

Food Storage Guidelines

Refrigerator/Freezer/Ambient Temperature

- **Store foods in designated areas.** Keep food away from dishwashing areas, garbage bins and rooms, restrooms, chemical/cleaning supply storage, furnace rooms, and under stairways and pipes.
- **Store food in original containers or approved food-safe containers.** If food is removed from its original package, put it in a clean, sanitized, food-safe container and cover it. Ensure to label it with the name of the food and the original expiration date. Do not store food uncovered, unlabelled or without a use-by date.
- **Check the temperatures of all storage areas and equipment at least twice daily.** Keep refrigerated food at 4°C (40°F) or colder, frozen food at - 18°C (0°F) or colder and food in a dry store between 10°C and 21°C (50°F to 70°F). Record the temperatures and the time they were taken in a temperature log.
- **Rotate stock. Use the First In, First Out (FIFO) Rule.** Dating products and storing new products behind old products makes FIFO easy to follow.
- **Keep storage areas clean and dry**
- **Store all food and supplies at least 15 cm (6 inches) off the floor and 5 cm (2 inches) away from the wall**
- **Follow top to bottom storage order to prevent cross-contamination**

Top to Bottom Storage Order (Refrigerator/Freezer)

Food must be arranged on the shelves by cooking temperature (lowest cooking temperature on the top to highest cooking temperature on the bottom shelf):

- Cooked and ready-to-eat foods on the top or highest shelf
- Whole seafood on the shelf below the ready-to-eat items
- Whole beef, pork, veal, lamb (steaks and chops); roasts; eggs that will be served immediately on the shelf below whole seafood
- Ground/injected/marinated or tenderized meat and eggs that will be hot held below the whole meat
- All Poultry items and stuffing on the lowest shelf

Proper food storage is essential to keep food safe from contamination and spoilage.