, and veal should be cooked to 160 °F. Poultry should be cooked to 165 °F.
- Never serve cooked foods on the same plate that held the raw meat.
- Foods should not sit out for more than two hours.

Food Safety

Cook food thoroughly.

Keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold.

Wash your hands before handling food and after touching raw meat.

Wash dishes, silverware, and pans with hot, soapy water.

Wash fresh foods before eating.



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Farm to Fork Cards

