



Inside This Issue

Ask The Health Inspector!

Focus on Equipment - Cold Holding

Focus on Process – Date Marking

Focus on the Rules - Received Cold Food

Preventing Illness - Listeria

Ask the Health Inspector!

Does anyone inspect food trucks? Yes! To operate a food truck in NC you must first obtain a permit from the local health department and be routinely inspected just like a restaurant. All food trucks must work out of a permitted commissary and return to the commissary each day for servicing. Food trucks must keep the health department up to date with a list of times, dates and locations of operation. If lists are not kept current, or the food truck does not return to the commissary daily, an intent to suspend their permit can be issued. If you are interested in obtaining more information about all requirements, you can contact your health inspector or call 704-920-1207. Do you have a question for Ask The Health Inspector? Email us at Askthehealthinspector@cabarrushealth.org

Focus on Equipment - Cold Holding

It is the duty of the Person in Charge (PIC) to ensure that cold TCS foods are being maintained at 41° F or less and not to wait for the health inspector to discover violations. Here are some tips to ensure compliance.

1. Create a temperature log for each piece of refrigeration equipment. Monitoring temperatures daily can detect potential problems early. This can help reduce the need to throw out food that has been left in the “danger zone” too long and can help prevent points being deducted on your inspection.
2. Have regular maintenance completed on all refrigeration. Regular cleaning of coils, replenishing coolant and replacing torn gaskets can lengthen the life of refrigeration units and keep them operating at their peak.
3. Do not overfill containers in the top of a prep cooler. Many pans have a fill line that is about an inch below the top of a pan. Do not fill containers past this line.
4. Make sure that cooler intakes on the outside of the cooler are not blocked and that the air flow inside of the cooler is not restricted (blocked fans, overstocking units).
5. Keep doors and lids closed as much as possible. This lets the cold air out! Remember that the ambient temperature in your kitchen can greatly affect the efficiency of your refrigeration units.
6. Do not use flip top refrigerators to cool warm or hot food. These units are only designed to keep cold food cold. Use a walk-in unit or a refrigerator that is not opened as frequently for cooling foods.

Focus on Process - Date Marking

Refrigerated, ready to eat, TCS foods opened or prepared and held in a food establishment for more than 24 hours shall be marked to indicate the date or day by which the food shall be consumed on the premises, sold, or discarded for no more than seven days when held at 41° F. The day of preparation or opening shall be counted as Day 1. Your date marking system may use calendar dates, days of the week, day dots, or other effective means, to correctly date food. Date marking is important to help reduce the growth of listeria in these foods. It is the duty of the PIC to insure that your facility is correctly following all date marking requirements and that food is marked correctly as well as discarded after seven days. For questions regarding date marking please review 3-501.17/3-501.18 in the NC food code manual.

Source: 2009 FDA Food Code, FDA Food Code Annex 3

Focus on the Rules – Received Temperatures of Cold Food

Because temperature is one of the prime factors that controls the growth of bacteria in food, one of the duties of the Person-in-Charge (PIC) at a food service facility is to observe foods as they are received to determine that they are delivered at required temperatures. All potentially hazardous foods (TCS foods) that are refrigerated should be verified to be at 41°F or below when received, except for raw eggs which may be received in refrigerated equipment that maintains an air temperature of 45°F or less. Foods that are labeled frozen and shipped frozen shall be received frozen with no evidence of temperature abuse. For more information about receiving duties and cold temperatures see NC Food Code 2-103.11 (E) and 3-202.11.

<https://www.cabarrushealth.org/DocumentCenter/View/4/NCFoodCodeManual2009>

Preventing Illnesses - Listeria

Listeriosis is a serious infection usually caused by eating food contaminated with the bacterium *Listeria monocytogenes*. An estimated 1,600 people get listeriosis each year, and about 260 die. The infection is most likely to sicken pregnant women and their newborns, adults aged 65 or older, and people with weakened immune systems.

Foods likely to contain Listeria are: Queso fresco and other soft cheeses, especially those made with raw (unpasteurized) milk; raw sprouts; cut melons; hot dogs, pâtés, lunch meats and cold cuts; smoked fish; and raw (unpasteurized) milk.

Symptoms for pregnant women are fever and other flu-like symptoms, such as fatigue and muscle aches. However, infections during pregnancy can lead to miscarriage, stillbirth, premature delivery, or life-threatening infection of the newborn. For people other than pregnant women symptoms can include headache, stiff neck, confusion, loss of balance, and convulsions in addition to fever and muscle aches.

For more information visit: www.cdc.gov/listeria/index.html

Don't forget to visit the Environmental Health Page for Food and Lodging at www.cabarrushealth.org/131/Food-Lodging for valuable resources, forms, and other information!



<https://www.facebook.com/cabarrushealth/>