1 / INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

This RFS Compliance Support Guide (CSG) has been produced for fishermen who are engaged in all capture fisheries around the UK and the EU. The guide incorporates recognised best practice in relation to the topic area covered and if followed will ensure compliance with respect to Responsible Fishing Scheme standards content.

This CSG forms part of a suite of CSGs which are designed to deal with the key industry requirements covering specific areas as they relate to any of, catch quality, crew safety and welfare and/or, the environment. Each CSG will have the capacity to be upgraded as required to reflect improvements in good industry practice and any changes in national and international legislation.

The guides will aim to support the industry and to actively promote and encourage better practice. The suite of Seafish CSG’s cover the following specified sectors and will be added to in future if required:

**Catching Sector Specific**
- Seafish Demersal CSG.
- Seafish Pelagic CSG.
- Seafish Shellfish CSG.
- Seafish Nephrops CSG.
- Seafish Scallop CSG.

**Generic Industry Specific**
- Seafish Health and Safety CSG for skippers and crews.
- Seafish Ethical and Welfare CSG for crews and Non EEA Fishing Crews.
- Seafish Environmental CSG.
- Seafish Food hygiene CSG for on board food production and storage.
- Seafish Common Operational Practices CSG for all sectors and vessels.

By the following and adhering to these CSGs the UK Fishing Industry will be able to promote and champion the high standards of operational practices that are essential for the supply chain and for a modern progressive industry.

The UK Fishing industry is fully aware that by adopting the good operational practices described in these guides that it will raise standards for all of the skippers and crews, the supply chain generally and the wider environment in which they operate.
1.2 Purpose and scope

The purpose of each CSG is primarily to support and encourage all fishermen to try and adopt recognised industry best practice in the area addressed by the guide. The CSG will also take account, where relevant, of current key legislation that underpins the subject area. The suite of CSG’s will also underpin the Seafish Responsible Fishing Scheme programme and all vessel applicants applying for this programme will be required to commit to adopting these good practices and to where practically possible incorporate them into their fishing operations.

In the sector specific CSG’s the underpinning legislations are Regulation 852/2004/EC on the Hygiene of Foodstuffs, and Regulation 853/2004/EC laying down specific rules for food of animal origin.

In the Health and Safety CSG the Health and Safety requirements will relate to only marine health and safety requirements regulation 89/391/EC. The ethical and welfare will relate to the ILO convention specifically directed to the fishing sector and the food safety management system advice will follow the requirements laid out in Codex Alimentarius.

This CSG was produced by Seafish in collaboration with representatives of the trade, NGOs and other official bodies.

1.3 The Responsible Fishing Scheme (RFS)

The revised RFS Programme has been developed by Seafish and the UK Seafood industry to allow the fishing industry to demonstrate compliance with the programme’s five Core Principles:

**Core Principle 1**
Safety, health and welfare (Reduce accidents, injuries & fatalities; promote decent work, respect & integrity).

**Core Principle 2**
Training and professional development (Improve skills, knowledge and understanding; raise standards and open up new opportunities).

**Core Principle 3**
The vessel and its mission (Demonstrate due diligence and compliance).

**Core Principle 4**
Treating fish as food (Focus on supply of safe, wholesome product with known provenance).

**Core Principle 5**
Care for the environment (Behave responsibly, respecting the environment).

All the listed CSGs have been designed to underpin the RFS Standards and will to encourage fishermen to adopt responsible behaviours to promote long term improvement across all sectors of the UK Fishing Industry.
1.4 Guide development and acknowledgements

In the production of the CSGs Seafish called upon the expertise of key industry stakeholders and acknowledges and thanks all their efforts in the formation on the guides, particularly the RFS Technical Groups and certification experts RS Standards. Each CSG was endorsed by the RFS Technical committee to ensure that it has the correct credibility to underpin this standard and each CSG has been formally approved by the RFS Oversight Board as a key document that will need to be adopted by all vessel applicants wishing to be certified to one of the RFS standards.

Acknowledgement is given to the following industry stakeholders who have participated in reviewing this guide through its development.

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Scottish skipper

Jerry Percy
New Under Ten Fishermens Association

Katie Miller
Client Earth
2 / STRUCTURE

2.1 Structure of the guide

Section 3 of this guide describes the underpinning legislation that applies to all fishing vessels in relation to health and safety when handling catch on board.

Section 4 of this guide describes in detail the topic area covered by the guide, and provides best practice guidance as agreed by the UK Fishing industry and representative industry stakeholders that have expertise in all sectors of the Fishing Industry and where appropriate the onward Supply Chain.
3 / LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

3.1 Summary of legal requirements

The legal requirements that apply to the operation of a fishing vessel cover basic issues of food safety, fish marketing, fishery controls and health and safety, most of which meet requirements set by the European Union.

**Food Safety Specific**

The Food Safety Act, 1990 is the central Act of Food Safety. It establishes the essential principles of food safety, gives powers to the Food Authorities to enforce food safety and provides a means of enacting subsidiary Regulations on more detailed aspects of food safety. All persons in the food industry, including fishermen are subject to the Food Safety Act 1990. This Act establishes the basic requirements not to carry out any act which will render food injurious to health and to trade only in food satisfying food safety requirements.

The Food Safety (Fishery Products and Live Shellfish) (Hygiene) Regulations 1998 is the current enabling regulation covering all aspects of fish handling and processing from capture up to retail sale. It gives general hygiene requirements for all fishing vessels. In addition, the Regulations establish hygiene requirements for the landing, inspection, storage and transport of fish ashore. They also establish basic standards for the minimum quality of fishery products.

These Regulations and its requirements do not apply to a fisherman who sells all his catch directly to the final consumer or retailer within the UK up to a maximum of 25 tonnes per year. However, in this case, the requirements of the Food Safety (General Food Hygiene) Regulations 1995 apply. These establish basic hygiene requirements but are less detailed than the Fishery Products and Live Shellfish Regulations.

EC Regulation No. 178/2002 on the General Principles of Food Law.
EC Regulation No.852/2004 on the Hygiene of Foodstuffs.
EC Regulation No.853/2004 laying down specific hygiene rules for food of animal origin.

Draft Food Hygiene (England) Regulations 2005
4 / FOOD HYGIENE

Operational best practice

4.1 Background

Everyone who handles food has a responsibility to ensure it is safe to eat. As a fisherman you will take care of your catch to maintain its quality and food safety as it progresses from your boat to the dining table. As someone responsible for preparing food on-board a fishing vessel you have additional responsibilities to ensure that the food and drink you prepare is safe to eat and will not harm you or your crewmates.

This guide to the safety of food prepared onboard fishing vessels is designed to help crewmembers comply with the ILO Maritime Labour Convention 2006 regulation, which lays down the responsibilities placed on vessel owners and operators to provide safe food and fresh water to vessel crews. Here is an extract from MGN 397 (M+F) Guidelines for the Provision of Food and Fresh Water on Merchant Ships and Fishing Vessels:

- All ships should provide free of charge food and drinking water of appropriate quality, nutritional value and quantity to meet the needs of those on board.
- Food hygiene principles and the provision and maintenance of fresh water must be applied regardless of the age, size and type of vessel.
- Bacterial contamination is the most serious risk to food and fresh water safety.
- Those preparing or serving food must be properly trained and demonstrate a working knowledge of the principles and practices of food hygiene.
- Prevention using a risk assessment and management approach is one of the most effective means of ensuring food and fresh water safety.

This Guide will also provide a useful and practical introduction to the principles of food safety. Principles that will help you to prepare safe food and drink for you and your crewmates and to take responsibility for reception, storage and preparation of food and drink onboard.

If you get it right then your crewmates will enjoy your food and will be spared the consequences of unsafe food – illness, possible injury and even death!
4 /  FOOD HYGIENE

4.2  Personal Responsibility

Crewman have a responsibility to the vessel and the rest of the crew to not do anything that may cause harm or fail to do anything that may prevent harm.

This includes following the basic requirements for personal hygiene, food safety and the reporting of any occurrence that may pose a hazard. Crew are required to report any illness (including intestinal problems) that could affect food safety onboard, or any allergy or food intolerance that may affect your health and wellbeing. It should be reported to the Skipper or other responsible person at the earliest opportunity.
4 / FOOD HYGIENE

4.3 Introduction to principles of food hygiene for food handlers

Whether you are preparing food in a five star hotel or a west coast scalloper, food safety is food safety and the same basic principles will apply.

Food poisoning usually occurs because a series of mistakes combine to render the food prepared unsafe to eat.

The three most common mistakes that lead to food poisoning are:

• The contamination of a high risk food by a food hazard, usually dangerous or “pathogenic” bacteria;
• The multiplication of the bacteria over time to dangerous levels;
• Failure to render the food safe by destroying the bacteria and any toxins by thoroughly cooking the food.

Not all toxins in food are destroyed by cooking so we cannot rely on cooking to keep our food safe. Instead we rely on good food handling practices such as those described in the rest of this guide to avoid and control the food hazards that can potentially cause mild discomfort, illness or even death if you get it seriously wrong.

1. Food Hazards

Food hazards are anything that could cause harm to the person who consumes food. Usually we talk about four types of food hazard:

• Physical hazards – bits of bone, shell, glass, metal, wood etc in the food;
• Chemical hazards – cleaning chemicals, pesticides, biotoxins (from scallops for example). Chemicals do not always make food taste unpleasant;
• Biological hazards – bacteria, viruses and moulds are the most common forms of biological contamination;
• Allergens – some people are allergic to shellfish, peanuts, dairy products.

Physical hazards can cause choking or serious injury.

Chemical hazards are often responsible for food being spoiled and occasionally for more serious poisoning can lead to long term damage or illness.

Biological hazards can cause food poisoning (usually short term) or food borne disease (often a long term problem), while the problems caused by allergens can range from mild symptoms to full blown allergic shock which can be fatal.

Foods are often described (by food safety experts) as low risk or high risk. Low risk foods are those that are not usually a source of contamination or affected by contaminants.

High risk foods are those that are often sources of contaminants or affected by them. For example, raw chicken and cooked sliced meat can both be high risk. The chicken can be a source of salmonella bacteria and the cooked sliced meat is the perfect food for those bacteria to multiply on. The chicken will be well cooked before eating so it will be safe. The contaminated pre-cooked sliced meat will not be cooked again before it is served up so it is the perfect “vehicle” for the food poising bacteria to wreak havoc on the crew.

Jam and ketchup are low risk. Bacteria will struggle to multiply at all; even moulds find it hard to grow due to the high levels of salt and sugar. Tinned foods are also low risk and safe to eat, at least until they are opened and even then only if they are somehow contaminated.
4.3 Introduction to principles of food hygiene for food handlers (continued)

2. Contamination and cross contamination

Contamination can occur at any time. It may happen before the food is delivered to the vessel, or it can happen onboard due to poor hygiene practices. Contamination can happen during storage, preparation and even during serving. Poor personal hygiene and bad temperature control can make it worse.

Sources of contamination are often the person preparing the food, raw food itself (particularly raw meat), pests (flies and rodents particularly), waste food, the general environment, food contact surfaces (knives, cutting boards etc) and chemicals kept onboard the fishing vessel.

People commonly harbour food poisoning bacteria on their skin, nose, mouth, intestines. We are covered with bacteria both inside and out. We can pass on these bacteria by touch, sneezing, coughing or by the steady light rain of dandruff and flaking skin cells that affect us all.

Raw food, particularly meat is a great source of food poisoning bacteria. Even unpurified shellfish may be a source of bacteria such as E coli and viruses such as Norovirus, both of which come from untreated sewage that is discharged into the sea.

Whatever the source of the contamination, we can reduce the risk of cross-contamination by adopting a few simple practices. These practices are largely aimed at reducing cross contamination by food poisoning bacteria. The problem with bacteria is that wherever we find them they will stay. But, they will also hitch a ride on your hands, utensils, cutting boards and transfer over to other foods. Once there they will multiply if they are given enough time and are kept at the right temperature. Under ideal conditions, bacteria can multiply every 20 minutes or so. One bacterium becomes 2, then 4, then 8. Before you know it there’s so many that you don’t need a microscope, you need a bucket!

We can reduce the risk of all kinds of contamination by:

- Buying food from reputable suppliers;
- Storing all foods correctly;
- Keeping things clean and cleaning as we go;
- Keeping food in its packaging until needed;
- Avoiding unnecessary handling;
- Keeping low risk and high risk foods separate during storage, preparation and serving;
- Good personal hygiene;
- Well designed gallery area;
- Keeping equipment in good repair.
3. Food poisoning or food borne disease

Food poisoning is caused by the bacteria that can multiply on the food before it is eaten. Food poisoning usually takes hold within a few hours of the food being eaten. In fact some forms of food poisoning are so quick that the symptoms (vomiting for example) happen before the meal is fully consumed!

Food borne disease is rather slower taking days rather than hours to show itself. Symptoms are often much more complex and serious cases can lead to organ damage and failure.

Whether it is an allergic reaction, food poisoning, chemical contamination or some other food related danger the means to avoid it are simple:

- Use safe ingredients.
- Store them safely.
- Prepare and handle them correctly.
- Maintain a hygienic environment and dispose of waste appropriately.
4.4 Working environment

The working environment on a fishing vessel is almost always cramped and dangerous. Whether in the engine room, wheelhouse, in the hold or on deck there are hazards to our health and safety. Hazards that as experienced fishermen you manage and deal with on a day to day basis.

Why should the galley be any different? Just as the engine room and decks are kept free of clutter and appropriately clean, so should the galley. Just as there are safe ways of working on deck, there are safe ways of working in the galley.

An incident on deck can lead to a crewman suffering an injury. An incident in the galley can lead to the entire crew being laid low.

The equipment and food contact surfaces in the galley area should be clean and easily cleanable. Materials should be appropriate for a food preparation area, and the system of work used should keep low and high risk foods apart, waste in a safe place and everything must be easily accessible for cleaning.

Where possible there should be a route for food to come from storage, be prepped, cooked, dished out and served. Cooked food should go one way and waste another without crossing over. This is going to be a challenge on even the largest of fishing vessels, but with a little thought you will be able to improve on what you currently have.

Take a look at the galley area on your fishing boat. Are the surfaces and materials:

- Easily cleaned?
- Kept clean?
- Hardwearing?
- Waterproof?
- Light coloured (so dirt can be easily seen)?
- Undamaged (cracked, scoured rough)?

In short are they suitable for a food preparation area?

If not then what are you going to do about it?
4 / FOOD HYGIENE

4.5 Personal Hygiene

People are often the commonest source of food poisoning bacteria and hands are the easiest way of contaminating food. Food handlers, must maintain high standards of personal hygiene to avoid contaminating food and causing illness.

It is an absolute requirement that you follow the following simple but essential practices.

Wash Your Hands – before you start to prepare food, during food preparation and after preparation. When in doubt wash your hands.

Wash your hands before and after going to the toilet, after eating, smoking, sneezing, coughing, handling waste, chemicals of any kind, between handling high risk and low risk foods, handling external food packaging, handling known allergens etc.

Why do you need to wash your hands so frequently?

Almost everything you touch will carry a food hazard, particularly bacteria. When you smoke or eat you may easily pick up bacteria from your mouth. Sneezing and coughing can spread diseases. If you have been handling fish or shellfish on deck then you and your outer clothes will be contaminated.

And when we say "wash your hands" we don’t just mean a 20 second rinse under the tap. Effective hand washing is something to be learned and applied consistently. Seafish have an excellent guide and online video on hand washing that you should study – see appendix.

Personal hygiene is more than just bathing often and washing your hands.

1 Fit for work – have you recently suffered from food poisoning or had a food borne illness? If you have then you shouldn’t be preparing food for others until you are declared fit to do so;
2 Skin conditions and infections – if you have a weeping skin condition, a wound that cannot be properly covered by a waterproof plaster or anything else that could lead to contamination then you may be unfit to prepare food for others;
3 Food Preparation Protective clothing – that’s clothing to protect the food from you! It includes a head covering to keep hair and dandruff out of the food. It must be clean and hygienic. It doesn’t have to be white. It doesn’t have to have built in buoyancy nor protect you from the weather! It only needs to be clean and worn whenever you are working with food. And removed when you are not working with food.
4 Bad Habits – it’s a long list and I’m sure you don’t do any of these:
   a. Have fingers with dirty nails;
   b. Use your fingers to taste food;
   c. Re-use a spoon to taste food a second time;
   d. Blow into a bag to open it or lick your fingers to separate packaging materials;
   e. Eat, drink or smoke while preparing food;
   f. Cough, sneeze, scratch or pick any part of your anatomy!

There’s no law against doing any of these bad habits, except when you do them in a food preparation area or while handling food during preparation for others.
4.5 Personal Hygiene (continued)

The Law doesn’t mind too much if what you do only affects you. But when your actions put others at risk, the Law can get quite concerned. Things that will get you into trouble include:

- Wearing your food preparation protective clothing outside the food area, particularly when going to the toilet. Take it off, hang it up and when you come back you can put it back on;
- Not washing your hands after going to the toilet and before you enter the food preparation area;
- Smoking anywhere in the food prep area when handling food.

No sneezing, hair clean and covered, cuts covered, wear gloves if needed, no smoking.
4.6 Purchase, receipt and storage of food and supplies

Buy your food and other supplies from a reputable supplier with high standards of food hygiene. If the food delivered is poorly packed then cross contamination may have happened before you get the food and that will be difficult to detect.

Select the least hazardous materials or ingredients. Chicken pieces rather than a whole chicken avoids the need to cut up poultry and reduces the chance of cross contamination. Ready prepared vegetables mean less handling and less risk. Make sure that everything is in date enough to last out the entire trip. Canned goods usually have a long shelf life, at least until they are opened.

Chilled goods must still be chilled when delivered, and frozen foods should be rejected if they are not cold enough.

What is the state of the delivery vehicle and the driver? Unsatisfactory delivery vehicles or drivers may indicate unsatisfactory deliveries.

Of course you may buy all of your supplies yourself from your local supermarket. If that’s the case then you can watch out for cross contamination risks and threat to temperature control yourself.

Controls – simple steps you can take to ensure the food onboard your vessel is fit for purpose:

- No delays – as soon as the food arrives on the Quayside get it onboard and into storage;
- Inspect before placing into storage – are the use by dates ok? Is the packaging intact? Is it at the appropriate temperature?
  - Frozen food at or below -15C
  - Chilled food at or below 5C
4.7 Storage

Essentially there are three types of food storage — frozen, chilled and dry. And each food stuff should be put in the appropriate store. Failure to do so can lead to all kinds of problems caused by bacterial multiplication, growth of moulds, spoilage of food, pest infestations and taints.

Low and high risk foods in the same kind of store should be kept separate. In a chill store (refrigerator) keep the cooked chicken in a covered container up near the top. Keep the raw meat in its packaging in a container at the bottom. After all, who wants raw blood dripping onto their cooked chicken?

Highly perishable foods should be stored under chilled conditions. This may include cans and jars that have been opened. Bacterial multiplication can still occur, but it is more likely that spoilage bacteria will render the food unfit to eat before it becomes unsafe.

Frozen food should be kept below -18C.

Dry goods should be kept in a cool dry, vermin proof place that is kept clean. Hazards include dirty/contaminated delivery cartons, leaking containers and out of date stock. Soil from root vegetable and chemicals may also present a hazard.

Canned goods are usually stored in a dry store. Watch out for damaged, dented, rusty or out of date canned goods as they will present a hazard.

Chiller good practice guide — unless you are keeping your chilled goods in ice, and there are problems with that, you should follow this Chiller/Refrigerator good practice guide;

- The chiller should provide easy access for cleaning and stock rotation;
- The internal light should operate, how else will you see what is inside;
- Keep between 1C and 4C. Check this with a thermometer permanently in place inside the chiller;
- Defrost and clean according to the Galley Cleaning schedule;
- Do not overload the chiller. Leave space between products;
- Rotate stock — first in first out;
- Hot food must have cooled down before being placed in the chiller;
- Raw and high risk food at the bottom. Low risk foods at the top.
- Everything covered or in a container;
Temperature control is the single most important factor in avoiding food poisoning due to bacterial multiplication.

Some key temperatures:

- Frozen food = below -18°C.
- Chilled food = below 5°C and above 1°C.
- Hot holding = above 63°C.
- Danger Zone = 5°C to 63°C.
- Cooking = core temperature of the food reaches at least 75°C to ensure food poisoning bacteria are killed.
- Reheating cooked food = minimum temperature of 82°C at the core of the food to be safe.

Thawing frozen food – some foods can be cooked from frozen. Large pieces of meat/whole chickens will take a lot longer to thaw – that's why chicken pieces are easier/safer to handle.

Thawing a large piece of meat onboard a fishing vessel can be such a problem that it's best avoided at all costs. The Danger Zone (5°C-63°C) is the temperature range in which food poisoning bacteria multiply well. Try and minimise the time food spends in this zone — chill hot foods quickly and heat chilled foods quickly and thoroughly.

Some examples of how it can go wrong…

Stews and Gravy that are gently simmered in a deep pan will have cool spots where the temperature is below 63°C — a perfect breeding ground for common bacteria that produce a toxin (poison) that no amount of later cooking will destroy. The level of toxin increases in the gravy (or sauce or stew or soup) until there's enough there to cause a serious amount of food poisoning. To avoid this bring gravy up to temperature quickly and either keep well above 63°C or serve as soon as it's hot. Use a pan lid to avoid cold spots.

Cooked rice that is slowly cooled, kept overnight before being reheated may also contain a toxin producing bacteria that will have you vomiting a few hours after eating. Chill the rice quickly using cold water, keep chilled until you are ready to reheat it.

## Avoiding cross contamination

Eight ways to avoid cross contamination:

1. Keep raw food away from ready-to-eat food at all times;
2. Keep all food covered during storage;
3. Clean and disinfect food contact surfaces between tasks;
4. Use colour coded chopping boards and knives, and keep them clean between tasks;
5. Use single use disposable cloths or paper towels — you wouldn’t believe how quickly bacteria can infest an apparently clean but damp tea towel;
6. Wash your hands properly before and after handling raw food and before handling ready-to-eat food;
7. Maintain high standards of personal hygiene;
8. Store and dispose of waste correctly,
4.9 Safe water supplies

Safe and potable water for drinking and food preparation is essential for the health of the crew, which is why it is now a legal requirement.

Whatever system is used to supply safe drinking water onboard, whether it is bottled, shore-side delivered or produced onboard, it must be safe, potable and free from harmful contaminants and chemicals.

Problems can arise when perfectly safe water is stored if the storage system is not regularly checked – when was the last time checks were carried out on your vessel?

Water produced onboard by a filtration or distillation system may not always be safe for long term consumption as the seawater it is produced from may be contaminated by pesticides and other contaminants.

These issues are of less concern to fishing vessels that have short trip lengths, and who regularly inspect and maintain their water supply and storage equipment.

See MGN 397 (M+F) Guidelines for the Provision of Food and Fresh Water on Merchant Ships and Fishing Vessels for more information on this.
4.10 Cleaning and waste disposal

The purpose of cleaning is to keep food safer by removing contamination by bacteria, viruses, moulds, chemicals, allergens or physical contaminants.

Cleaning also keeps your working environment safer by, for example, removing slip and trip hazards. Cleaning can be broken down into two main types – clean as you go and scheduled cleaning.

Clean as you go is exactly what it seems to be. As you work in preparing and cooking food, serving and clearing up you should clean as you go. Clear, clear and disinfect your work area between tasks. Not only does this keep on top of the problem, it reduces the opportunity bacteria have to multiply.

Scheduled cleaning is the kind of thing you would do at the end of a shift – if there is such a thing on a fishing boat and at the end of a trip. You need to set aside time for the scheduled cleaning as “clean as you go” won’t be enough except for short trips.

Deeper cleaning requires the moving of equipment to get at the harder to reach areas to clean them. When this is done at the end of a trip it is an ideal time to look out for any signs of pest infestations and to carry out any required maintenance.

Cleaning = time + chemicals + effort + method

1. Time
Take your time cleaning. If it’s clean as you go then take the time to wipes spills as they occur. Take the time to wipe down surfaces regularly with a food safe disinfectant or sanitizer. And take the time to remove waste so it doesn’t build up.

If it’s a deeper clean then it will take more time and you’ll need to pick the right time so you can see the job through without interruption.

A Cleaning Schedule is a way of being certain what to do and when to do it. A cleaning schedule clearly posted in the galley area will act as a reminder to you and the rest of the crew that cleaning is important.

2. Chemicals
Water alone isn’t enough. Cleaning should be helped along by the correct use of disinfectants, detergents and/or sanitizers. Do you know the difference?

Detergents = essentially these are high tech soap solutions that are used to remove dirt and grease, and to reduce the level of bacteria. They can get your food contact surface looking nice and clean, but as they DO NOT KILL bacteria, the surface will not yet be safe.

Disinfectants = chemicals that kill bacteria and reduce their numbers to a safer level. Disinfectants do not work well where dirt and grease are still present so best to use a detergent first. Hot water (above 82°C) and steam make great disinfectants. An effective way of cleaning a washing up pad is to clean it with disinfectant and then disinfect it with a 3 minute soak in boiling water. This is best done before doing the washing up. A soak in bleach solution can achieve the same result in a couple of hours.

Sanitizers = chemicals that combine detergent and disinfectant properties if use correctly – usually on surfaces where there is little dirt or grease.

Use detergent then disinfectant for most things, and sanitizers for light work.
4.10 Cleaning and waste disposal (continued)

3. Effort
You cannot clean effectively without putting in some effort. A gentle wipe down of the galley table for instance just won’t do. Put a bit of effort into it. Wash and wipe, wash and wipe and then disinfect.

4. Method
In a commercial kitchen they recommend six stages to cleaning plates.

Pre-clean to remove food waste > main clean by washing up > rinse with warm water > disinfect with very hot water or a chemical soak > final rinse in hot water > allow to air dry or use disposable paper – most tea towels are awash with bacteria within an hour of first being used.

As a minimum though, your washing up should be followed by a hot rinse and leaving them to air dry. Air drying should take no more than 1hr and the dry pots should be put away.

Try and use a formal cleaning schedule that describes the who, what, when and how of cleaning.

Simple Do’s and Don’ts of cleaning:

- Follow a cleaning schedule;
- Use the correct cleaning chemicals and tools;
- Have a system and stick to it;
- Regularly clean food contact surfaces – chopping boards, utensils, equipment, plates, bowls, containers;
- Clean hand contact surfaces – door handles (inc refrigerator etc.), taps, controls, waste bin lids;
- Non food contact surfaces may only require detergent – walls, ceiling, floors, hobs;
- Use the right cloth for the job – cloths can carry mind blowing numbers of bacteria if they are kept damp.
  - Disposables are best and you must not use the same cloth for cleaning food contact surfaces and other areas such as floors, toilets etc.
  - Re-usable cloths – clean and disinfect after use, do not leave to soak for too long, air dry as quickly as possible;
- Finally: Follow a cleaning schedule.
4.11 Waste disposal and pests

Food waste must be removed from food areas as soon as possible and not allowed to build up.

Food waste should be collected in bins that have tight fitting lids and are easy to clean.

Food waste should be stored safely in areas that can be cleaned, are safe from pests, and do not cause other hazards until disposal.

Improperly stored food waste is the main cause of pest infestations such as insects and rodents.

Pests on a fishing board can be a problem if they become established as there are so many out of the way places they can hide. Rats and cockroaches can be a persistent problem so don’t leave waste food around to attract them in the first place, and look out for the signs of their presence.

If you find them onboard then you will need the services of a professional exterminator.

The solution to a mouse problem is not a ships cat. The cat is just as much a pest as the mice – there’s no place for a cat onboard a fishing boat.

Apart from waste, pests may also survive on the food in storage, so watch out for the tell tale signs of damage to packaging:

- Holes gnawed into packaging;
- Droppings (typically like black rice);
- Grease marks from rodent fur;
- Smell and odours – the smell of cockroaches in very distinctive.
Summary

Don’t give bacteria a free ride from a contaminated surface to your food;

- Avoid cross contamination;
- Wash hands;
- Use clean utensils;
- Use clean and if possible disposable cloths;
- Cleans as you go and scheduled cleaning;

Don’t allow bacteria to multiply to dangerous levels;

- Temperature control – stay out of the danger zone;
- Time – cook and serve is better than cook, reheat and serve;
- Clean and disinfect;
- Food safe disinfectant, bleach, very hot water;

Manage food hazards

- Physical, biological, chemical, allergens;
- Pests;
- Waste;
- Poor temperature control;
- Poor practices;
- Regular checks (for pests, damaged food, food out of date or temperature);

Bacteria are the main enemy. You cannot see them as they are too small. You cannot taste them and you can’t smell until there are billions on a cleaning cloth or your food is completely spoiled.

Assume they are everywhere and keep your guard up at all times.
Appendices

### General principles

| Wash and clean hands prior to food preparation and before handling high risk foods. |
| Wear food grade gloves as appropriate when handling cooked and uncooked foods. |
| Observe use by dates and reject food that is out of date. |
| Separate high risk, cooked and uncooked foods to avoid cross contamination. |
| Maintain fridge and freezer to ensure effective temperature control and avoid cross contamination. |
| Use food safe sanitiser and other cleaning agents correctly. |
| Keep the galley area clean, free of obstructions and in a fit for purpose state. |
| Keep all food storage areas clean, free from spills and monitor for signs of vermin. |

### Daily clean

| Wash and dry dishes and put away between meals. |
| All foodstuffs to be put away when not required. Overwrap and label any frozen or chilled foods removed from their original packaging. |
| Clean down all food contact surfaces (including worktops) with a spray and clean absorbent cloth. |
| Check that fridge, microwave etc. are clean. |
| Empty waste bin as appropriate |
| Clean down floors first by sweeping and then with cleaning solution. |
| Wipe down door handles and equipment handles with sanitiser. |
| Check that the galley is clean. Store soiled linen for laundering. |
### Weekly or end of trip

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Empty and clean cupboards. Check and rotate stock by date code.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empty and clean fridge. Check and rotate stock by date code.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Check freezer. Check and rotate stock by date code.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Check thoroughly for signs of pests.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clean all equipment that is not cleaned daily.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clean down walls and floors and disinfect as required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Check stock levels and reorder/replenish as needed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Check behind/underneath equipment that can be moved.</td>
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Did you find the information in this guide useful?
Is there anything we could have done better?

We would love to hear your feedback so please contact Mick Bacon on michael.bacon@seafish.co.uk with your comments.