

**HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY - COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES
701 OCEAN ST., ROOM 312, SANTA CRUZ, CA (831) 454-2022**

FOOD RECEIVING AND STORAGE

INTRODUCTION

To ensure your customers receive safe and wholesome foods, proper inspection and storage of the food is required.

INSPECTION UPON RECEIPT

Food must be inspected as soon as it is received and prior to using, storing or reselling. Accept food only if it meets the following conditions:

- The food was prepared by and received from an approved source. (Approved source is a county, state or federally permitted food facility. **Food prepared in a private home is not an approved source**).
- The food is in a wholesome condition.
- The food is in containers that are not damaged.
- The food or containers are not contaminated with insects, rodents or other vermin.
- Perishable foods are delivered within temperature requirements. (Hot foods 140° F. or above, cold foods 41° F or below)
- Frozen foods have no visible signs of thawing and refreezing (i.e. frost or ice crystals on boxes or food).
- Shell eggs are clean and unbroken.
- Raw or raw frozen molluscan shellfish containers are properly labeled with the species, quantity, harvest site, date of harvest and name and certification number of the harvester or original shipper or both. (Keep labels for at least 90 days).

PROPER STORAGE METHODS

The food storage areas should be large enough to store all of the food. Non-food items should be stored separately from food items.

- Store all food at least six (6) inches off the floor (except for bulk containers).
- Containers may be stored on dollies, racks, or pallets not meeting the height requirements if they are easily moveable.
- Store all food containers so they are protected from dirt, insects or rodents, overhead leakage, or other sources of contamination.
- Returned or damaged food items should be stored separately.
- Bulk food that is not stored in the original container should have the common name of the product on the storage container.
- Clean and sanitize all unused containers and utensils prior to storage.

UNPACKAGED FOODS

Unpackaged foods may be displayed for customer self-service under certain conditions. Types of foods that may be allowed to be displayed in an unpackaged state are produce (in a grocery store), bulk grains, pasta and dried fruits in self-service bins, and foods in salad bars or buffet lines.

PRODUCE

- Whole, uncut produce may be displayed on open counters or containers. Cut produce must be packaged and may need to be refrigerated.

BULK FOODS

- Bulk foods in self-service containers shall have tongs, scooper or other dispensing utensil with a handle. The container should be labeled with the common name of the product and a list of ingredients.

READY-TO-EAT FOODS

- Ready-to-eat foods, such as in salad bars and buffet lines must be:
 - shielded by a sneeze guard,
 - stored in a container with a tight fitting lid,
 - or dispensed from a mechanical dispenser.
- A utensil such as tongs, spoon, scooper, pastry papers or other approved means of dispensing shall be used.

PROPER STORAGE EQUIPMENT

Food storage equipment includes containers, counters, shelves, tables, and refrigeration units. Make sure all food storage equipment is:

- In good condition and properly functioning.
- Made of durable, nontoxic, noncorrosive, nonabsorbent, and easily cleanable material.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information about food protection, please contact Environmental Health Service at (831) 454-2022.