

Bulk Food Products

Introduction

This fact sheet helps food premises operators protect bulk food and reduce food-borne illnesses (e.g., Norovirus).

Product Categorization

- Bulk foods must be sold with individual serving utensils including single-use or multi-use scoops or tongs.
- Sticky foods, such as pie-fillings, peanut butter, raisins, dates, etc., can be sold in bulk containers that are moisture-resistant and fitted with lids (hinged or sliding). *Note: Disposable hand wipes or hand sanitizer stations should be available for consumer use.*
- Liquid foods, such as honey and syrup, should be dispensed from food-grade containers with gravity feed or pressurized taps.
- Dry items, such as jelly powders, sugars, cereals, soups and spices, should be sold from food-grade or lined containers with fitted lids (hinged or sliding).
- Nuts and bulk food items that may contain nuts should be separate from all other bulk food items.
- Bulk foods that are not for human consumption (e.g., detergents and pet foods) should be stored separately and scoops should be marked appropriately.



1-800-361-5653

TTY (for those with hearing disabilities) **1-866-252-9933**



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Food Protection

- Ensure that all food contact surfaces (e.g., containers and utensils) are made of food-grade materials than can be cleaned and sanitized.
- Store food in a way that protects it from contamination and adulteration (e.g., keep food covered).
- Ensure that containers are durable – they will not break, chip, crack or splinter under normal operating conditions. For dry products, cardboard may be used as long as it is lined with single-use food grade plastic liners or bags. Cardboard containers may be reused if they are not soiled or contaminated and foods do not come in direct contact with the cardboard.
- Secure dispensing utensils, including tongs, pumps, scoops, etc., to each bin with its own utensil holder
- Confirm that shipping containers received by retailer have the General Labelling Requirements as set by the *Food and Drugs Act* and *Consumer Packaging and Labelling Act*.
- Rotate stock using the “first in, first out” (FIFO) rule. Date the food products and use the oldest food product first.
- Monitor for pest activity on a regular basis – a monthly inspection by a licensed pest control operator is recommended. Household pesticides or insecticides are not suitable for a food premise.

Cleaning and Sanitizing

- Supply a separate handwashing sink with hot and cold running water, dispensed liquid soap and paper towels in the bulk food packaging area.
- Use a minimum two-compartment sink with sanitizer for washing, rinsing, and sanitizing multi-use items (e.g., containers, utensils, tongs and scoops). Multi-use items should be cleaned at least once per day or more as required.

- Ensure dishwashing sinks are large enough for proper sanitizing. If the sinks do not cover the largest item, ensure that proper sanitizing is achieved by spraying or rinsing with twice the concentration of sanitizer.

Consumer Education

- Ensure that bulk food labels comply with federal government requirements, including list of ingredients, name, information of supplier and manufacturer.
- Consider providing signs in the bulk food display areas to remind customers of good food-handling practices.
- Do not allow customers to handle or taste bulk food.

Recall Information

- Routinely check the Canadian Food Inspection Agency’s (CFIA) website for current information on product recalls. Go to www.inspection.gc.ca.
- Remove recalled food products from the retail area and clearly tag the item pending further instruction from an authorized agency.

YorkSafe

YorkSafe is York Region’s inspection reporting program. Food safety inspection reports are posted online.

For more information on food safety requirements or the YorkSafe inspection reporting program, contact **York Region Health Connection** at 1-800-361-5653, TTY 1-866-252-9933 or visit www.york.ca/foodsafety

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