HACCP-Based SOPs

Date Marking Ready-to-Eat, Time/Temperature Control for Safety Foods
(Sample SOP)

PURPOSE: To ensure appropriate rotation of ready-to-eat food to prevent or reduce foodborne illness from Listeria monocytogenes.

SCOPE: This procedure applies to school nutrition employees who prepare, store, or serve food.

KEY WORDS: Ready-to-Eat Food, Time/Temperature Control for Safety Foods, Date Marking, Cross Contamination, TCS Foods

INSTRUCTIONS:
1. Train school nutrition employees on using the procedures in this SOP.
2. The best practice for a date marking system would be to include a label with the product name, the day or date, and time it is prepared or opened. Examples of how to indicate when the food is prepared or opened include:
   - Labeling food with a calendar date, such as “cut cantaloupe, 2/20/17, 8:00 a.m.,”
   - Identifying the day of the week, such as “cut cantaloupe, Monday, 8:00 a.m.,” or
   - Using color-coded marks or tags, such as cut cantaloupe, blue dot, 8:00 a.m. means “cut on Monday at 8:00 a.m.”
3. Follow state or local health department requirements.
4. Label ready-to-eat, time/temperature control for safety foods that are prepared on-site and held for more than 24 hours.
5. Label any processed, ready-to-eat, time/temperature control for safety foods when opened, if they are to be held for more than 24 hours.
6. Refrigerate all ready-to-eat, time/temperature control for safety foods at 41 °F or below.
7. Serve or discard refrigerated, ready-to-eat, time/temperature control for safety foods within 7 days.
8. Indicate with a separate label the date prepared, the date frozen, and the date thawed of any refrigerated, ready-to-eat, time/temperature control for safety foods.
9. Calculate the 7-day time period by counting only the days that the food is under refrigeration. For example:
   - On Monday, 2/27/17, lasagna is cooked, properly cooled, and refrigerated with a label that reads, “Lasagna, Cooked, 2/27/17.”
INSTRUCTIONS, continued:

- On Tuesday, 2/28/17, the lasagna is frozen with a second label that reads, “Frozen, 2/28/17.” Two labels now appear on the lasagna. Since the lasagna was held under refrigeration from Monday, 2/27/17 – Tuesday, 2/28/17, only 1 day is counted towards the 7-day time period.
- On Tuesday 3/7/17, the lasagna is pulled out of the freezer. A third label is placed on the lasagna that reads, “Thawed, 3/7/17.” All three labels now appear on the lasagna. The lasagna must be served or discarded within 6 days.

MONITORING:
A designated employee will check refrigerators daily to verify that foods are date marked and that foods exceeding the 7-day time period are not being used or stored.

CORRECTIVE ACTION:
1. Retrain any school nutrition employee found not following the procedures in this SOP.
2. Foods that are not date marked or that exceed the 7-day time period will be discarded.

VERIFICATION AND RECORD KEEPING:
The school nutrition manager will complete the Food Safety Checklist daily. The Food Safety Checklist is to be kept on file for a minimum of 1 year.

DATE IMPLEMENTED: ____________________ BY: ____________________

DATE REVIEWED: ____________________ BY: ____________________

DATE REVISED: ____________________ BY: ____________________