



# IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE FOR COMMERCIAL KITCHENS



**COLOR-CODED**  
FOODSERVICE SYSTEM



# INTRODUCING COLOR

Color-coding your storage and prep tools can help reduce the risk of cross-contamination. Reducing cross-contamination means safer food, and safe food means happier customers.

The Rubbermaid Commercial Products Color-Coded Foodservice System is available in seven colors. Simply match the utensil or storage container to the appropriate food for a safer, more sanitary kitchen.

## ► SUGGESTED FOOD PER COLOR

Below are the suggested food types to be used with each color. The Color-Coded Foodservice System can be *easily adapted to fit your unique needs or existing color-coding program*.



RAW MEAT



PRODUCE



RAW POULTRY



COOKED PROTEIN



SEAFOOD



DAIRY



ALLERGENS

# COLOR-CODE YOUR KITCHEN



► Storing food in the appropriate container helps prevent cross-contamination.

## IT STARTS WITH STORAGE

- **DITCH THE CARDBOARD**  
Remove food from its original packaging and place it in a color-coded container to help prevent the juices of uncooked foods from dripping onto ready-to-eat foods, which can cause bacteria growth.<sup>1</sup>
- **STAY IN STOCK**  
Square and round storage containers include graduation lines that make it easy to stay on top of your inventory.
- **STORE EVERYTHING**  
Storage containers aren't just for produce and poultry. Use a white container to store dairy or dry goods like flour or sugar.

<sup>1</sup> ©2016 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, [foodsafety.gov](https://www.foodsafety.gov)





- ▶ Foodborne illnesses can be caused by cross-contamination during preparation and cooking.<sup>2</sup> The Color-Coded Foodservice System makes it easy to keep food separated and safe, even during the busiest times.



- ▶ Preventing cross-contamination is critical to keep food safe.<sup>3</sup> Here are some additional tips to help avoid cross-contamination and reduce the risk of foodborne illnesses.

## PREP IN COLOR

Prep tools include high-heat spatulas, tongs, cutting boards, and a cutting board rack.

- **WASH THE BOARDS**  
The USDA recommends washing cutting boards after each use with warm soapy water, even when using color-coded cutting boards.
- **DON'T FLIP**  
Flipping a cutting board to use the other side seems efficient, but saving a minute or two isn't worth the cross-contamination risk. Use just one side of the cutting board, then wash it.
- **HIGH-HEAT VERSATILITY**  
The high-heat spatulas can withstand temperatures up to 500°F/260°C, which means you can use them to stir a boiling sauce, or sauté veggies (with the appropriate color of course).
- **USE THE CLEAN-REST™ FEATURE**  
The high-heat spatulas have a unique Clean-Rest™ feature that keeps the blade off of countertops when laid flat.

<sup>2</sup> ©2015 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

## AVOIDING CROSS-CONTAMINATION

- **CREATE PREP ZONES**  
If space allows, create dedicated prep zones in the kitchen to help avoid cross-contamination. That's one area to prep raw meat, another for produce, another for seafood, etc.
- **SEPARATE YOUR TOOLS**  
Hang or store color-coded tools separately by food type. Using the right tool is easier if that tool is already set apart, ready to use. Avoid dumping them in a single drawer, or stacking them on a shelf.
- **WASH STORAGE**  
Washing prep tools is a no brainer, but storage is easy to forget. When a storage container reaches empty, wash it out before putting new food in.

### KNOW THE COLORS

Make sure everyone working in the kitchen knows the color-coded system. Some staff may have used different colors in the past, so make sure to hang the color-coded poster where employees can refer to it easily.

<sup>3</sup> © 2012 National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation, ServSafe®, 6th Edition



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