

OS/03: Storage of food

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Storage facilities must offer protection against contamination, deterioration and damage.
- 1.2 Contamination may well be attributed to micro-organisms, chemicals, physical objects and/or pest infestation. Cross-contact may occur where allergenic ingredients are stored with other foods.
- 1.3 Deterioration may occur if food spoilage organisms are allowed to grow thereby causing chemical changes within the food.
- 1.4 Damage may be caused by the ingress of food pests or through incorrect storage.
- 1.5 To ensure that foods are stored safely the working temperatures of refrigerators, freezers etc. must be monitored on a regular basis and subsequently recorded on the appropriate control sheet. Refer to **TM/04: Storage of food.**

2.0 Chilled storage of food

- 2.1 The legal requirement for the storage of chilled foods is 8°C, however some manufacturers/ suppliers may indicate that certain foods need to be stored at a lower temperature in order to ensure product safety, in this event the temperature must be identified and adhered to.
- 2.2 Raw and cooked foods must be kept apart to eliminate the risk of cross-contamination.
- 2.3 Raw meat, poultry and wet fish must be stored in containers and effectively covered to prevent spillage and the risk of drips.
- 2.4 If raw and cooked foods are stored in the same appliance then 'high-risk' cooked foods must always be stored above raw foods.
- 2.5 Food must be protected from contamination and therefore must be covered at all times.
- 2.6 All food must be dated, labelled and in-date.
- 2.7 Regular checks must be undertaken to identify the shelf-life of foods. Any food that has passed its 'use-by' date must be discarded.

3.0 Frozen storage of food

- 3.1 The legal temperature requirement for the storage of frozen foods is -18°C.
- 3.2 Raw and cooked foods must be kept apart during storage in order to reduce the risk of cross-contamination.
- 3.3 In the event that raw and cooked foods are stored in the same appliance then cooked foods must always be stored above raw foods.
- 3.4 Frozen foods must be protected from contamination throughout storage and therefore must be effectively wrapped at all times.
- 3.5 All food must be dated, labelled and in-date.
- 3.6 Regular checks must be undertaken to identify the shelf-life of foods. Any food that has passed its 'best-before' date must highlighted and the appropriate action taken.

SECTION 2 - OPERATIONAL STANDARDS

4.0 Dry storage of food

- 4.1 Upon storage of dry goods, the storage area must be;
- well ventilated;
 - cool & dry;
 - well lit; and
 - clean & tidy.
- 4.2 All open foods must be stored off the floor, a minimum height of 18 inches would be regarded as good practice, in order to reduce the risk of contamination, pest infestation and to aid cleaning of the immediate surrounding floor area.
- 4.3 Once opened, all part-used packs of food must be effectively resealed or decanted into a clean airtight container with a lid.
- 4.4 On decanting of such foods they must be clearly labelled and an appropriate shelf life (e.g. 'best-before' date) must be calculated and affixed.

5.0 Fresh fruit and vegetables

- 5.1 It is regarded as 'best practice' to decant fresh fruit and vegetables into clean and hygienic food-safe containers.
- 5.2 Fruit and vegetables must be checked on a regular basis to identify deterioration in quality of which must subsequently be discarded.

6.0 Stock rotation

- 6.1 Effective stock rotation ensures that food is not wasted and therefore maximises profit and reduces customer complaints
- 6.2 The fundamental principle of stock rotation is 'First In, First Out' (FIFO)
- 6.3 Stock rotation of food involves the use of food with the earlier 'use-by' or 'best-before' dates first.
- 6.4 When placing food into storage dates must be checked
- 6.5 Upon delivery those foods with the longer shelf lives must be placed to the back of the shelf and those with the shorter shelf life must be brought to the front of the shelf.
- 6.6 Always decant food with the shortest shelf life from storage first.
- 6.7 Remove any out-of-date stock from storage

Version	Date of issue	Author	Endorsed by
V3	June 2019	Graham Day; Health & Safety Adviser	Graham Hakes; Senior Health & Safety Adviser