

BULK FOOD SELF SERVICE GUIDELINES

This guideline is to provide general information to establishments that are selling self-serve unwrapped bulk candies/confectionery. It outlines the minimum standards for the operation of a bulk food service in the area of food safety and sanitation and should be used in supplement to The Food and Food Handling Establishments Regulation, MR 339/88R under *The Public Health Act*.

1. **DEFINITIONS**

Low Hazard Food: include cookies, breads, buns, candies, chocolate bars, jam, peanut butter, molasses, honey, fruit pie fillings spices, grains.

Potentially Hazardous Foods: include dairy products, meat and meat poultry products, fish, eggs, and artificial cream filled products. These products are not to be offered in bulk food self service operations. The exception is that sausage may be offered for sale in its natural or artificial casing, intact and uncut if displayed in refrigerated storage.

2. **GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

A. Baked Goods: pastries, buns, breads, cookies including candies.

Protection Options:

- Containers with tight-fitting covers are to be provided. Covers may be hinged or sliding. Containers shall be of food grade plastic or stainless steel or may be cardboard provided a food grade plastic liner is utilized.
- Display tables should be equipped with appropriate protective devices.
- Bagging may also be used.

B. Cereals and Dried Products: grains, flour, spices and nuts.

Protection Options:

- Containers with tight-fitting covers are to be provided. Covers may be hinged or sliding. Containers shall be of food grade plastic or stainless steel or may be cardboard provided a food grade plastic liner is utilized.

C. Semi Liquid and Sticky Products: jam, fruit pie fillings, peanut butter, honey, molasses, raisins, cherries.

Protection Options:

- Containers with tight-fitting covers are to be provided. Covers may be hinged or sliding. Containers shall be of food grade plastic or stainless steel or may be cardboard provided a food grade plastic liner is utilized

Note: All reusable display equipment must be capable of being easily cleaned and sanitized. In the case of dry products, cardboard may be used to provided they are lined with single use food grade plastic liners or bags. The reuse of cardboard containers is acceptable provided they are not soiled or contaminated in any way and foods do not come in direct contact with the cardboard.

3. FOOD PROTECTION

All bulk foods in Section A and B must be protected by one of the following methods:

- i. Food shield installation over display table or shelving with a table height of 86.36 cm (34") or higher and with the lower edge of the sneeze guard 137.56 cm (4'6") or less. A 15 cm (6") ledge around the perimeter of the table either vertically or horizontally (inset) is required to avoid accidental contact with clothing, hands and other objects. The open ends shall be enclosed to prevent accident and contact.
- ii. Covered containers, easily cleanable and with close-fitting covers, hinged or sliding covers are recommended. Container sizes shall be kept to a minimum, with sizing depending on volume of ingredient dispensed. Thorough cleaning and sanitization prior to refilling is required. Dry product (i.e. grains, cookies, buns) may be stored in clean cardboard containers provided a single use food grade plastic bag liner is utilized. The liner shall prevent any contact between the product and the box.

- iii. Dispensing utensils shall be provided for all self-service areas, and shall be appropriate for the foods involved:
 - a. Section A & B - scoops shall be made of approved material and provided with holding devices where required, (clips or saddles) conveniently located adjacent to the bulk food container.
 - b. Section A - tongs shall be provided with holding devices adjacent to the bulk food display area.
 - c. Section A, B, & C - spoons provided shall have handles of sufficient length to prevent falling into the food containers and extend beyond the top of the container through a small opening.

4. **CONSTRUCTION**

Equipment and utensils shall be constructed and repaired with safe materials; including finishing materials; shall be non-absorbent; and shall be smooth, easily cleanable, and durable under conditions of normal use.

5. **CLEANING AND SANITIZING**

Adequate facilities shall be provided for cleaning and sanitizing utensils and containers. Clean up facilities in the meat cutting area or deli area may be utilized provided these areas are thoroughly cleaned and sanitized prior to use and after use.

6. **LABELLING**

Products displayed in bulk, where identification is not certain, must be clearly labeled, on the container itself. Non-food bulk displays (i.e. dog food, detergents, etc.) shall be distinctly separate from food displays and clearly labeled.