

CHAPTER 4

FLOW OF FOOD

Good food safety practices begin with purchasing from approved suppliers and properly inspecting food deliveries upon arrival. Careful attention to these steps can dramatically reduce foodborne illness risk factors, food cost, and ensure food quality. All deliveries must be immediately and thoroughly inspected, then quickly and correctly stored. If food is unsafe when received, there is no way to make it safe to serve later.

When accepting food deliveries, use these general guidelines to ensure food arrives in a safe condition, and remains so while being checked in and stored:



- Deliveries should be scheduled during off-peak times - not during busy meal periods - so employees have time to carefully examine items and move them quickly into storage. It is difficult to devote the proper care and attention to this step during busy service times.
- Speak to a manager or supervisor about the specific procedures where you work, including who is responsible for accepting deliveries, rejecting questionable items, and safely storing food.
- Ensure TCS foods have been transported under proper refrigeration or frozen conditions.
- While unloading, ensure that all food items have been transported for delivery in clean conditions. Check food packaging and the delivery vehicle for signs of insect or rodent activity. These pests carry disease-producing bacteria and parasites that can contaminate food.
- Ensure that non-food items, such as cleaning chemicals, are safely packaged and appropriately separated from food to prevent contamination during transit.
- Carefully inspect all cartons and containers - broken, crushed or otherwise damaged packaging may be contaminated and should not be accepted.
- Open sealed boxes and inspect individual food items.
- Using a calibrated food thermometer, check refrigerated food temperatures to verify they are received at 41°F or lower.
- Frozen food should be delivered frozen solid. Partially thawed food can lose quality and freshness, or worse allow harmful microorganisms to multiply. Reject frozen foods with ice crystals or signs of thawing.
- Keep the receiving area secure, clean and well-lighted.

WHEN THE DELIVERY ARRIVES

General guidelines when receiving food deliveries:

Schedule deliveries during slow periods (not a lunch time) when food products can be carefully examined and moved quickly into storage.

Check temperatures in refrigerated shipments, particularly frozen foods which should be delivered in a freezer section or freezer truck.

Sample random food containers and check contents for damage, contamination and possible unacceptable food quality.

Observe the condition of the delivery truck; mud, dirt, water, oil stains, or foul odors, may indicate that food products inside were exposed to contaminants while in transit. Also, check for signs of insect or rodents. These pests can be carriers of disease and parasites.

Reject products if cartons or containers are broken, crushed or otherwise damaged as their contents may be contaminated.

Beware of carriers that include non-food items in the shipment. Non-food items like chemicals may contaminate food products.

Maintain the receiving area clean and well lit.

Be sure to inspect "key drop," or after hours deliveries, immediately upon arrival the next business day.

Inspecting and Accepting Deliveries

When accepting deliveries, use your sense of touch, smell and sight to help get the job done quickly and efficiently. Judge delivered food items for acceptable quality. If it smells, looks, or feels wrong, reject it.

Reject food when:

- Signs of pests are present – live or dead insects, cartons looked chewed, etc.
- Ice crystals have formed inside or on frozen food packaging
- Containers are torn, broken or damaged
- Expiration / use-by dates have passed
- Dry goods packages are have visible liquid damage or feel wet.

Using the temperature checking techniques from Chapter 5 of this manual, check food temperatures upon delivery using the chart below and verify critical limits are met then quickly get all foods into to storage where they will be held at 41°F or lower.

| FOOD TYPE | RECEIVING TEMPERATURE |
|--------------------------|---|
| Meat | Receive at 41°F or lower |
| Poultry | Receive at 41°F or lower |
| Fish | Receive at 41°F or lower |
| Eggs | Receive at ambient air temperature of 45°F or lower, check for quality and condition |
| Dairy products | Receive at 41°F or lower; check the expiration or use-by date |
| Shellfish, live | Receive on ice or at ambient air temperature of 45°F or lower, check for quality and live condition |
| Shellfish, prepared | Receive at 41°F or lower |
| Crustacea, live | No temperature requirement; check for quality and live condition |
| Crustacea, prepared | Receive at 41°F or lower |
| Packaged TCS food | Receive at 41°F or lower |
| Produce, whole | No temperature requirement; check for quality and condition |
| Produce, cut or prepared | Receive at 41°F or lower |
| Frozen food | Receive frozen solid; check for ice crystals or signs of thawing |

If your job responsibilities include receiving and inspecting food deliveries, ask your employer how to handle deliveries that are of unacceptable quality.

Safe Food Storage

Establishments must quickly check food deliveries to ensure invoices match actual goods, confirm goods are of acceptable quality, and store foods quickly into the appropriate refrigerated, frozen or dry storage area. Ensure all storage areas are clean, secure, and holding foods at proper temperature.

- **Protect** - all food while being transported, stored, prepared, held, displayed, or served must be protected against contamination. Store food only in secure, protected areas designed and intended for food storage. Never store food in restrooms, utility rooms, garbage areas, or public spaces and hallways.
- **FIFO** - stands for "First In, First Out," and is a common method of stock rotation. It means using food products in the order in which received so the oldest inventory is always used first. To ensure proper stock rotation, label all foods upon delivery with the received date.
- **Stocking** - be careful to load slotted shelves so that air easily circulates and it keeps food at correct temperature. Tightly packed shelves can insulate food and prevent proper storage temperatures. Store all food products a minimum of six inches above the floor, on clean shelves or racks, and allow space between food items. Allow clearance between the stored food and walls and ceiling.
- **Containers** - keep stored foods in the original packaging whenever possible. When re-packing into working containers for storage or use, take care to safely transfer food to a clean, food-grade container and label the container with a common food name, and the date it must be discarded.
- **Separate** - be very careful to separate raw foods and ready-to-eat foods, and store them so that raw food cannot cross-contaminate ready-to-eat food. Store all raw foods below or away from cooked or ready-to-eat foods.



Correct food storage is critical to safely operating any restaurant or food service establishment. Consistent standards for proper cleanliness, temperature control, storage conditions, and stock rotation must be maintained. Failure to do so can cause not just costly food quality problems like contamination and spoilage, but may also pose serious danger to customers from insect and rodent infestation, and other foodborne illness risks.

BEST EMPLOYEE PRACTICE

Deliveries

Food should be received during slower business periods so that it can be thoroughly inspected for signs of contamination prior to acceptance and be stored quickly so that it doesn't spend excessive time in the Temperature Danger Zone. If it appears as though food is frequently delivered during busy periods, notify your manager or supervisor so that corrections in delivery times can be made.

CHAPTER FOUR REVIEW QUIZ

True or False

1. T____ F____ It is not necessary to label stored food with a date.
2. T____ F____ FIFO is a foodborne illness.
3. T____ F____ Lunch rush is a good time for deliveries because lots of employees are on duty.
4. T____ F____ If food is unsafe when received; it can be made safe later.

Complete the Sentence

1. Reject food when containers are _____, ice crystals are in packaging or on food, signs of pests are present, use-by / expiration dates have passed and when dry goods are damp or wet.
2. FIFO stands for _____.
3. When food is stored properly, ready-to-eat foods must be stored _____ or away from raw foods.
4. Frozen food should be delivered _____ solid.

Multiple Choice

1. The proper temperature for meat at delivery is:
 - a. 45°F or lower.
 - b. at room temperature.
 - c. 41°F or lower.
 - d. ambient (air) temperature of the truck.
2. When inspecting a produce delivery, which of the following is acceptable:
 - a. cut produce at room temperature.
 - b. produce boxes that are wet and damaged.
 - c. produce from a foreign country without a label.
 - d. whole produce in good condition at room temperature.
3. A food thermometer is required for each of the following except:
 - a. when checking in or receiving food deliveries.
 - b. when cooling food for overnight storage after a meal period.
 - c. when making a trash run.
 - d. when calibrating a thermometer.
4. The receiving area should be well-lighted, secure and _____.
 - a. open.
 - b. clean.
 - c. dirty.
 - d. filled with boxes.