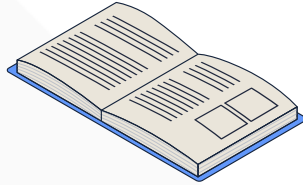


Level 1 Food Hygiene and Safety

Module 3: Food Storage

Learning outcomes

- Explain your own, and others', responsibilities for food hygiene and safety.
- Identify food safety hazards and recognise how to prevent contamination of food.



Key terminology

FIFO - all food premises should follow a stock rotation system where existing food is used before newer food. This is known as 'FIFO' or First In, First Out.

Food safety

Under food safety law, holding and storing foods at the correct temperatures are crucial parts of food safety. Failing to do so will allow harmful bacteria to grow and place your customers at risk.

You must always follow the guidance and practices set out by law in relation to temperature control, low and high-risk foods, stock rotation methods and the management of best before and use-by dates.

Low and high-risk foods

Foods are considered **low-risk** if bacteria cannot multiply in them, such as dry food or food with high concentrations of sugar, salt or acid (vinegar, for example). They are usually stored in ambient conditions and examples include canned foods, dried pasta, jams and cereals.

Foods are considered **high-risk** if they support the growth of harmful bacteria and will not undergo any further treatment to destroy them, such as dairy products and cooked meats. However, low-risk foods can become high-risk once opened or moisture is added to them, and must be refrigerated.



Level 1 Food Hygiene and Safety

Module 3: Food Storage

Temperature control and refrigeration

Given the right conditions of time, warmth, food and moisture, bacteria can multiply rapidly and will multiply the quickest in temperatures between 20 °C and 50 °C. **It is essential to understand the impact different temperatures have on bacterial growth on food.**

- When refrigerating food, there are other factors outside of temperature control to consider, a few of which include:
- Ensuring separate refrigeration areas for raw food and ready-to-eat food.
- Storing ready-to-eat foods above raw foods to prevent cross-contamination.
- Placing new stock behind older stock to ensure food stock rotation.
- Checking dates regularly, including use-by, best before and any in-house stock rotation labels. Anything out of date should be discarded.
- Never putting hot food into the fridge to cool down.
- Not overloading the refrigerator.



Use-by and best before dates

Use-by dates are generally found on high-risk perishable foods that require refrigeration. They state the date up to which the food is safe to eat and once this date has passed, the food should not be consumed, cooked or frozen.



Foods labelled with a use-by date must be checked daily to ensure they are still safe to eat. It is illegal to use, distribute, sell or display food after the use-by date.

Best before dates are more about food quality than food safety. They indicate the length of time for which a food will be at its best quality. Once the date expires, the food might begin to lose its taste and texture.

Best before dates are used for low-risk foods and are not appropriate to use for ready-to-eat foods that contain high-risk ingredients.