

		West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources			
		MANUAL OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PROCEDURES			
Section	Food	Date	December 4, 2007	Procedure #	F-6
Subject	Molded Cheese	Page		1	of 1

The question "Is cheese from which mold has been removed considered safe for human consumption" was submitted to the FDA for an interpretation, which was as follows:

The term moldy cheese refers to the presence of atypical contaminating mold on cheese, generally species of Penicillium, Aspergillus, Fusarium, Cladosporium, and Alternaria. It does not refer to the presence of molds, principally Penicillium roqueforti and Penicillium casercolum, which are intentionally added to curd or milk in order to produce "mold-ripened" cheeses, such as Roquefort, blue, brie, and camembert.

Molds may grow on cheese during the ripening stage, during the curing process or during storage. Many of the common molds grow at refrigeration temperatures. All types of cheeses, from the very hard grating cheeses such as parmesan and romano to the soft cheeses like cottage and ricotta, are susceptible to mold growth.

Some moldy cheese can be restored to a safe and sound condition by carefully cutting off and discarding a layer at least ½ inch thick, if the cheese became moldy while being held at or below 41°F.

The cutting must be done carefully to minimize the possibility of contaminating the newly exposed cheese surface. Cheese which is too small for the required cutting or which has a high moisture content (cottage or ricotta) or which has mold filaments deeply penetrating along the holes as eyes (swiss-type) cannot be made safe and sound.

References

History

Old procedure number F-43

Attachments