

## **TRANSPORTATION OF POTENTIALLY HAZARDOUS FOODS GUIDELINE**

### **INTRODUCTION:**

This guideline is intended to be used to aid in the protection of potentially hazardous foods from the numerous potential sources of contamination that may occur during transportation. Temperature control is important to prevent the rapid and progressive growth of disease-causing or spoilage organisms that are naturally present in foods and the environment, as well as those introduced through incidental contamination in the operation of transport vehicles.

### **DEFINITION:**

**“potentially hazardous foods”** means any food that consists, in whole or in part, of milk or milk products, eggs, meat poultry, fish, shellfish, edible crustacean, or other ingredients, including synthetic ingredients, in a form capable of supporting rapid and progressive growth of infectious or toxigenic microorganisms, but does not include foods which have a pH level of 4.6 or below, or a water activity value of 0.85 or less.

### **FOOD PROTECTION:**

- Food must be protected from cross-contamination sources such as insects, chemicals, rodents, waste products, toxic materials, unclean equipment unnecessary handling or other agents of public health significance at all times, including while being transported.
- Adequate food temperatures must be maintained.
- Vehicles used in the transport of potentially hazardous foods should be regularly and effectively cleaned and sanitized to minimize the possibility of contamination, accelerated food spoilage and the transmission of disease organisms or toxins.
- Effective cleaning removes soil and prevents the accumulation of food residues that may decompose or support the rapid growth of pathogenic organisms or the production of toxins. Effective sanitation procedures destroy organisms of public health importance. The detergents and sanitizers used must be suitable for use in association with foods. Cresols, phenolics and / or sanitizers which may transfer objectionable odours to foods must not be used.
- All potentially hazardous foods, including seafoods, hanging primal cuts, quarters, or sides of meat, poultry, etc. must be protected from contamination by the use of packaging or covered containers while being transported.

## **VEHICLES:**

- Vehicles used to transport foods shall be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition to protect potentially hazardous foods from contamination.
- All equipment used for the transporting and handling of foods shall be smooth, impervious, corrosion resistant, non-toxic, in good repair and constructed to permit adequate cleaning. The vehicles must be constructed to prevent waste products, such as iced poultry wastes, from leaking onto the ground surfaces during transport.

## **RECOMMENDED PRACTICES FOR FROZEN FOODS:**

All vehicles intended for transporting potentially hazardous foods should be:

- constructed and insulated so that when equipped with appropriate refrigeration units they will be capable of maintaining an air temperature of at **least minus 18 degrees Celsius** (0 degrees Fahrenheit) or lower throughout the load
- equipped with an appropriate thermometer to accurately indicate air temperature inside the transport area. The dial or reading element of the device should be mounted in a readily accessible position outside the vehicle,
- equipped with air leak-proof cargo spaces, including tight fitting doors and suitable closures for drain holes to prevent air leakage,
- entirely free from any dirt, debris or offensive odours prior to being placed for loading.

Frozen foods should be securely packaged before they are offered for transport.

Carriers companies should provide their personnel with appropriate testing thermometers and instruction in proper procedures to determine that the product they receive is kept in a frozen state.

## **TEMPERATURE CONTROL:**

Potentially hazardous, non-frozen, foods must be maintained at a temperature of **no higher than 5 degrees Celsius** (40 degrees Fahrenheit). Frozen foods must remain thoroughly frozen during transport.

## **REMINDER:**

All vehicles should be checked:

- before and after each for trip for structural defects,
- for cleanliness of the vehicle,
- for properly operating refrigeration equipment
- to ensure that all food containers within the vehicle are of sound construction, clean, maintained and for separate temperature control, if applicable.