

# Introductions to Food Safety

## What is Food Safety and Why Do We Care?

Food safety is the responsibility of every food handler, manager, and operator. It is the Division of Environmental Health's responsibility to provide the education and guidance to ensure the people of the U.S. Virgin Islands are protected from food-borne illnesses.

### What is a foodborne illness?

A foodborne illness is a sickness caused by eating contaminated food. The foodborne illnesses that most people contract are caused by microorganisms such as bacteria, viruses, fungi, and parasites.



The United States Centers for Disease Control estimates that each year roughly one in six Americans or about **48 million people get sick** from foodborne illnesses. Of these, **128,000 people are hospitalized**, and **3,000 die** from foodborne diseases.

Symptoms include (but are not limited to): vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain, stomach cramps, nausea, and fever.

## Five Main Risk Factors That Contribute to Foodborne Illness

- Purchase food from safe and approved sources
- Keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold
- Cook food to the correct temperatures
- Maintain good personal hygiene
- Clean and sanitize your equipment



## Five Key Controls For Risk Factors

- Demonstration of knowledge about food safety
- Employee health controls
- Controlling hands as a vehicle of contamination
- Time and temperature parameters for controlling pathogens
- Consumer advisory



## Cost of Foodborne Illness To An Operation

- Loss of customers and sales
- Negative media exposure
- Lawsuits and legal fees
- Increase insurance premiums
- Loss of reputation
- Lowered staff morale
- Staff missing work
- Staff retaining

