aerobic bacteria. Bacteria that require oxygen.

allergy. When the body interprets a normally harmless protein as a dangerous substance and the body’s immune system then reacts to fight it.

anaerobic bacteria. Bacteria that thrive without oxygen.

bacteria. Single-celled organisms that reproduce by dividing.

biological hazards. Harmful organisms that cause foodborne illness.

chemical hazard. Any chemical that contaminates food.

contamination. The unwanted presence of harmful substances or levels of microorganisms in food.

facultative bacteria. Bacteria that can grow either with or without oxygen.

foodborne illness. Any illness caused by eating contaminated food.

infection. Illness resulting from ingesting live bacteria.

intoxication. Illness resulting from ingestion of bacteria that create or contain toxins, or poisonous substances, that are harmful to humans.

material safety data sheets (MSDS). A document that lists the composition of a chemical product, proper procedures for storage and handling, and what to do in the case of an emergency involving that product.

mold. A large family of single-cell fungi that grow on most foods and in many conditions.

parasite. An organism that lives in and feeds on the body of another live creature.

pathogen. An organism that is dangerous to humans.

pH. The measure of acidity or alkalinity of a substance.

physical hazards. Solid materials that pose a danger to the consumer when present in food.

potentially hazardous foods (PHF). Any foods that require time and temperature control for safety (TCS).

sanitation. The creation and practice of clean and healthy food-handling habits.

spore. A thick-walled, “super survival unit” produced by some bacteria to survive during unfavorable conditions.

temperature danger zone. The temperature range in which bacteria reproduce rapidly.

virus. A small organism that invades another cell and causes it to reproduce the virus.

water activity (a_w). The amount of water available for microbial growth in a product.

yeast. A microscopic fungus that consumes sugar and expels alcohol and carbon dioxide gas.