Separate Separating foods that are ready–to–eat from those that are raw or that might otherwise contain harmful microbes is key to preventing foodborne illness. Attention should be given to separating foods at every step of food handling, from purchase to preparation to serving. Store raw seafood, meat, and poultry below ready–to–eat foods in your refrigerator. Separate Foods When Preparing and Serving Food Always use a clean cutting board for fresh produce and a separate one for raw seafood, meat, and poultry. Separate Foods When Shopping Place raw seafood, meat, and poultry in plastic bags.