

## Sanitizing with Household Products

Joanne Cooper  
Family and Consumer Sciences Agent  
UF/IFAS Extension St. Johns County

Is there a difference between sanitizing and cleaning?

Cleaning removes food and other dirt from a surface. Sanitizing reduces pathogens on a surface to safe levels so that illness is unlikely to occur.

It is very important to sanitize after utilizing your kitchen for food preparation. The proper steps include spraying the surface with sanitizer of choice, leave the sanitizer on the surface for the suggested amount of time, then allowing the surface to air dry OR dry with a clean paper towel (not dishrag!).

What home products can you use to sanitize your kitchen? In short, chlorine bleach, vinegar or hydrogen peroxide.

### Steps for using vinegar OR hydrogen peroxide to sanitize:

#### Option 1 – using heat

1. Heat either 4 oz (1/2 C) white distilled vinegar **OR** hydrogen peroxide in a sauce pan to 150°F or 66°C. (Handle **CAREFULLY** when heating as the liquids will be warm but not hot.)
2. Pour **warm** solution into a spray bottle.
3. Immediately spray on area to be sanitized.
4. Let sit for 1 minute, then wipe with a clean paper towel.

#### Option 2 – no heat

1. Use either 4 oz (1/2 C) white distilled vinegar **OR** hydrogen peroxide.
2. Pour **room temperature** solution into a spray bottle.
3. Spray onto area to be sanitized.
4. To be effective the solution **MUST sit for 10 minutes**, then wipe with a clean paper towel.

**Warning: Never mix hydrogen peroxide and vinegar together.**

### **Tips for using Chlorine Bleach**

- The amount needed is very small and no chlorine residue will be left behind using a concentration of 1 scant teaspoon of chlorine bleach to 1 quart of water.
- Chlorine reacts quickly and becomes inactive quickly. Detergents and dirt inactivate chlorine; surfaces must be cleaned first to ensure effective sanitation.
- Chlorine solutions need to be made at least weekly and must be stored in a dark place.
- Do not use chlorine with added fragrance—this is not food-safe.

### **Reference:**

Cleaning and Sanitizing the Kitchen: Using Inexpensive Household Food Safe Products:

<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/fy1280>.

**July 2018**