

## **ATTACHMENT 1**

### **OBSERVATIONS TO SUPPORT BIENNIAL MEETING ISSUE SUBMITTAL**

As a 40 year restaurant professional, one of the least hygienic practices I have consistently observed, is the treatment of wiping cloths. There have been studies conducted that provide detailed scientific information on the topic.

Despite clear intent of the Food Code that a cloth be either “in use”, or “stored in sanitary solution”, this is not the practice in the restaurant world. Restaurant workers must multi task to be efficient in their work. To that end, the wet wiping cloth so prevalent is commonly stashed in a pants pocket, dirty apron, an armpit, or my favorite, the back of one’s pants!!

As a solution in the past, I have offered staff various holsters and bags to carry their cloths – none of these were made of materials that could be sanitized, and in the end, may have been contributing to the cloths’ cross contamination.

A method and/or vessel should be required that can be sanitized along with the wiping cloth, light and flexible enough for them to easily put a wiping cloth in it, and be able to transport it to the location to be “in use”, all while maintaining the efficiency desired by the employer.

## ATTACHMENT 2

# Identity and Numbers of Bacteria Present on Tabletops and in Dishcloths Used to Wipe Down Tabletops in Public Restaurants and Bars

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CATEGORIES: [FOOD SERVICE](#), [CLEANING MEASUREMENT](#), [IEQ MEASUREMENT](#), [HEALTH & HYGIENE](#)

TAGGED: [MEASUREMENT](#), [DISINFECTING](#), [SANITIZING SURFACES](#), [BACTERIA](#), [CLEANING MEASUREMENT](#), [FOOD SERVICE](#), [RESTAURANTS](#), [BARS](#), [E. COLI](#), [TABLETOPS](#), [DISHCLOTHS](#)

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### Abstract

Dishcloths used in restaurants and bars (23 restaurant cloths, 14 bar cloths) were collected, and tabletops (10 restaurants) were swabbed, to determine the occurrence of bacteria. Coliforms were isolated from 89.2% of dishcloths and 70% of tabletops. *Escherichia coli* was isolated from 54.1% of dishcloths and 20% of tabletops. The numbers of heterotrophic plate count bacteria (HPC) and coliforms were significantly higher in bars than in restaurants. The levels of HPC found in dishcloths were 25-fold and coliforms were 60- to 120-fold lower than the levels found in home dishcloths reported in previous studies. The numbers recovered from restaurant tabletops were also lower than those from household kitchen countertops. The most commonly isolated genera from dishcloths in restaurants and bars differed from those in homes. **The numbers found for heterotrophic plate count bacteria (HPC) on restaurant tabletops were 45-fold greater after cleaning than prior to cleaning.** There were also a 19-fold greater number of coliforms and twice as many *E. coli*. Therefore, although the mandatory use of sanitizers in restaurants and bars may have reduced contamination levels and caused a shift in the microbial populations present in food service establishments, the implication of dishcloths in contamination of tabletops through cleaning suggests that current monitoring of linen sanitation solutions might be inadequate.

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### **ATTACHMENT 3**

#### **Occurrence of Bacteria in Dishcloths Used in Restaurants and Survival of Respiratory Viruses on Produce**

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Pg 35

Greater numbers of bacteria were found on tabletops that had been cleaned with a dishcloth than before cleaning (Fig.1.5.3). Approximately  $3.56 \times 10^3$  cfu/156 cm<sup>2</sup> heterotrophic plate count bacteria were found before cleaning. This number increased to  $1.6 \times 10^5$  cfu/156 cm<sup>2</sup> (45-fold increase) after the tables were wiped down with a dishcloth. Likewise, the numbers increased for total coliforms (4.9 to 92.2 cfu/156 cm<sup>2</sup> ) and E. coli (< 1 to 2.3 cfu/156 cm<sup>2</sup> ) following cleaning.

Pg 42

Although this study was fairly small, it raises several interesting questions. For instance, although the bacterial numbers found in food service establishments were lower than the number found in homes, considerable numbers of coliforms and E. coli were still present. This could represent a danger to the public, especially for populations at risk including the very young, the elderly and the immunocompromised. Also, because the bacterial numbers found on tabletops after wiping with a cloth were higher than the numbers prior to cleaning, the use of such cloths in restaurants and bars could contribute to contamination of surfaces and to the spread of potentially harmful bacteria. Therefore, more careful monitoring of linen sanitization solutions used by food service establishments such as restaurants and bars might be called for