

CROSQ

DRAFT STANDARD

CODE OF PRACTICE-FOOD HYGIENE

0. FOREWORD

- 0.1** This Code of Practice has been prepared through the CARICOM Regional Organization for Standards and Quality (CROSQ) in order to identify the essential principles of food hygiene applicable throughout the food chain and thus achieve the goal of ensuring that food is safe and suitable for human consumption.

It was approved by the CROSQ Council on

- 0.2** International food trade and foreign travel are increasing, bringing important social and economic benefit to the CARICOM region. However, this increase in international trade and travel has an associated risk of exposing national populations to illness.

- 0.3** In preparing this standard, assistance was derived from the following sources:

- (a) CAC/RCP 1-1969, Rev. 2003 –CODEX - Recommended International Code of Practice: General Principles of Food Hygiene.

1. SCOPE

- 1.1** This Code of Practice details the essential principles of food hygiene within the food chain from primary production to the final consumer, stipulating the necessary hygiene conditions for producing food which is safe and suitable for consumption.

2. DESCRIPTION/ DEFINITION

For the purpose of this Code of Practice, the following definitions and expressions shall apply:

- 2.1** **Cleaning** - the removal of soil, food residue, dirt, grease or other objectionable matter.
- 2.2** **Contaminant**- any biological or chemical agent, foreign matter, or other substances not intentionally added to food which may compromise food safety or suitability.

- 2.3 Contamination-** the introduction or occurrence of a contaminant in food or food environment.
- 2.4 Disinfection-** the reduction, by means of chemical agents and/or physical methods, of the number of microorganisms in the environment, to a level that does not compromise food safety or suitability.
- 2.5 Establishment** - any building or area in which food is handled and the surroundings under the control of the same management.
- 2.6 Food Hygiene** - all conditions and measures necessary to ensure the safety and suitability of food at all stages of the food chain.
- 2.7 Hazard-** a biological, chemical or physical agent in, or condition of, food with the potential to cause an adverse health effect.
- 2.8 HACCP-** Hazard Analysis Critical and Control Point system is a system which identifies, evaluates, and controls hazards which are significant for food safety.
- 2.9 Food handler-** any person who directly handles packaged or unpackaged food, food equipment and utensils, or food contact surfaces and is therefore expected to comply with food hygiene requirements.
- 2.10 Food Safety-** assurance that food will not cause harm to the consumer when it is prepared and/ or eaten according to its intended use.
- 2.11 Food suitability-** assurance that food is acceptable for human consumption according to its intended use.
- 2.12 Primary production-** those steps in the food chain up to and including, for example, harvesting, slaughter, fishing, milking.

3. PRIMARY PRODUCTION

OBJECTIVES:

Primary production should be managed in a way that ensures that food is safe and suitable for its intended use, traditionally including the following:

- avoiding the use of areas where the environment poses a threat to the safety of food;
- the control of contaminants, pests and diseases of animals and plants, in a manner that poses no threats to food safety.
- the adoption of practices and measures to ensure food is produced under appropriately hygienic conditions.

RATIONALE:

This is in an effort to reduce the likelihood of the introduction of a hazard which could adversely affect the safety or suitability of food intended for consumption.

3.1 Environmental Hygiene

Potential sources of contamination from the environment should be considered. Primary food production should not be carried out in areas where there are potentially harmful materials which could lead to unacceptable levels of undesirable substances in food.

3.2 Hygienic Production of Food Sources

The potential effects of activities within primary production must be the focus at the all times. This includes the identification of any specific points of the

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production process associated with a high probability of contamination and devising measures to minimize this. The HACCP-based approach may assist in assessing these measures.

Producers are required to implement measures to:

1. Control contamination from air, soil, water, feedstuffs, fertilizers (including natural fertilizers) pesticides, veterinary drugs or any other agent used in primary production.
2. Control plant and animal health so that it does not pose a threat to human health through food consumption or adversely affect the suitability of the product; and
3. Protect food sources from faecal and other contamination.

Care should be taken to manage wastes and the storage of harmful substances appropriately.

3.3 Handling, Storage and Transport

Procedures should be in place to:

- a) Sort food and food ingredients to segregate material which is evidently unfit for human consumption;
- b) Dispose of any rejected material in a hygienic manner; and
- c) Protect food and food ingredients from contamination by pests, or by chemical, physical or microbiological contaminants or other objectionable substances during handling, storage and transport.

Care should be taken to prevent as far as reasonably practicable, deterioration and spoilage through appropriate measures which may incorporate temperature, humidity and/ or other such controls.

3.4 Cleaning, Maintenance and Personnel Hygiene at Primary Production

Appropriate facilities and procedures should be in place to ensure that:

- 1) any necessary cleaning and maintenance is carried out effectively; and
- 2) an appropriate degree of personal hygiene is maintained.

4. ESTABLISHMENT: DESIGN AND FACILITIES

Objectives:

Dependent upon the nature of the operations, and the risks associated with them, premises, equipment and facilities should be located, designed and constructed to ensure that:

- contamination is minimized;
- design and layout allow for appropriate maintenance, cleaning and disinfections and minimize air-borne contamination;
- surfaces and materials, in particular those in contact with food are non-toxic in intended use and where necessary, suitably durable and easy to maintain and clean;
- where appropriate that suitable facilities are available for temperature, humidity and other controls; and
- there is effective protection against pest access and harbourage.

RATIONALE:

The effect control of hazards requires attention to good hygienic design and construction, appropriate location and the provision of adequate facilities.

4.1 Location

4.1.1 Establishments

Consideration must be given to potential sources of contamination when deciding where to locate food establishments, in addition to the effectiveness of any reasonable measures that might be taken to protect food. Establishments should not be located in locations where threats to food safety or suitability exist. Establishments should normally be located away from:

- environmentally- polluted areas and industrial activities which pose a serious threat of contaminating food;
- areas subject to flooding unless sufficient safeguards are provided;
- areas prone to infestation of pests;
- areas where wastes, either solid or liquid cannot be removed effectively.

4.1.2 Equipment

The location of equipment should:

- permit adequate maintenance and cleaning;
- function in accordance with its intended use; and
- facilitate good hygiene practices, including monitoring.

4.2 Premises and Rooms

4.2.1 Design and Layout

Where appropriate, the internal design and layout of food establishments should permit good food hygiene practices including protection of food and food ingredients against cross- contamination between and during operations.

4.2.2 Internal Structures and Fittings

The structures within food establishments should be sound in construction and be easy to maintain, clean and where appropriate, able to be disinfected. The

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following conditions should be satisfied where necessary to protect the safety and suitability of food:

- the surfaces of walls, partitions and floors should be constructed of impervious materials with no toxic effect in intended use;
- walls and partitions should have a smooth surface up to a height appropriate to the operation;
- floors should be constructed to allow adequate drainage and cleaning;
- ceilings and overhead fixtures should be constructed and finished to minimize the buildup of dirt and condensation and the shedding of particles;
- windows should be easy to clean, be constructed to minimize the buildup of dirt and where necessary, be fitted with removable and cleanable insect-proof screens. Where necessary windows should be fixed;
- doors should have smooth, non-absorbent surfaces, and be easy to clean and where necessary, disinfect;
- working surfaces that come into direct contact with food should be in sound condition, durable and easy to clean, maintain and disinfect. They should be made of smooth, non-absorbent materials, and be inert to food, to detergents and disinfectants under normal operating conditions.

4.2.3 Temporary/ mobile premises and vending machines

The premises and structures covered here include market stalls, mobile sales and street vending vehicles, temporary premises in which food is handled such as tents.

These premises should be sited, designed and constructed to avoid as far reasonably practicable the contamination of food and harbourage of pests.

In the application of these conditions and requirements, any food hygiene hazards associated with these facilities should be adequately controlled to ensure the safety and suitability of food.

4.3 Equipment

4.3.1 General

Equipment and containers (other than single use containers and packaging) coming into contact with food should be designed and constructed to ensure that where necessary they can be adequately cleaned, disinfected and maintained to avoid the contamination of food. Equipment and containers should be made of materials with no toxic effect in intended use. Where necessary, equipment should be durable and movable or capable of being disassembled to allow for maintenance, cleaning, disinfection, monitoring (e.g. for pests).

4.3.2 Food Control and Monitoring Equipment

Equipment used to cook, heat treat, cool, store or freeze food should be designed to achieve the required food temperatures as rapidly as necessary in the interests of food safety and suitability, and maintain them effectively. Such equipment should also be designed to allow temperatures to be monitored and controlled. Such equipment should have effective means of controlling and monitoring humidity, air-flow and any other characteristic likely to have a detrimental effect on the safety or suitability of food, as necessary. These requirements are intended to ensure that:

- harmful or undesirable micro-organisms or their toxins are eliminated or reduces to safe levels or their survival and growth are effectively controlled;
- where appropriate, critical limits established in HACCP-based plans can be monitored; and
- temperatures and other conditions necessary to food safety and suitability can be rapidly achieved and maintained.

4.3.3 Containers for Waste and Inedible Substances

The containers used for the disposal of waste, by-products and inedible or dangerous substances, should be specifically identifiable, suitably constructed and where appropriate, made of impervious material. Containers used to hold dangerous

substances should be identified and where appropriate be lockable in order to prevent malicious or accidental contamination of food and/ or food ingredients.

4.4 Facilities

4.4.1 Water Supply

An adequate supply of potable water with appropriate facilities for its storage, distribution and temperature control should be available whenever necessary to ensure the safety and suitability of food.

Potable water should comply with the requirements set out in the latest edition of the WHO Guidelines for Drinking Water Quality, or higher standard. Non-potable water (for use in, for example, the fire control, steam production, refrigeration and other similar purposes where it would not contaminate food), shall have a separate system. Non-potable water systems shall be identified and shall not connect with, or allow reflux into, potable water systems.

4.4.2 Drainage and Waste Disposal

Provision for adequate drainage and waste disposal systems and facilities should be made. They should be designed and constructed so that the risk of contaminating food or the potable water supply is avoided.

4.4.3 Cleaning

Adequate facilities, suitably designed should be provided for the cleaning of food, utensils and equipment. Such facilities should have an adequate supply of hot and cold potable water where appropriate.

4.4.4 Personnel Hygiene Facilities and Toilets

Personnel hygiene facilities should be available to ensure that an appropriate degree of personal hygiene can be maintained and to avoid contaminating food. Where appropriate, facilities should include:

- adequate means of hygienically washing and drying hands , including wash basins and a supply of hot and cold (or suitably temperature controlled) water;
- lavatories of appropriate hygienic design; and
- adequate changing facilities for personnel.

These facilities should be suitably located and designed.

4.4.5 **Temperature Control**

Dependent upon the nature of the food operation to be undertaken adequate facilities should be available for the heating, cooling, cooking, refrigerating and freezing of food for storage of refrigerated or frozen foods, the monitoring of food temperatures and when necessary the control of ambient temperatures to ensure the safety and suitability of food.

4.4.6 **Air Quality and Ventilation**

Adequate means of natural or mechanical ventilation should be provided particularly to:

- minimize air-borne contamination of food, for example, from aerosols and condensation droplets;
- control ambient temperatures;
- control odours which might affect the suitability of food; and
- control humidity where necessary to ensure the safety and suitability of food.

The ventilation systems used should be designed and constructed so that air is not allowed to flow from contaminated areas to clean areas, and where necessary allow for easy maintenance and cleaning.

4.4.7 **Lighting**

The lighting employed; whether natural or artificial should be adequate for the operations to be undertaken in a hygienic manner. Where necessary, lighting should not be such that the resulting colour is misleading. The intensity should be adequate to the nature of the operation. Light fixtures should, where appropriate, be protected to ensure that food is not contaminated by breakages.

4.4.8 Storage

Adequate facilities for the storage of food, ingredients and non-food chemicals (e.g. cleaning materials, lubricants, fuels) should be provided where applicable and necessary.

Where appropriate food storage facilities should be designed and constructed to:

- permit adequate maintenance and cleaning;
- avoid pest access and harbourage;

- enable food to be effectively protected from contamination during storage; and

- where necessary provide an environment which minimizes the deterioration of food (e.g. by temperature and humidity control).

The type of storage facilities required will depend on the nature of the food. Where necessary, separate, secure storage facilities for cleaning materials and hazardous substances should be provided.

5. CONTROL OF OPERATION

Objective:

To produce food that is safe and suitable for human consumption by:

formulating design requirements with respect to raw materials, composition, processing, distribution and consumer use to be met in the manufacture and handling of specific food items; and

- designing, implementing, monitoring and reviewing effective control systems.

Rationale:

To reduce the risk of unsafe food by taking preventative measures to assure the safety and suitability of food at an appropriate stage in the operation by controlling food hazards.

5.1 Control of Food Hazards

Food business operators should control food hazards through the use of systems such as HACCP. This should involve:

- identification of any steps in the operations which are critical to the safety of food;
- implementation of effective control procedures at those steps;
- monitoring control procedures to ensure their continued effectiveness; and
- review of control procedures periodically and whenever there is a change in operation procedure.

These systems should be applied throughout the food chain to control and ensure good food hygiene throughout the shelf-life of the product via proper product and process design.

Control procedures may be simple, e.g. checking stock rotation, calibrating equipment, or correctly loading refrigerated display units. In some cases a system based on expert advice, and involving documentation may be appropriate.

5.2 Key Aspects of Hygiene Control Systems

5.2.1 Time and Temperature Control

Inadequate food temperature control is one of the most common causes of food borne illness or food spoilage. Such controls normally involve the time and

temperature of processes such as cooking, cooling, processing and storage. Systems should be in place to ensure that temperature is controlled effectively where it is critical to the safety and suitability of food.

Temperature control systems should take into account:

- the nature of the food, e.g. its water activity, pH and the likely initial level and types of micro-organisms;
- the intended shelf-life of the product;
- the method of packaging and processing; and
- how the product is intended to be used, e.g. further cooking/ processing or ready-to- eat.

Such systems should also stipulate the tolerable limits for time and temperature variations. Temperature recording devices should be checked at regular intervals and tested for accuracy.

5.2.2 **Specific Process Steps**

Other steps which contribute to food hygiene may include, for example:

- chilling
- thermal processing
- irradiation
- drying
- chemical preservation
- vacuum or modified atmospheric packaging

5.2.3 **Microbiological and Other Specifications**

Management systems described in paragraph 4.1 offer an effective means of ensuring the safety and suitability of food. Where microbiological, chemical or physical specifications are used in any food control system, such specifications should be based on sound scientific principles and state where appropriate the monitoring procedures, analytical methods and the action limits to be employed.

5.2.4 Microbiological Cross-contamination

Pathogens can be transferred from one food to another either by direct contact or by food handlers, contact with surfaces or the air. Raw, unprocessed food should be effectively separated, either physically or by time, from ready-to-eat foods, with effective intermediate cleaning and where appropriate disinfection.

Access to processing areas should be restricted or controlled as appropriate. Where there is a high risk of contamination access to processing areas should be via a changing facility only. Personnel may be required to wear clean protective clothing including footwear and wash their hands before entering.

Surfaces, utensils, equipment, fixtures and fittings should be thoroughly cleaned and where necessary disinfected after raw food, particularly meat and poultry has been handled or processed.

5.2.5 Physical and Chemical Contamination

Systems should be in place to prevent contamination of food by foreign bodies such as glass or metal shards from machinery, dust, harmful fumes and unwanted chemicals. In manufacturing and processing, suitable detection or screening devices should be used where necessary.

5.3 Incoming Material Requirements

All raw materials and or ingredients accepted by the establishments should be free of parasites, undesirable micro-organisms, pesticides, veterinary drugs or toxic, decomposed or extraneous substances which would not be reduced to an acceptable level by normal sorting and/ or processing. Where appropriate, specifications for raw materials should be identified and applied.

Raw materials or ingredients should, where appropriate, be inspected and sorted before processing. Where necessary, laboratory tests should be made to

established fitness for use. Only sound, suitable raw materials or ingredients should be used.

Stock of raw materials and ingredients should be subject to effective stock rotation.

5.4 Packaging

Packaging design and materials should provide adequate protection for products to minimize contamination, prevent damage, and accommodate proper labeling. Packaging materials or gases where used must be non-toxic and not pose a threat to the safety and suitability of food under the specified conditions of storage and use. Reusable packaging should be suitably durable, easy to clean and where necessary easy to disinfect.

5.5 Water

5.5.1 In Contact with Food

Only potable water should be used in food handling and processing with the following exceptions:

- a) for steam production, fire control and other similar purposes not connected with food; and
- b) in certain food processes, e.g. chilling and in food handling areas provided this does not constitute a hazard to the safety and suitability of food (e.g. the use of clean sea water).

Water re-circulated for reuse should be treated and maintained in such a condition that no risk to the safety and suitability of food results from its use. The treatment process should be effectively monitored. Re-circulated water which has received no further treatment and water recovered from processing of food by evaporation or drying may be used, provided its use does not constitute a risk to the safety and suitability of food.

5.5.2 As an Ingredient

Potable water should be used wherever necessary to avoid food contamination.

5.5.3 Ice and Steam

Ice should be made from water that complies with 3.4.1. Ice and steam should be produced, handled and stored to protect them from contamination.

Steam used in direct contact with food or food contact surfaces should not constitute a threat to the safety and suitability of food.

5.6 Management and Supervision

The type of control and supervision needed will depend on the size of the business, the nature of its activities and the types of food involved. Managers and supervisors should have a sound knowledge of food hygiene principles and practices to be able to make judgments regarding potential risks, take appropriate preventive and corrective action and ensure that effective monitoring and supervision occurs.

5.7 Documentation and Records

Where necessary appropriate records of processing, production and distribution should be kept and retained for a period that exceeds the shelf-life of the product. Documentation can enhance the credibility and effectiveness of the food safety control system.

5.8 Recall Procedures

Managers should ensure effective procedures are in place to deal with any food safety hazard and to enable the complete rapid recall of any implicated lot of the finished food from the market. Where a product has been withdrawn because of an immediate health hazard, other products which are produced under similar conditions and which may present a similar hazard to public health should be evaluated for safety and may need to be withdrawn. The need for public warning should be considered.

Recalled products should be held under strict supervision until they are destroyed, used for purposes other than human consumption, determined to be safe for human consumption or reprocessed in a manner to ensure their safety.

6. ESTABLISHMENT: MAINTENANCE AND SANITATION

Objective:

To establish effective systems to:

- ensure adequate and appropriate maintenance and cleaning;
- control pests;
- manage waste; and
- monitor effectiveness of maintenance and sanitation procedures.

Rationale:

To facilitate the continuing effective control of food hazards, pests and other agents likely to contaminate food.

6.1 Maintenance and Cleaning

6.1.1 General

Establishment and equipment should be kept in an appropriate state of repair and condition to:

- facilitate all sanitation procedures;
- function as intended, particularly at critical steps (see paragraph 4.1);
- prevent contamination of food, e.g. from metal shards, flaking plaster, debris and chemicals.

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Procedures for cleaning should remove food residues and dirt which may be a source of contamination. The necessary cleaning methods and materials will depend upon the nature of the food operation. Disinfection may be necessary after cleaning.

Chemicals used in cleaning procedures should be handled with care and in accordance with manufacturers' instructions and stored where necessary, in separate area from food, in clearly marked containers to avoid the risk of contamination of food.

6.1.2 Cleaning Procedures and Methods

Cleaning can be carried out by the separate or the combined use of physical methods, such as heat, scrubbing, turbulent flow, vacuum cleaning or other methods that avoid the use of water, and chemical methods using detergents, alkalis or acids.

Cleaning procedures will involve, where appropriate:

1. removing gross debris from surfaces;
2. applying a detergent solution to loosen soil and bacterial film and hold them in solution or suspension;
3. rinsing with water which complies with section 4, to remove loosened soil and residues of detergent.
4. dry cleaning or other appropriate methods for removing and collecting residues and debris;
5. where necessary, disinfection with subsequent rinsing unless the manufacturers' instructions indicate on scientific basis that rinsing is not required.

6.2 Cleaning Programmes

Cleaning and disinfection programmes should ensure that all parts of the establishment are appropriately clean and should include the cleaning of cleaning equipment.

Cleaning and disinfection programmes should be continually and effectively monitored for their suitability and effectiveness and where necessary documented.

Where written cleaning programmes are followed, they should specify:

1. areas, items of equipment and utensils to be cleaned;
2. responsibility for particular tasks;
3. method and frequency of cleaning; and
4. monitoring arrangements.

As appropriate, programmes should be drawn up in consultation with a relevant specialist or expert.

6.3 Pest Control Systems

6.3.1 General

Pests pose a major threat to the safety and suitability of food. Pest infestations can occur where there are breeding sites and a supply of food. Good hygiene practices should be employed to avoid creating an environment conducive to pests. Good sanitation, inspection of incoming materials and good monitoring can minimize the likelihood of infestation and thereby limit the need for pesticides.

6.3.2 Preventing access

Building should be kept in good repair and condition to prevent pest access and to eliminate potential breeding sites. Holes, drains and other places where pests are likely to gain access should be kept sealed. Wire mesh screens, for example on open windows, doors and ventilators, will reduce the problem of pest entry. Animals should wherever possible be excluded from the grounds of factories and food processing plants.

6.3.3 Harbours and Infestation

There is an associated risk of harbours and infestation of pests in areas of

available food and water. Potential food sources should be stored in pest-proof containers and/ or stacked above the ground and away from walls. Areas both inside and outside food premises should be kept clean. Where appropriate, refuse should be stored in covered, pest-proof containers.

6.3.4 Monitoring and Detection

Establishments and surrounding areas should be regularly examined for evidence of infestation.

6.3.5 Eradication

Pest infestation should be dealt with immediately and without adversely affecting food safety or suitability. Treatment with chemical, physical or biological agents should be carried out without posing a threat to the safety or suitability of food.

6.4 Waste Management

Suitable provision must be made for the removal and storage of waste. Waste must not be allowed to accumulate in food handling, food storage and other working areas or adjoining environment except so far as is unavoidable for the proper functioning of the business.

Waste stores must be kept appropriately clean.

6.5 Monitoring Effectiveness

Sanitation systems should be monitored for effectiveness, periodically verified by means such as audit pre-operational inspections or, where appropriate microbiological sampling of environment and food contact surfaces and regular review and adaptation to reflect any changed circumstances.

7. ESTABLISHMENT: PERSONAL HYGIENE

Objectives:

To ensure that those who come directly or indirectly into contact with food are not likely to contaminate food by:

- maintaining an appropriate degree of personal cleanliness;
- operating and conducting in an appropriate manner.

Rationale:

People infestations should be dealt with immediately and without adversely affecting food safety or suitability. Treatment with chemicals, physical or biological agents should be carried out without posing a threat to the safety or suitability of food.

7.1 Health Status

Persons known or suspected to be carriers or to be suffering from a disease or illness, likely to be transmitted through food should not be allowed to enter any food handling or processing area if there is a likelihood of their contaminating food. Any person so affected should immediately report illness or symptoms of illness to management.

Medical examination of a food handler should be carried out if clinically or epidemiologically indicated.

7.2 Illness and Injuries

Conditions which should be reported to management so that any need for medical examination and/ or possible exclusion, from food handling can be considered include:

- jaundice;
- diarrhea;
- vomiting;
- fever;

- sore throat with associated fever;
- visibly infected skin lesions (boils, cuts, etc.);
- discharges from the ear, nose or eye.

7.3 Personal Cleanliness

Food handlers are expected to maintain a high degree of personal cleanliness and where appropriate wear suitable protective clothing, head covering and foot wear. Cuts and wounds should be covered with suitable waterproof dressings where personnel are permitted to continue working.

Personnel should always wash their hands when personal cleanliness can affect food safety, for example:

- at the start of food handling activities;
- immediately after using the toilet; and
- after handling raw food or any contaminated material where there is risk of contamination of other food items. They should also avoid handling ready-to-eat food where possible.

7.4 Personal Behaviour

Persons engaged in food handling activities should refrain from behaviour which could result in contamination of food, for example:

smoking;

spitting;

chewing or eating;

sneezing or coughing over unprotected food.

Personal effects such as jewelry, watches, pins or other such items should not

be worn or brought into food handling areas if they pose a threat to the safety and suitability of food.

7.5 Visitors

Visitors to the food manufacturing, processing or handling areas should where appropriate wear protective clothing and adhere to all the other personal hygiene provisions set out in this section.

8. TRANSPORTATION

Objectives:

To ensure that measures are taken where necessary to:

- protect food from potential sources of contamination;
- protect food from damage likely to render the food unsuitable for consumption; and
- provide an environment which effectively controls the growth of pathogenic or spoilage micro-organisms and the production of toxins in food.

Rationale:

Food may become contaminated, or may reach its destination in a suitable condition for consumption, unless effective control measures are taken during transport, even where adequate hygiene control measures have been taken earlier in the food chain.

8.1 General

Food must be adequately protected during transport. The type of conveyances or containers required depends on the nature of the food and the conditions under which it has to be transported.

8.2 Requirements

Where necessary, conveyances and bulk containers should be designed and

constructed so that they:

- do not contaminate foods or packaging;
- can be effectively separation of different foods or foods from non-food items where necessary during transport;
- permit effective separation of different foods or foods from where necessary during transport;
- provide effective protection from contamination, including dust and fumes;
- can effective protection from contamination, including dust and fumes;
- can effectively maintained the temperature, humidity, atmosphere and other conditions necessary to protect from harmful or undesirable microbial growth and deterioration likely to render it unsuitable for consumption; and
- allow any necessary temperature, humidity and other conditions to be checked.

8.3 Use and Maintenance

Conveyances and containers for transporting food should be kept in an appropriate state of cleanliness, repair and condition. Where the same conveyance or container is used for transporting different foods, or non-foods, effective cleaning and, where necessary, disinfection should take place between loads.

Where appropriate, particularly in bulk transport, containers and conveyance should be designated and marked for food use only and be used only for that purpose.

9. PRODUCT INFORMATION AND CONSUMER AWARENESS

Objectives:

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Products should bear appropriate information to ensure that:

- adequate and accessible information is available to the next person in the food chain to enable them to handle, store, process, prepare and display the product safely and correctly;
- the lot or batch can be easily identified and recalled if necessary.

Consumers should have enough knowledge of food hygiene to enable them to:

- understand the importance of product information;
- make informed choices appropriate to the individual; and
- prevent contamination and growth or survival of food borne pathogens by storing, preparing and using it correctly.

Information for industry or trade users should be clearly distinguishable from consumer information, particularly on food labels.

Rationale:

Insufficient product information, and/or inadequate knowledge of general food hygiene can lead to products being mishandled at later stages in the food chain. Such mishandling can result in illness or products becoming unsuitable for consumption, even where adequate hygiene control measures have been taken earlier in the food chain.

9.1 Lot Identification

Lot identification is essential in product recall and also helps effective stock rotation. Each container of food should be permanently marked to identify the producer and the lot. The CARICOM Standard for the “Labelling of Prepackaged Foods” shall apply.

9.2 Product Information

All food products should be accompanied by or bear adequate information to enable the next person in the food chain to handle, display, store and prepare and use the product safely and correctly.

9.3 Labelling

Prepackaged foods should be labeled with clear instructions to enable the next person in the food chain to handle, display, store and use the product safely. The CARICOM Standard for the “Labelling of Prepackaged Foods” shall apply.

9.4 Consumer Education

Health education programmes should cover general food hygiene. Such programmes should enable consumers to understand the importance of any product information and to follow any instructions accompanying products, and make informed choices. In particular, consumers should be informed of the relationship between time/ temperature control and food borne illness.

10. TRAINING

Objective:

Those persons engaged in food operations who come directly or indirectly into contact with food should be trained and/ or instructed in food hygiene to a level appropriate to the operations being performed.

Rationale:

Training is fundamentally important to any food hygiene system. The absence of adequate hygiene training and/ or instruction and supervision of all staffers involved in food related activities poses a potential threat to the safety of the food and its suitability for consumption.

10.1 Awareness and Responsibilities

Training in food hygiene is very essential in food operations. All personnel should be aware of their role and responsibility in protecting food from contamination or deterioration. Food handlers should have the necessary knowledge and skills to enable them to handle food hygienically. Those who handle strong cleaning chemical or other potentially hazardous chemicals should be instructed in safe handling techniques.

10.2 Training Programmes

Factors to take into account in assessing the level of training required include:

1. the nature of the food, in particular its ability to sustain growth of pathogenic or spoilage micro-organism;
2. the manner in which the food is handled and packed, including the probability of contamination;
3. the extent and nature of processing or further preparation before final consumption;
4. the conditions under which the food will be stored; and
5. the expected length of time before consumption.

10.3 Instruction and Supervision

Periodic assessment of the effectiveness of training and instruction programmes should be made, as well routine supervision and checks to ensure that procedures are being carried out effectively.

Management, that is; managers and supervisors of food processes should

have the necessary knowledge of food hygiene principles and practices in order to assess potential risk and take appropriate action to remedy deficiencies.

10.4 Refresher Training

Training programmes should be routinely reviewed and updated as necessary. Systems should be in place to ensure that food handlers are updated and reminded of all procedures necessary to maintain the safety and suitability of food.