



FOOD HANDLING: FOOD RECEIVING AND STORAGE

INTRODUCTION

Safely receiving and storing food is just as important as preparing and serving. Sometimes it is necessary to reject deliveries due to improper packaging, expired labels, or partially thawed frozen food. It is part of the responsibility of the transportation and manufacturing companies to deliver high quality and safe food but sometimes this does not happen.

WHEN TO REJECT A DELIVERY

When receiving deliveries of food products, it is important to thoroughly inspect every package. Reject deliveries of:

- Hot food that is cooler than 135°F (57°C)
- Cold food that is warmer than 41°F (5°C)

Reject deliveries of frozen food if you see or feel:

- Fluids
- Water stains
- Ice crystals on food or packaging
- Frozen liquids
- Expired labelling
- Discoloring
- Foul smell
- Mold
- Slimy, sticky, or dry fish, meat, or poultry

Reject deliveries of any other food if you see:

- Dirty packaging
- Mold
- Water stains
- Discoloration
- Leaking or dripping
- Damaged, torn, or punctured packaging
- Dented, rusty, or swollen cans



STORAGE

When storing food follow the following methods:

- Do NOT overload coolers.
- Do NOT leave a cooler door open longer than needed.
- Properly label food when placed into cooler with the date of storage and the use-by date.
- Ready to eat TCS food prepared on-site can be stored 7 days below 41°F (5°C).
- If removed from original container, must be labelled with common name of food.
- If delivered off-site TCS food must be placed in an insulated container and include use-by date, time, reheating instructions, and product name. Check with your supervisor for any additional labelling requirements.
- Practice FIFO, First In First Out to properly rotate stored food always remove food in the order they were put in. Organize your storage accordingly.

COOLING HOT FOOD BEFORE STORAGE

Hot food must be cooled prior to storage. Here are the proper steps for cooling hot food before storage:

1. Cool from 135°F (57°C) to 70°F (21°C) within 2 hours.
 2. Cool from 70°F (21°C) to 41°F (5°C) within 4 hours.
 - *NOTE: if the food is not cooled within the time limits the food must be recooked before restarting the cooling process.*
- Do NOT cool large amounts of hot food in a cooler. Separate the food into separate smaller containers.
 - Do NOT cool hot food at room temperature.

REHEATING FOOD

When reheating food follow the following methods:

- If ready-to-eat food is being reheated to serve immediately it can be reheated to any temperature.
- If ready-to-eat food is being reheated for later serving, it must be heated to 165°F (74°C) for 15 seconds. Do NOT reheat food for reserving more than 2 hours later.
- Pre-cooked, commercially processed, packed items must be heated to 135°F (57°C) for 15 seconds.
- NEVER reheat food in hot holding equipment.

STORING FOOD

Store food:

- Away from walls
- At least 6 inches (15 centimeters) above the floor
- In storage containers specifically designed for storing food
- Wrapped or covered
- NEVER store food in old chemical containers

Keep ready to eat and raw food separate when storing and transporting. If this is not possible due to storage space constraints, use the following order for storing food above and below one another, listed from top to bottom:

1. Ready to eat
2. Seafood
3. Whole cuts of beef and pork
4. Ground meat and fish
5. Whole and ground poultry

CONCLUSION

Receiving and storing food safely is just as important as serving and preparing food. By following the safe work practices presented in this lesson, employees can help minimize the chances of causing or spreading a foodborne illness.

