

SECTION 9 – PRODUCT INFORMATION AND CONSUMER AWARENESS

OBJECTIVES:

Products should bear appropriate information to ensure that:

- adequate and accessible information is available to the next person in the food chain to enable them to handle, store, process, prepare and display the product safely and correctly;
- the lot or batch can be easily identified and recalled if necessary.

Consumers should have enough knowledge of food hygiene to enable them to:

- understand the importance of product information;
- make informed choices appropriate to the individual; and
- prevent contamination and growth or survival of foodborne pathogens by storing, preparing and using it correctly.

Information for industry or trade users should be clearly distinguishable from consumer information, particularly on food labels.

RATIONALE:

Insufficient product information and/or inadequate knowledge of general food hygiene can lead to products being mishandled at later stages in the food chain. Such mishandling can result in illness or products becoming unsuitable for consumption, even where adequate hygiene control measures have been taken earlier in the food chain.

9.1 Lot identification

Lot identification is essential in product recall and also helps effective stock rotation. Each container of food should be permanently marked to identify the producer and the lot. *General Standard for the labelling of prepackaged foods* (CODEX STAN 1-1985) applies.

9.2 Product information

All food products should be accompanied by or bear adequate information to enable the next person in the food chain to handle, display, store and prepare and use the product safely and correctly.

9.3 Labelling

Prepackaged foods should be labelled with clear instructions to enable the next person in the food chain to handle, display, store and use the product safely. *General Standard for the labelling of prepackaged foods* (CODEX STAN 1-1985) applies.

9.4 Consumer education

Health education programmes should cover general food hygiene. Such programmes should enable consumers to understand the importance of any product information, follow any instructions accompanying products, and make informed choices. In particular, consumers should be informed of the relationship between time/temperature control and foodborne illness.