

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP): Food Preparation and Packaging Standards

This SOP defines the **food preparation and packaging standards** to ensure food safety, quality, and compliance with regulatory requirements. It covers guidelines for hygienic food handling, ingredient verification, preparation procedures, packaging materials and methods, labeling accuracy, and storage conditions. The goal is to maintain product integrity, prevent contamination, and guarantee consumer safety throughout the food production process.

1. Purpose

To establish standardized procedures for safe food preparation and packaging, promoting the highest standards of quality and compliance with applicable food safety regulations.

2. Scope

This SOP applies to all personnel involved in food preparation, packaging, storage, and handling within the facility.

3. Responsibilities

- **Food Handlers:** Adhere to hygienic practices and follow SOPs.
- **Supervisors:** Oversee compliance and provide training.
- **Quality Assurance:** Monitor adherence, conduct audits, and maintain records.

4. Definitions

- **Contamination:** The presence of harmful substances or microorganisms in food.
- **Packaging:** Materials and processes used to enclose and protect food products.
- **Labeling:** Display of product information on packaging.

5. Procedure

1. Hygienic Food Handling

- Wash hands thoroughly before and after handling food.
- Wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), such as gloves, hairnets, and aprons.
- Maintain clean and sanitized work surfaces and utensils at all times.
- Do not work if experiencing symptoms of illness.

2. Ingredient Verification

- Verify all incoming ingredients against approved supplier lists and specifications.
- Inspect for quality, expiration dates, and signs of damage or contamination.
- Record batch and lot numbers for traceability.

3. Preparation Procedures

- Follow standardized recipes and preparation steps.
- Avoid cross-contamination by using separate equipment for raw and cooked products.
- Cook foods to required internal temperatures as per guidelines.

4. Packaging Materials & Methods

- Use only approved food-grade packaging materials.
- Check packaging for integrity before use.
- Seal products securely to prevent contamination and leakage.

5. **Labeling Accuracy**

- Ensure all labels include product name, ingredient list, allergens, batch/lot number, manufacture and expiry dates, and storage instructions.
- Labels must be legible and firmly affixed to each package.

6. **Storage Conditions**

- Store food products at specified temperatures and humidity levels.
- Use FIFO (First In, First Out) rotation system.
- Monitor and document storage areas regularly for cleanliness and pest control.

6. **Documentation & Records**

- Maintain records of ingredient verification, preparation logs, packaging batch records, and storage monitoring logs.
- Retain all records for a minimum of **2 years** or as required by regulatory authorities.

7. **Training**

- All personnel must complete food safety and hygiene training prior to commencing work.
- Conduct regular refresher training and document participation.

8. **References**

- Local Food Safety Regulations
- Codex Alimentarius Standards
- Company Food Safety Policy

9. **Revision History**

Version	Date	Description	Approved By
1.0	2024-06-27	Initial release	[Name/Title]