

# Foodservice Updates

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## Food prep and packaging that suit the times

Any chef would love to have their dishes prepared, plated and enjoyed by customers within a period of a few minutes. But these days, that is an unusual scenario. The pandemic has not only spurred reinvention in restaurant service structures. It is also necessitating changes in how food is prepared due to the lag time between when a food is cooked and when a customer is eating it. Pret A Manger has met that challenge by incorporating sous vide into some of its ghost kitchens. The brand just partnered with Cuisine Solutions to launch a sous vide ghost kitchen in New York, the Spoon reports. By cooking and keeping food at a stable temperature, sous vide helps ensure a food doesn't lose quality during the lag time between preparation and consumption – think of a chicken breast that becomes dry and rubbery if it's not eaten soon after grilling. In Pret A Manger's case, sous vide also helps ease labor strains by having food prepared centrally and minimizing additional work required by kitchen staff. Throughout the past year, you have no doubt reviewed and reworked your menu to ensure it travels and represents your brand well when consumers aren't eating your food on-premise. If there are popular and profitable (but not very portable) items you have had to remove from the menu until customers feel safe about eating in your dining room, are there preparation or packaging adaptations that could enable you to bring those items back and preserve the experience consumers have when they eat a meal in your dining room?



## Crush curbside pickup

If you're struggling to make delivery work, embracing and fine-tuning your curbside pickup service this year could be your best way to reap the benefits of digital orders (like bigger check totals and the ability to retain customer data) while avoiding the disadvantages of third-party delivery. Operators have been making large investments in the digital technology that will make curbside pickup work, according to a Restaurant Dive interview with Jean Chick, principal and U.S. restaurant & food service leader at Deloitte. She said consumers are more apt to go for it if they live within a 10-mile radius of the restaurant because it may end up being faster than waiting for delivery. Curbside offers benefits to both restaurants and customers: It gives a restaurant the ability to control their interaction with a customer and make it a fast, safe, positive, data-rich one. It's a digital experience, so it is quick, but it is also personal, which can help convert customers into regular visitors. Could you enhance your curbside pickup experience this year?



## Retain customer data in 2021

Your customers' preferences are what keep them coming back to you – and are what tell you what items to promote to whom and when. Restaurants often lose ownership of that critical data when partnering with third-party delivery companies, but they may be able to find more ways around that this year. Industry analysts are seeing potential for a rise in unbranded delivery partnerships with restaurants in 2021. In practice, this means customers would have to visit a restaurant's website to place an order and access delivery – at which point the third-party delivery is triggered on the back end. It takes delivery off of a restaurant's shoulders but also ensures it retains the customer information that can help them formulate their sales and marketing plans.



## Strawberry shortcake

### *Ingredients:*

Southern Style Biscuit Dough  
On Top Original  
Allen Strawberry Whole Fruit Filling

## How sweet it is

As Valentine's Day approaches, your customers will be looking for reasons to treat themselves and their significant other. But at the same time, many of them want to avoid sugar – as the current demand for allulose, a new natural sugar replacement, has been demonstrating. Your dessert menu can provide some appealing options that don't pile on added sugar. Look to fiber-rich fruits – whether fresh, frozen or canned – to bring natural sweetness to your dessert menu without the extra guilt.

# Food Trends



### *Instructions:*

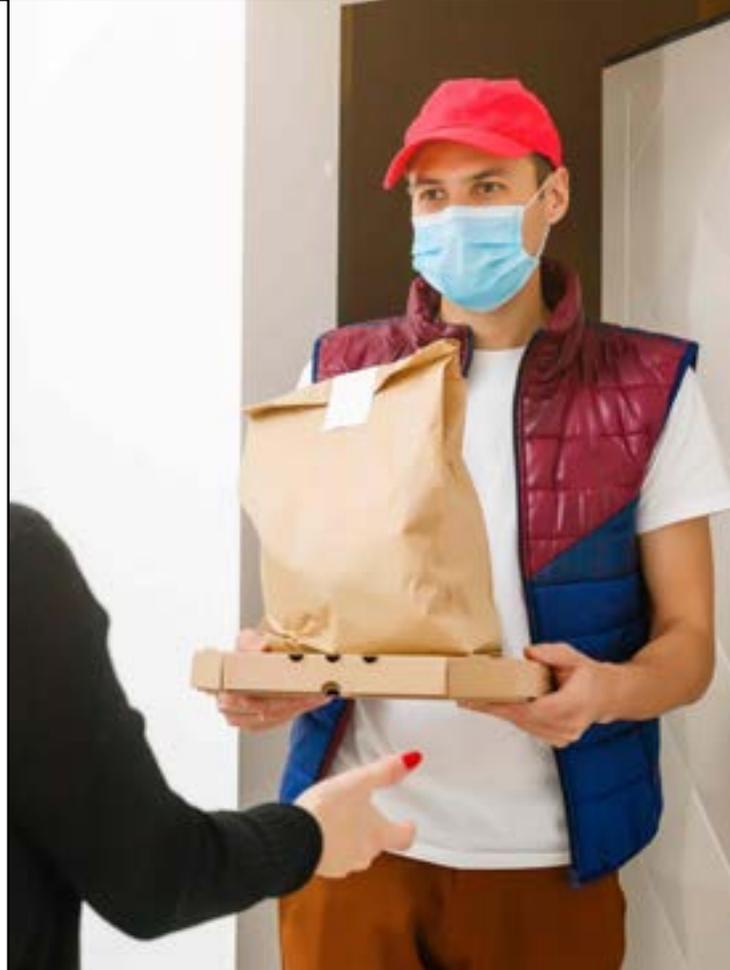
1. Keep product frozen at 0 f to -10 f until ready to use.
2. Pan frozen dough on paper lined sheet pan. Full sheet pan: individual - 8 x 5; clustered - honeycomb of 51. Half sheet pan: individual - 5 x 4; clustered - honeycomb of 21.
3. Bake until golden brown. Conventional oven: 375 f - 20 to 25 minutes. Convection oven: 325 f - 10 to 15 minutes. Bake times will vary. Adjust times accordingly.
4. Place warmed biscuits in large ramikin or other suitable dish, top with strawberry filling, fresh strawberries, On Top topping, and dust with sugar.

Recipe and photo courtesy of Rich's



## Food safety to go

At a time when off-premise sales are essential to the survival of so many foodservice businesses, a restaurant's health and safety practices need to carry over onto the road. Ensure your delivery drivers wear masks at pick-up and drop-off, provide hand sanitizer at delivery pick-up points and ask drivers to use it before handling an order. Check to make sure delivery hot bags and vehicles are cleaned regularly. To protect food on the road, place cold and hot foods in separate bags, use tamper-proof packaging, and ensure each food item is in a container that keeps an item at its intended temperature as well as possible. Delivery drop-offs should continue to be zero-contact. Finally, assure your customers that their food is being delivered by people who value their safety. On social media, share photos of the precautions you are taking to protect an order's journey between your restaurant and customers.

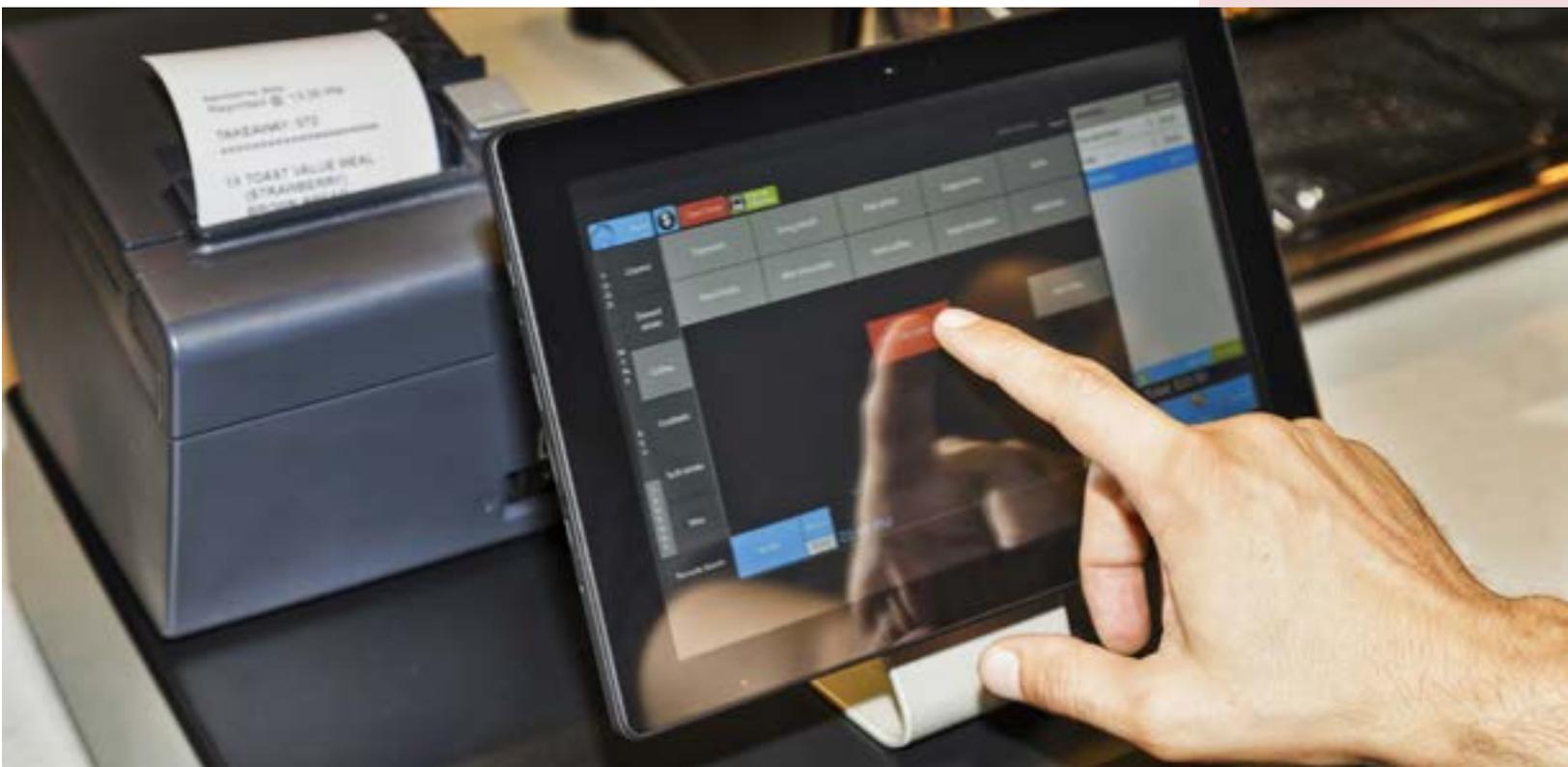


**#FoodSafety**

# #FoodSafety

## How safe is your tech?

The adoption of new technology in restaurants used to be all about maximizing efficiency. But in the midst of a pandemic, much restaurant technology turns out to be just as beneficial in protecting the safety of employees and customers. Whether you're considering adopting a cloud-based, decentralized POS system, a new kitchen display system, or simply an ordering app, these resources minimize the number of shared surfaces people must touch. Further, by digitizing communication throughout your business, they eliminate the need for face-to-face interactions with customers and employees alike. No more greasy smudges on order slips passed among team members, drawn-out conversations with guests looking to customize a dish, or extra interactions with kitchen staff about a customer's food allergy. Where are your food safety pain points? Chances are technology can help ease them -- and boost your efficiency in the process.



# Foodservice Updates

## Where's the beef?

Make way for plant-based meat. While the rise of meat-free options is hardly new, these foods have gotten a major boost in momentum lately. According to new research, the plant-based meat market is on track to grow 93 percent between now and 2025 – its most substantial growth to date. Growing consumer interest in protecting both personal health and the environment is driving the trend. Restaurants have plenty to gain from it – even if plant-based meats occupy a small fraction of their menus. For one, prices of plant-based meats are coming down, aligning more closely with the cost of animal proteins. Impossible Foods recently cut wholesale prices on its plant-based burgers and sausages by 15 percent – its second price cut in less than a year, according to CNBC. The plant-based market is also an appealing one for restaurants. According to research from Packaged Facts, consumers of plant-based foods (whether all the time or even semi-regularly) tend to have the resources to pay for more premium foods and a willingness to pay for them. They skew younger (think Millennials and Generation Z) and are open to trying new products. They also tend to value eating fresh, healthy foods themselves and providing them for their children. Restaurants who want to develop this market can build menu offerings and promotions with those traits in mind: A restaurant near a college campus might push the boundaries of its plant-based menu items, offering creative combinations and edgy global flavors, while one serving families might assemble plant-based meal kits or bundles that help parents ensure they are feeding their families healthfully.



Team Four/Value 4 provides customized Supply Chain Solutions and Business Consultancy to the foodservice owners and operators throughout the United States. To find out how we can help your business save money contact us at:

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