T.A.C.T. W.I.N.S. in Food Safety and Sanitation

Every year, an estimated 75 million cases of foodborne illnesses occur in the United States. Because of this, cleanliness and sanitation are essential for ensuring the safe production of foods. A comprehensive cleaning and sanitation program is necessary to prevent contamination, control allergens, and meet regulatory requirements in the food industry. Fortunately, outbreaks that result from poor sanitation are preventable with the help of good systems and the right products.

According to the USDA, sanitation maintains or restores a state of cleanliness and promotes hygiene for the prevention of foodborne illness. Implementing cleaning and sanitation solutions that work starts with understanding the basics. The acronym TACT WINS summarizes the components and considerations for an effective cleaning program. It refers to:

TIME – Contact time on the surface being cleaned. The amount of time a sanitizer stays on a surface is critical; too long and the product could lose its effectiveness and build a residue on the surface or too little time and the soil and bacteria might not be removed.

ACTION – Physical force exerted onto the surface. Some products may require manual brushing, mechanical action, foaming, or high pressure.

CONCENTRATION – Type and amount of cleaner used. Achieving the correct concentration through proper dilution of cleaning and sanitizing chemicals is critical for their effectiveness.

TEMPERATURE – Each cleaning solution has a temperature range in which it should be applied to get the effectiveness desired. Assessing the temperature of water or cleaner that you can use on a surface beforehand is essential.

WATER – Water is used at various steps in the cleaning and sanitizing process to remove soils, dilute detergents, and rinse sanitizers. Be mindful of the type of water used; hardness can impact the effectiveness of cleaning and sanitizing products.

INDIVIDUAL – All individuals involved in the cleaning process must have appropriate training and understand the steps involved, including appropriate personal protective equipment. Best practice is to have these steps clearly outlined in written procedures used to train employees and easily referenced in the future.

NATURE OF SOIL – There are five basic kinds of soils the food industry must deal with: fats/grease, proteins, minerals, sugars, and complex carbohydrates. The nature of the product being manufactured will determine the selection of cleaning and sanitizing products and the appropriate approach required.

SURFACE – This is the composition of material being cleaned. Equipment surfaces, such as steel, aluminum, plastic, and rubber, can be affected by cleaners and sanitizers.

WEST BEND®

THE SILVER LINING®