Standard Operating Procedure (SOP): Food Receiving and Inspection Procedures

This SOP details the **food receiving and inspection procedures** to ensure all incoming food products meet safety, quality, and regulatory standards. It covers the steps for verifying delivery documentation, inspecting packaging integrity, checking temperature controls, assessing product quality and freshness, identifying potential contaminants or damages, and recording inspection findings. The goal is to prevent contamination, ensure compliance with food safety regulations, and maintain product consistency from delivery to storage.

1. Purpose

To establish a standardized process for receiving and inspecting food products, ensuring only safe and compliant products are accepted into the facility.

2. Scope

This SOP applies to all personnel involved in the receipt and inspection of food deliveries.

3. Responsibilities

- Receiving staff: Follow inspection steps and complete documentation.
- Supervisors/Managers: Oversee process and address non-compliance issues.

4. Required Materials & Equipment

- Delivery Documentation (invoice, bill of lading, etc.)
- Thermometer (for temperature checks)
- Inspection Checklist
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) as required
- Camera (for documenting non-conformities, if needed)

5. Procedure

1. **Preparation**
    - Ensure receiving area is clean and ready for inspection.
    - Gather all required materials and equipment.
2. **Verification of Documentation**
    - Obtain and review delivery documentation.
    - Match product names, quantities, and lot numbers with purchase order.
3. **Inspection of Delivery Vehicle**
    - Check cleanliness and, if applicable, temperature controls of delivery vehicle.
4. **Inspection of Packaging Integrity**
    - Visually inspect all packaging for signs of damage, leaks, or tampering.
    - Reject units with compromised packaging.
5. **Temperature Control Check**
    - Measure and record temperature of temperature-sensitive products (e.g., refrigerated, frozen foods).
    - Ensure products are within required temperature ranges.
6. **Product Quality and Freshness Check**
    - Assess appearance, odor, color, and labeling of products.
    - Check for expiration or use-by dates.
    - Identify and reject items showing signs of spoilage.
7. **Identify Contaminants or Damages**
    - Look for visible contaminants (e.g., pests, foreign objects, mold).
    - Isolate and reject affected products.
8. **Recording and Documentation**
    - Complete inspection checklist with findings.
    - Document any non-conformities and actions taken.
    - Sign and date all records.
9. **Acceptance and Storage**
    - Approve and move accepted products promptly to appropriate storage areas.

        ○ Arrange for return or disposal of rejected items.

6. Records Management

- Retain completed inspection checklists and documentation for regulatory review per company policy.

7. Corrective Actions

- If non-conforming products are identified, notify the supplier immediately and follow company procedures for return or disposal.
- Record corrective actions taken and notify management of potential supplier issues.

8. Review & Revision

- This SOP should be reviewed annually or upon significant process changes.

9. References

- Food Safety Regulations (e.g., FDA, USDA, local health department guidelines)
- Company Food Safety Policy