

Hygiene Guidelines on Transportation of Meat

Objective:

Cold chain monitoring is one of the important control measures to ensure food safety. If the temperature of the cold chain is not well controlled during transportation of meat, the chances of microorganisms rapidly multiplying or producing toxins in meat will increase, thereby increasing food safety risks. These guidelines are intended to remind the food sector about the food hygiene and safety issues they should note when transporting fresh, chilled and frozen meat by vehicles, so as to ensure food safety.

Scope of Applicability:

Food producers and traders, such as suppliers and retailers that use vehicles to transport fresh, chilled and frozen meat.

Content:

1. Requirements for Transportation Equipment

1) Basic requirements

- The internal surfaces of the goods compartment and storage compartment¹ of the vehicle should be smooth and impervious so as to facilitate cleaning;
- The goods compartment and storage compartment should be of an enclosed type to avoid contamination of meat.

2) Vehicles with temperature monitoring equipment

- It is preferable to transport fresh, chilled and frozen meat in the goods compartment of vehicle fitted with temperature monitoring equipment, with chill temperature at below 5 °C and freezing temperature at -18 °C or below;
- Thermometers should be installed in the vehicle to monitor the temperature of the goods compartment of the vehicle during

¹ The storage compartment specified in these guidelines refers to a small storage box, such as the motorcycle tail box for food.

transportation;

- If conditions permit, a data logger should be installed in the goods compartment of the vehicle, which constantly records the temperature on a running graph during transportation. Such temperature records should be kept for management and checking purposes.

3) Vehicles without temperature monitoring equipment

- Put ice cubes or dry ice in insulated containers or other containers that are used to store fresh, chilled and frozen meat in order to keep the meat cold;
- Ensure there is adequate amount of ice cubes or dry ice for replacement or refill when necessary.

2. Proper Protection of Meat

- Protect unpackaged meat properly, e.g. store it in suitable containers with lids. Such containers should not be used to store other food, and should be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected before and after use;
- Do not expose meat to direct sunlight or rain;
- Do not place meat directly on the floor;
- The goods compartment and storage compartment of the vehicle used for transportation of food should not be used for transportation of other goods (especially chemicals and waste).

3. Temperature and Time of Transportation

- Do not transport fresh, chilled and frozen meat in the absence of any temperature control;
- During transportation, store fresh, chilled and frozen meat separately according to the specific storage requirement. Fresh and chilled meat should be kept at below 5 °C and frozen meat at -18 °C or below;
- Before loading fresh, chilled and frozen meat, the temperature monitoring equipment of the transportation vehicle should be checked to ensure that it functions effectively and the temperature in the goods compartment reaches the appropriate level. When temperature monitoring equipment is

not available, make sure there is adequate ice cubes or dry ice in the containers to keep the meat cold;

- Shorten the time of transportation, loading and unloading of goods as far as possible. Minimise the time and frequency of opening the compartment door to maintain the temperature inside the compartment;
- Every door and window of the goods compartment of the vehicle should be kept closed during transportation, except when loading and unloading goods. The temperature monitoring equipment of the goods compartment should be kept running at all times.

4. Cleaning and Maintenance of Transportation Equipment

- Ensure the goods compartment and storage compartment of the vehicle are clean and in good hygienic condition. Clean and disinfect the goods compartment, storage compartment and relevant equipment regularly, as well as before and after use;
- Maintenance of vehicles and devices such as temperature monitoring equipment and thermometer should be carried out regularly to ensure they are in good working conditions;
- No person is allowed to stay in the goods compartment of the vehicle, except for the purpose of loading and unloading of goods, cleaning and disinfection of vehicle or maintenance of equipment.

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