FOUR REQUIREMENTS FOR KEEPING GERMS IN CHECK

CLEAN

This involves proper hand washing and cleaning and sanitizing equipment and storage bins, surfaces that contact food, and utensils that may be used to handle food. Floors should be kept clean, garbage removed as often as possible, and pest prevention steps should be in place.

SEPARATE

In order to prevent cross contamination, you need to have specific areas dedicated to specific foods on your shelves and in refrigerators. Shelf stable foods should be kept away from cleaning chemicals and all pantry stock should be rotated with oldest items in front and newest items in back. Store all meats and eggs on bottom shelves and ready to eat foods on top shelves. The rule is if the items should be stored top to bottom by how much it needs to be cooked. Therefore, salad greens will be separated on the top shelf and raw chicken will be on the bottom shelf.

COOK

Although your pantry may not be cooking ready to eat food, you should inform students of the correct cooking temperatures of food. Share the Temperature Chart Resource to help them determine what internal temperature is required for specific foods so harmful bacteria are killed and the food is safe for consumption.

CHILL

Make sure to refrigerate or freeze foods delivered to the pantry promptly. Keep refrigerator at or below 40 degrees Fahrenheit and monitor temperatures regularly. Also, inform students of the importance of proper cooling and refrigerating of foods they prepare at home.