

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

Safe Food Storage Practices and Labeling

This SOP details **safe food storage practices and labeling** to ensure food safety and prevent contamination. It covers proper temperature controls, segregation of raw and cooked foods, use of appropriate storage containers, clear and accurate labeling of food items with dates and contents, and routine inspection and rotation of stored products. The goal is to maintain food quality, extend shelf life, and comply with health regulations, thereby safeguarding consumer health and reducing food waste.

1. Purpose

To establish standardized procedures for the safe storage and labeling of food to prevent contamination, ensure product quality, and comply with health and safety regulations.

2. Scope

This SOP applies to all personnel responsible for receiving, storing, and managing food in the facility.

3. Responsibilities

- **All employees** must follow these procedures to ensure food safety.
- **Supervisors/Managers** are responsible for training staff, monitoring compliance, and ensuring corrective actions are taken when necessary.

4. Procedures

4.1 Temperature Controls

- Store perishable foods at the appropriate temperatures:
 - Refrigerated foods: $\pm 4^{\circ}\text{C}$ (40°F)
 - Frozen foods: $\pm -18^{\circ}\text{C}$ (0°F)
- Monitor and record temperatures at least twice daily.
- Immediately correct deviations from standard temperature ranges and document actions taken.

4.2 Segregation of Foods

- Store raw foods separately from cooked or ready-to-eat foods.
- Use designated storage areas or shelves for different categories (e.g., raw meat below ready-to-eat items in refrigerators).

4.3 Storage Containers

- Store all foods in clean, food-grade, sealed containers.
- Cover foods to prevent contamination.
- Do not store food in open cans, in unlabeled containers, or on the floor.

4.4 Labeling of Food Items

1. Label each item with:
 - Name of the food
 - Date received/prepared
 - Use-by or expiration date
 - Initials of the person labeling
2. Ensure labels are clear, legible, and resistant to moisture and temperature changes.
3. Discard unlabeled or expired items immediately.

4.5 Routine Inspection and Stock Rotation

- Conduct routine inspections of storage areas daily.
- Use the "First-In, First-Out" (FIFO) method for product rotation.
- Promptly remove and discard spoiled or expired products.

5. Documentation

- Keep temperature logs and inspection checklists up to date and on file for review.
- Maintain records of corrective actions taken for any deviations.

6. References

- Local public health department regulations
- Food Safety Standards (e.g., FDA Food Code)

7. Revision History

| Date | Revision | Prepared by | Approved by |
|------------|-----------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| 2024-06-15 | Initial Release | Food Safety Officer | Quality Manager |