

Hygiene Guidelines on Preparation and Sale of Siu-mei and Lo-mei

Objective:

Siu-mei and lo-mei are often displayed for sale at room temperature after heat-treatment, and are handled with bare hands (e.g. during chopping) before sale, thus posing a higher risk of microbiological contamination. This guideline is intended to remind the food industry about the food hygiene and safety issues they should pay attention to in the preparation and sale of siu-mei and lo-mei.

Scope:

Premises for preparation and sale of siu-mei and lo-mei, including premises for takeaways and dine-in, and food factories that make siu-mei and lo-mei, etc.

Definition:

Siu-mei and lo-mei are specially processed meat, poultry and offal products in traditional Chinese cuisines.

Siu-mei: refers to food that has been roasted at high temperatures, e.g. roasted duck and barbecue pork, etc.

Lo-mei: refers to food that has been braised and soaked in large volume of Chinese seasoning sauces for a period of time, e.g. soy sauce chicken, lo shui duck tongue and lo shui pork intestine, etc.

Content:

1. Smart Purchase and Receipt

1) Purchase

- Purchase hygienic and good quality food ingredients, such as meat and poultry, from reputable suppliers. Do not purchase meat without inspection and quarantine or from unknown sources;
- Purchase food ingredients and seasonings according to the quantity required;
- If it is necessary to buy cooked siu-mei and lo-mei, purchase from licensed food factories and reputable shops;
- Retain invoices and sales records for inspection and source tracing by competent government authorities whenever necessary.

2) Receipt

- Check the information on the invoices to see if it is consistent with the received goods upon receipt;
- Check whether the food ingredients are stored at proper temperatures. Make sure they are in good condition, uncontaminated and undamaged. Reject food ingredients which are from unknown sources, perished, expired or with signs of melting;
- If necessary, request the suppliers to provide relevant documents, such as health certificates and certificates of origins.

2. Careful Preparation

1) Storage

- Food ingredients such as meat should be wrapped and stored in a refrigerator (with chill temperature below 5 °C and freezing temperature at -18 °C or below). Follow the “cooked food above, raw food below” principle, or alternatively, store raw food and cooked food in separate refrigerators;
- Food ingredients stored at room temperature, such as salt, sugar and soy sauce, should be kept in a cool and well-ventilated place and avoid exposure to direct sunlight;
- Self-prepared sauces should be stored in a refrigerator.

2) Preparation

- Estimate the amount of siu-mei, lo-mei and sauces required to avoid over-production or preparation too far in advance. Check whether the food ingredients are in good condition and ensure that the food ingredients with earlier expiry dates are used first;
- Defrost frozen food ingredients with the appropriate methods (e.g. defrost food in a refrigerator, under running water or in a microwave oven. The food ingredients defrosted in a microwave oven should be cooked immediately). Defrosted food ingredients should be used as soon as possible;
- Impurities found in animal offal such as liver and intestine should be removed prior to thorough washing;
- Use different sets of utensils to handle raw food and cooked food separately;
- Try to avoid using food colours, and do not use industrial grade

colours;

- If food colours are needed to improve the colour of food (such as barbeque pork and roasted pork ribs), they should be chosen from a reliable and safe source, and the amount added should be controlled to the minimum to achieve the intended effect.

3) Cooking

- Production of siu-mei
 - Adjust the roasting temperature and time according to the portion size;
 - Gas grilling and electric oven roasting are preferable to charcoal grilling. If charcoal grilling is used, avoid fat from dripping onto the heat source;
 - Sui-mei should be roasted thoroughly. Ensure that the centre of the thickest part of meat is not red in colour, the juice is clear and blood is not visible.
- Production of lo-mei
 - Lo-mei should be cooked thoroughly. Ensure that the centre of the thickest part of meat is not red in colour, the juice is clear and blood is not visible;
 - Lo-mei should be completely soaked in water or lo shui marinade and be covered during cooking;
 - If cooling is required, lo-mei should be cooled from above 60 °C to 21 °C within two hours or less, and cooled from 21 °C to below 5 °C within the next four hours or less, and then stored in refrigerator.

3. Proper Delivery and Display

1) Delivery

- Keep siu-mei and lo-mei in sealed containers to prevent food from being contaminated;
- Use appropriate and clean delivery equipment or vehicle to deliver siu-mei and lo-mei to the destination as soon as possible.

2) Display and sale

- Siu-mei and lo-mei should be stored in a well-maintained, clean and hygienic siu-mei showcase for sale;
- Siu-mei showcases should not be used to store other food or items

(such as undercooked meat and money) to avoid cross-contamination;

- Use clean and appropriate packaging materials to wrap or hold siu-mei and lo-mei for takeaway;
- Stop serving siu-mei and lo-mei immediately if they have deteriorated or are suspected of being contaminated.

4. Personal Hygiene

- Wash hands thoroughly after using the toilet, and before handling and selling food;
- Wear clean and light-coloured outer clothing, protective overalls or apron;
- Do not wear accessories like rings, bracelets, watches, etc., and do not wear nail polish or false nails;
- Use waterproof dressings to cover open wounds properly;
- Do not handle money while handling food;
- Do not use finger to taste food;
- Suspend from engaging in any food handling work when suffering from symptoms of illness such as running nose, coughing, diarrhoea, vomiting and fever.

5. Utensils, Equipment and Environmental Hygiene

- Utensils and equipment that come in contact with food (e.g. chopping boards, knives and hooks, etc.) must be cleaned and disinfected before and after use;
- Cleaning cloths for chopping boards and knives should be replaced and cleaned regularly;
- All work surfaces should be made of impermeable and easy to clean materials, and kept well above the ground;
- Replace damaged or cracked utensils;
- Use covered rubbish bins, and empty and disinfect them regularly;
- Clean all siu-mei and lo-mei preparation, storage and display areas daily;
- Do not keep pets at food premises.

May 2015