
Overview

This standard is about the skills and knowledge needed for you to sharpen and maintain cutting tools for use in food and drink operations.

You will need the skills and knowledge to sharpen and maintain knives and cutting tools on manual or automated equipment in food and drink operations, eg the meat and poultry, fish and fresh produce industries.

Knives and cutting tools are used for a variety of purposes in food and drink operations. The cutting edges must be sharp to be effective, and this includes handheld knives and the cutting blades in equipment and automated machines.

You must understand the importance of safety procedures when sharpening cutting tools and the impact of blunt tools on production and quality.

This standard is for you if you work in food and drink operations and maintain and sharpen cutting tools ready for use.

Performance criteria

You must be able to:

1. identify the need for the cutting edge to be sharpened and choose the appropriate method for sharpening
2. assemble the materials necessary to carry out sharpening
3. sharpen the tool according to safety regulations and procedures making it suitable for the task
4. check that the required sharpness of the cutting edge has been achieved
5. clean the blade and cutting edge after sharpening to avoid residual contamination and risk to food safety
6. check that the edge of the cutting tool is sharp enough for the task
7. identify when the edge of the cutting tool needs further sharpening
8. make sure the blade and cutting edge present no risk of contamination to the products
9. follow the legal and regulatory requirements; health and safety, hygiene and environmental standards and instructions

Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

1. why sharp, effective edges on cutting tools are important
2. problems caused by using blunt edged cutting tools
3. what causes blunting and damage to cutting edges
4. methods of sharpening cutting tools
5. materials used to sharpen cutting tools
6. methods of checking that the required sharpness of cutting edges has been achieved and why it is important
7. how to clean blades and cutting edges to make sure products are not contaminated and why it is important
8. how to identify when cutting edges need corrective maintenance
9. methods of carrying out corrective maintenance on cutting edges
10. automated sharpening methods
11. checks to make sure that cutting edges are sharp and effective
12. methods of identifying when cutting edges are blunt
13. company procedures for dealing with worn, damaged or broken cutting tools
14. how maintenance of cutting tools can help with productivity
15. the importance of only using tools you have been trained to use
16. relevant legal and regulatory requirements, health and safety and hygiene standards and instructions relating to sharpening and handling of cutting tools and what happen if they might not be met

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