



# Flood Recovery **ANSWERS**

SDSU Cooperative Extension Service

## **Sanitize Dishes, Pans after Flood**

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Dishes, pots and pans that have been covered by floodwater should be carefully inspected, washed and disinfected before they are used again.

- ◆ inspect all items. Discard any items made of porous material, such as wood, plastic or rubber. Any dishes with deep cracks should be thrown away as well. These items can't be sanitized.
- ◆ Wash the remaining items in hot detergent solution, using a brush, if necessary, to remove dirt. If handles from frying pans and saucepans are removable, clean them separately. Equipment that can be taken apart should be cleaned in pieces.
- ◆ After sudsing and brushing, rinse in clear hot water. Then immerse in a chlorine solution to sanitize. Use a solution of two tablespoons of liquid household bleach to a gallon of water.
- ◆ To sanitize metal items, boil them in water for at least two minutes.
- ◆ Let all items air-dry. Do not dry them with a dishtowel.
- ◆ Kitchen items made of iron probably will be rusted. Remove rust by scouring with steel wool. After scouring and sanitizing iron items, season them before use to prevent food from sticking to them. Lightly coat the cooking surfaces with cooking oil and place them in an oven at 250 degrees Fahrenheit for two to three hours. The oil will seal the pores of the metal so food will not stick easily.
- ◆ If cupboards and food preparation surfaces were in contact with floodwater, clean and sanitize them before storing the clean dishes, pots and pans. Wash the surfaces with hot detergent solution. Then sanitize them using a solution of two tablespoons of liquid household bleach to a gallon of water.
- ◆ Bleach should not be mixed with other household cleaners, especially those containing ammonia, because deadly chlorine gas can form.

For more information contact your local Extension Office.

*This information was adapted from the Iowa State Extension Service.*

*<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/disasterrecovery/info/sanitizedishes.htm>*