

30th March 2020

Food Safety Guidance

Particularly for those packing, handling or transporting foods



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This guide is advise anyone packing or handling food in a depot, or transporting it to those in need, so it can be done as safely as possible and with the minimum risks of contaminating the food.

Protective clothing: Wear items that are clean and do not have tassels, loose sleeves etc. This is to reduce unnecessary contact with parcels/food.

Personal Hygiene: To keep food safe, every person working in a food-handling area must maintain a high level of personal hygiene. This is not just about hand washing:

- **Hair / touching face:** When preparing or handling food, it is really important you:
 - keep your hair tied back or securely under a hat
 - do not touch your face or hair, and do not smoke, sneeze, eat, chew gum etc.
- **Handwashing:** This is the best and most important thing you can do to help prevent harmful bacteria spreading from your hands. All staff working with food must particularly wash their hands:
 - Before starting work in the food packing and storage area
 - before handling any packed food
 - after blowing your nose
 - after eating or touching your face
 - after touching phones, light switches, door handles etc.
 - after using the toilet

Use warm water and anti-bacterial soap; then thoroughly dry your hands on a disposable towel. Using a disposable towel to turn off the tap will really help stop the spread of harmful bacteria.

Sanitizer / anti-bacterial gels can be used but they are not as good as thorough hand washing.

Gloves can be worn as a barrier but must be changed regularly and between tasks. If you would have washed your hands – you must change your gloves.

Fitness for work: It is vital checks are made every day to make sure everyone packing or handling food are fit for work. This is not **just** about protection from COVID-19, you must also check for other infections such as diarrhoea and vomiting / food poisoning.

No one must handle food or enter a food handling area if they:

- have recently had – or been caring for someone with sickness or diarrhoea
- are suffering from or carrying a known infectious disease

- have infected wounds, skin infections or sores. Minor sores and cuts can be covered with a brightly coloured waterproof dressing AND a close fitting glove.

If any of these apply to a member of staff, they must tell their manager about it immediately. Anyone with diarrhoea or vomiting should not return to work until they have had no symptoms for 48 hours. If they have symptoms relating to Covid-19 then they should be following the current guidance and self-isolating according to government guidelines.

FOOD SAFETY:

Chilled Food – e.g. Fresh Milk:

Chilling food properly helps stop harmful bacteria from growing. To keep your food safe:

- KEEP all perishable foods – those with a 'use by' date, in the fridge.
- CHECK your fridge with a fridge thermometer. Keep all areas in it below 5°C.
- DON'T OVERFILL the fridge. Leaving space allows air to circulate and maintains the set temperature. It will not work properly if it is too full.

If you have taken chilled food is out of the fridge, whether for picking, packing, delivering or short term storage make sure is for the shortest time possible. Try and make sure it less than 30 minutes whenever possible – and in all circumstance less than 2 hours.

Under current circumstances, disposable boxes are preferred, but if you are using re-usable insulated boxes and cool bags/boxes there must be a safe system in place for disinfection before reuse.

Stock Control

Fresh milk or other perishable products have a 'use by' date on them. Check these daily and make sure the ones that need using first are dispatched first.

Ambient shelf stable products do not require refrigeration but must be stored in a cool dry hygienic space away from direct sunlight and away from any potential pest damage. These products will have a 'best before' date on them. They can be used after the best before date has expired **provided** they have not been previously opened and there is no evidence of damage to the packaging. There will be no food safety risk but the quality may start to deteriorate.

Allergens

Allergen information is shown on all prepacked food products. Any one of the 14 allergens specified in the regulations will be highlighted in **bold text**.

You must check if the person you are supplying food is allergic to any of the 14 designated allergens. You could check the labels of each individual product prior to packing and include a summary on an allergen matrix will allow the packer to check and record the products as they pack them for each box.

Consider having a designated packing list for those with allergies.

Receiving this parcel instructions

You are advised to have clear handling, hand washing, and disinfection advice easily visible on the outside of the box and bring this to the attention of the recipient if possible.

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