

Food Safety Fact Sheet

Storing Foods

INTRODUCTION

Proper storing of food will help maintain food quality and safety. Employees who store food play an important role in a school nutrition program by following proper storing practices.

HERE ARE THE FACTS

Food is a perishable product so it is important to store it at the appropriate temperature for an appropriate time. Dry storage areas should be maintained at 50–70 °F, refrigerated storage areas should be maintained at 41 °F or below, and frozen storage areas should be maintained at 0 °F – -10 °F.

APPLICATION

Follow good storage practices.

- Keep storage areas clean.
- Store all food and supplies at least 6 inches off the floor.
- Keep food in original containers or labeled containers approved for food storage.
- Label all food with the name and delivery date.
- Use the First In, First Out (FIFO) method of inventory rotation. Dating products and storing new products behind old products will make FIFO easier.
- Store chemicals in a separate area from foods, preferably in a locked room or cabinet.
- Check products for damage or spoilage, and discard products that show signs of damage or spoilage.
- Avoid cross contamination and cross contact.
- Store allergen free foods in an isolated place, preferably its own shelf.
- Designate a place for recalled products as needed.
- Store ready-to-eat foods in the refrigerator separately from raw foods. If multiple products are stored in one refrigerator, place them in the following order:
 - ◊ Highest shelf - Cooked and ready-to-eat foods, Whole meat, Ground meat
 - ◊ Lowest shelf - Poultry

Monitor storage practices.

- Check storage areas for cleanliness.
- Check product expiration dates.
- Check temperatures of all storage areas a minimum of once a day.
- Record the temperatures and the time temperatures are taken for all storage areas.
- Record recalled products on the Damaged and Discarded Product Log.





Storing Foods cont.

Take corrective action if appropriate storage practices are not followed.

- Clean storage areas.
- Discard foods that are past the expiration date.
- Report to the supervisor if storage areas are not at the appropriate temperature.

Remember, follow state or local health department requirements.

References

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