

# Produce Safety: Restaurant Safety Stats and Facts

## FACTS

Accidents caused by produce in a restaurant can range from minor injuries to serious health risks. Some potential accidents that could be caused by improper safety practices in a restaurant include:

1. **Slips and falls:** Wet produce, such as sliced tomatoes or lettuce, can create a slippery surface on the floor. If not properly cleaned up, this can lead to slips and falls by staff or patrons.
2. **Cuts and lacerations:** Handling sharp knives and other kitchen tools to cut or prepare produce can increase the risk of cuts and lacerations. This can be particularly dangerous if a kitchen worker is not properly trained in safe food handling practices.
3. **Choking:** Small pieces of produce, such as grapes or cherry tomatoes, can become lodged in a person's throat and cause choking. This risk can be minimized by cutting produce into smaller, bite-sized pieces before serving.
4. **Allergic reactions:** Some patrons may have allergies to certain types of produce, such as strawberries or kiwi. If a restaurant does not properly label menu items that contain these allergens, it can put patrons at risk of an allergic reaction.
5. **Foodborne illness:** Produce can harbor harmful bacteria like *E. coli* and *Salmonella*. If contaminated produce is used in dishes, it can cause foodborne illness in patrons.

## STATS

- It is crucial for restaurants to adhere to food safety guidelines and ensure that all produce is handled, stored,

and prepared correctly to prevent foodborne illnesses and ensure the safety of their customers.

- According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), foodborne illnesses affect approximately 48 million people in the United States each year, leading to 128,000 hospitalizations and 3,000 deaths. Every year, 4 million Canadians are affected by a food-borne illness.
- A new study focused on reducing food waste in the restaurant industry found that anywhere from four to 10 % of food purchased by restaurants never gets to customers, while 30 to 40 percent of the food served to customers never gets consumed.
- A study by Unilever showed that 72% of diners in the US care about how restaurants handle food waste, and 47% are willing to spend more at restaurants with an active food recovery program.
- Restaurants in the United States generate about 22 to 33 billion pounds of food waste each year.