

3. HOUSE RULES

STOCK CONTROL

FOR ALL RETAIL BUSINESSES USING RETAILS SAFE

The House Rules Section contains 8 sub-sections, each of which covers a different food safety management subject. Once you have completed the Business Selector you will have selected the House Rules relevant to your type of business.

Every House Rule sub-section begins with guidance and then provides advice on how to write your own House Rules.

A template is then provided for you to use when writing your House Rules. Once completed, this should reflect your current safe working practices.

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO

- Read the guidance provided at the beginning of this sub-section
- Draw up your own House Rules describing how you intend to manage stock control in your business
- Information on allergies can be found at the end of this sub-section
- Once you have completed all your House Rules, remember to update your Action Plan

Think about the stock control practices that you already have in place. It is possible that you will simply have to write these down to produce your Stock Control House Rules.

THE STOCK CONTROL HOUSE RULES ARE AN ESSENTIAL COMPONENT OF YOUR HACCP BASED SYSTEM AND MUST BE KEPT UP TO DATE AT ALL TIMES



This sub-section will give guidance on stock control. At the end of the sub-section you will be asked to write your own House Rules to show how you manage stock control in your business.

Why is Stock Control important?

Stock control is a term used to describe the measures taken to ensure that food is not kept beyond its shelf life. Stock control is important because if high risk food is kept too long, even under favourable conditions, harmful bacteria may multiply. Additionally, even foods with a longer shelf life, whether dried, tinned or frozen, may deteriorate if they are kept for too long. Food which is being stored may also become contaminated by food handlers, pests and the retail environment.

HAZARDS (What can go wrong)

- **Microbiological Contamination** – Incorrect stock rotation, storage and food handling may result in the microbiological contamination of food.
- **Physical Contamination** – Incorrect transportation, storage and food handling may result in stock becoming physically contaminated.

CONTROLS (How you can prevent the hazard)

Contamination of stock can be minimised by the following practices:

Delivery

- Incoming food must not be accepted if its packaging is seriously damaged or if the food is obviously contaminated.
- Incoming food should not be accepted if its 'use by' date has expired.
- In terms of good practice, you may also wish to consider rejecting stock beyond its 'best before' date.

Storage and labelling

- Stored food must not be used or sold if its 'use by' date has expired.
- High risk food which has been removed from its packaging should be re-labelled with a new suitable 'use by' date, based on manufacturer's instructions.
- High risk foods prepared on the premises and then stored for later use should be labelled with an appropriate 'use by' date.

Stock rotation

- Stock should be rotated on a first-in-first-out basis and damaged stock removed from display and the storage area.
- Dried foods which have been opened should be stored in large waterproof containers and should not be topped up with new stock. Ensure that the existing food is used first.

Food protection

- Food being stored, defrosted, held hot, displayed or transported must be protected from contamination. This may be achieved by the use of suitable containers or packaging.
- Open food on display should be protected by the use of sneeze guards and/or covers.
- Food must be protected to prevent access by pests.



- Check 'use by' dates daily, you can't rely on your suppliers to check the dates of your stock
- Check that cans of food are not blown or the seams damaged
- Watch that your price or offer labels do not cover the 'use by' or 'best before' dates

Product withdrawal and recall

There are a number of reasons why a food product might be withdrawn (taken off the shelves) or recalled (returned to the manufacturer). Examples include, but are not limited to:

- wrong labelling
- bacterial contamination
- physical contamination

You may be asked to remove the product from your shelves and provide your Enforcement Officer with details of the foods bought and sold to other businesses. It is a good idea to keep receipts and invoices for this purpose. Please note that this information may be subject to change and you may wish to check with your Enforcement Officer and the Food Standards Agency website (www.food.gov.uk) to obtain the most up-to-date information.

Information on Food Allergies

Some people have a sensitivity to certain foods that non-sufferers would find harmless. When someone has a food allergy their immune system reacts to a particular food as if it is not safe. A severe food allergy can cause a life threatening reaction. Food intolerance does not involve the immune system and is not generally life-threatening.

Retailers need to know their products and know how to make sure that these allergens do not pass into other foods. Some foods can result in an allergic reaction. Examples of these foods include:

- | | | |
|---|-----------------------------|----------------|
| • Nuts
(namely almond,
hazelnut, walnut, cashew,
pecan nut, Brazil nut,
pistachio nut, Macadamia
nut and Queensland nut)
and nut products | • Cereals containing gluten | • Milk |
| | • Fish and crustaceans | • Celery |
| | • Eggs | • Mustard |
| | • Peanuts | • Sesame seeds |
| | • Soya | |

Key messages for retailers include the following:

- Food allergies can kill - talk to your staff about the risks.
- If preparing food on the premises, check the labels, know all your ingredients, and always reflect the presence of these items on your menu, signs or tickets to allow customers to make an informed choice.
- Keep foods that can cause an allergic reaction and/or intolerance separate from other foods.
- Utensils and equipment used with foods that can cause allergic reactions and/or intolerance should be kept separate from other utensils and equipment or cleaned thoroughly after use.
- Be aware of hidden ingredients in bought-in products/ingredients, for example nuts used in a carrot cake.
- Train all your staff in allergy awareness – staff handling food and counter or serving staff.
- Make sure that all your staff understand that they should never guess whether or not an ingredient is present in a food – they should check with management every time.

Note: Cooking does not usually eliminate allergen risks.

Please note that this information may be subject to change and you may wish to check with your Enforcement Officer or the Food Standards Agency website (www.food.gov.uk) to obtain the most up-to-date information.

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO NOW

To effectively manage the stock control part of your HACCP based system, use the information in this sub-section for guidance, go to the next page then write a list of House Rules covering stock control for your business.

Here is an example of how you could write your House Rules :

Describe: • Control Measures and Critical Limits (where applicable) • Monitoring including frequency	
Delivery	<p><i>For every delivery – visual checks :</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Check 'use by' dates</i> - <i>Check 'best before' dates</i> - <i>Check the packaging for signs of damage</i> - <i>Check product for signs of contamination</i> - <i>Check the labelling for allergens</i>

MONITORING (Checking your Control Measures)

Once you have completed your House Rules for Stock Control, you must then monitor their use.

RECORDING (Keeping a Record of your Monitoring)

Keep a record of the monitoring you carry out. Record your weekly stock control check on the COLD Record or the HOT AND COLD Record (depending on the type of food you produce in your business).

CORRECTIVE ACTION (What to do if things go wrong)

If you find that your Stock Control House Rules are not being followed, you must make a record of the problem you have identified and the action you have taken to correct it (this is known as a Corrective Action). For example if your delivery comes in and the 'use by' date has expired, reject the delivery and change suppliers. This information can also be entered in the COLD Record or the HOT AND COLD Record depending on the type of food you produce in your business. Further information on these records can be found in the **'Records'** Section of this manual.

It is required that all Records of Monitoring and any Corrective Action(s) taken be kept for an appropriate period of time, to demonstrate that your HACCP based system is working effectively.

Action Plan

Once you have completed all your House Rules, remember to update your Action Plan.

The Stock Control House Rules are an essential component of your HACCP based system and must be kept up to date at all times. Your House Rules need to be written to accurately reflect how you run your business and be readily understood by all of your staff handling food.

STOCK CONTROL HOUSE RULES

Enter a statement of your **Stock Control House Rules** in the table below:

Describe: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Control Measures and Critical Limits (where applicable) Monitoring including frequency 	
Delivery	
Storage and labelling	
Stock rotation	
Food protection	
Product withdrawal and recall	
Food allergies	
Monitoring/checking and any other appropriate records used by your business	

Signed Position in the business Date

The Stock Control House Rules are an essential component of your HACCP based system and must be kept up to date at all times.