



COVID-19 Best practice resources: handling food during the coronavirus

This advice is based on government guidance. The government suggests it is very unlikely that you can catch coronavirus from food and that COVID-19 is a respiratory illness. It is not known to be transmitted by exposure to food or food packaging. The government insists that in the event of a conflict between guidance and legislation, legislation will prevail.

Any food handler should practice safe working practices including

- Anyone who is unwell should not be at work, [are you fit for work?](#)
- washing their hands more often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. This should be done as a matter of routine, before and after handling food
- Frequently clean and disinfect objects and surfaces that are touched regularly, using your standard cleaning products
- Reminding staff of government coronavirus health and safety guidelines

Food business operators should continue to follow the Food Standard Agency's (FSA) [guidance on good hygiene practices](#) in food preparation and their Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) processes.

1. Food packaging

While food packaging is not known to present a specific risk, efforts should be made to ensure it is cleaned and handled in line with usual food safety practices such as harvest crates or delivery boxes.

2. Cleaning and waste disposal

The government has provided guidance on [cleaning and waste disposal](#) to help businesses reduce the spread of coronavirus.

For more information on handling food in a shop or market situation, see our document 'COVID-19 Best practice resources: customers in your shop, ordering or at market'



3. Social distancing

The advice on social distancing measures applies to everyone and this advice applies to both inside the food business and in the external public areas which customers use. Staff and customers should be reminded to wash their hands for 20 seconds and more frequently than normal and to practice at least 2m social distancing. For more information on working during coronavirus see [our document](#) and [government advice](#).

4. Resources

Advice on working safely with [staff](#), [volunteers](#) and [customers](#)

[Safer food, better business \(SFBB\)](#)

[Personal hygiene and fitness for work assessment](#)

[Cleaning in a non-health care setting](#)

[Working safely in restaurants and takeaway services](#)

[Wales Coronavirus information pages](#)

[Northern Ireland Coronavirus information pages](#)

[Scotland Coronavirus information pages](#)

Updated on 17th May 2020

On the above date the advice is applicable to the whole of the UK