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JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

FAO/WHO COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

14th Session

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GUIDELINES FOR FOOD SAFETY IN TOURIST ZONES

BACKGROUND

1. The 11th Session of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean (December 1998) agreed to continue considering issues related to food safety of interest to the Region, with particular regard to contamination by Salmonella and Emerging Pathogens¹.
2. The 12th Session of the Coordinating Committee (February 2001) stressed the importance of this issue for the Region and recalled the pending preparation of a document on food safety in areas of tourism. In this connection, the Committee welcomed the offer of Costa Rica to prepare, together with Brazil and the Dominican Republic, a draft document to be examined at the next session of the CCLAC, with an open invitation to other interested countries to participate in the preparation².
3. The 13th Session of the CCLAC considered *Guidelines for Food Safety in Tourism Zones* prepared by Costa Rica in collaboration with Brazil and the Dominican Republic and noted the request by the Regional Inter-ministerial Summit for Health and Agriculture (RIMSA) to make progress on this matter. It therefore requested the delegations of Barbados, Brazil, Cuba, Costa Rica and Dominican Republic, with the assistance of the Pan-American Institute for Food Protection and Zoonoses (INPPAZ), to prepare a new proposal for consideration at the next Session of the Committee³.
4. A proposed *Guidelines for Food Safety in Tourism Zones* prepared by the delegations of Barbados, Brazil, Cuba, Costa Rica and Dominican Republic, with the assistance of INPPAZ is attached to this document. The CCLAC is invited to consider the need for developing *Guidelines on Food Safety on Tourism Zones* as well as the best way to proceed should the Committee agree to the development of such a document.

¹ ALINORM 99/36 paras. 42-51.

² ALINORM 01/36 para. 37.

³ ALINORM 03/36, para. 82.

5. Should the Committee agrees to proceed with the development of *Guidelines for Food Safety in Tourism Zones*, a proposal for new work should be submitted in the format of a “project document” as adopted by the 27th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission in the *Amendments to the Procedures for the Elaboration of Codex Standards and Related Texts*. The “project document” is available in Appendix II, Part 2, Point 1 of ALINORM 04/27/41 (Report of the 27th Session of the Commission) available for downloading at: http://www.codexalimentarius.net/web/index_en.jsp. In preparing the “project document”, the Committee should take due account of the Criteria for the Establishment of Work Priorities as set out in the Codex Alimentarius Commission Procedural Manual (13th Edition, pages 68 - 69) and the Strategic Objectives and Priorities laid down in the Codex Alimentarius Commission Strategic Framework 2003 - 2007 (page 5).

GUIDELINES FOR FOOD SAFETY IN TOURIST ZONES

1. PREAMBLE

The 12th Session of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean (CCLAC) accepted the offer of the delegation of Costa Rica to prepare, jointly with Dominican Republic, a draft document to be analyzed at the 13th Session of the CCLAC. The possibility was opened for other interested countries to take part in the preparation of the said document.

This document has been initially prepared by Costa Rica, Brazil, and Dominican Republic.

The Guidelines have been prepared by taking into account that the Region has significantly developed the tourism industry in the last few years, and therefore, the health of tourists must be protected.

Some reports indicate that 14-25% of the tourists visiting Latin America and the Caribbean suffered from a diarrheic event in the initial 12 hours after arrival. This puts at stake the purchase of tourist services by the developed countries. Therefore, it is necessary to regulate the production of food, at all stages, in order to protect the health of transient populations.

Furthermore, the World Tourism Organization has always paid great attention to food hygiene and safety in tourist places or areas, and has often promoted, jointly with the World Health Organization, the organization of regional courses and lectures in order to make the relevant authorities and tourism professionals aware of these problems, thus guiding them towards suitable practices.

Finally, the Guidelines were considered by the 13th Session of the CCLAC⁴. On that occasion, the Committee noted the request by the Regional Inter-ministerial Summit for Health and Agriculture (RIMSA) to make progress on this matter, and requested the delegations of Barbados, Brazil, Costa Rica, Cuba and Dominican Republic, with the assistance of INPPAZ, to prepare a new proposal for consideration at the next Session of the Coordinating Committee.

2. PURPOSE OF THE GUIDELINES

- (a) to protect the health of tourists arriving at the Region from Food Borne Diseases (FBDs).
- (b) to make the basic safety requirements consistent for the production, collection, transport, storage, marketing and handling of food sold in tourist areas.
- (c) to establish basic guidelines on food safety, handling, hygiene, and quality, as well as on the principles and systems used to ensure the existence of these qualities.
- (d) to establish the general necessary guidelines to decrease the hazards to health associated to the consumption of food in tourist zones.

These Guidelines are a first step toward the regional harmonization of the requirements for food products aimed at temporary populations located in tourist zones.

The Guidelines are considered:

- (a) to expose the problem in a language appropriate for non-specialists in the field in order to facilitate the adoption of operational programs and procedures for the preparation of food in tourist zones and to be a basis for control equivalence between the Latin American and Caribbean countries.
- (b) to be a useful tool to help countries to develop national food safety programs in tourist zones in the Latin American and Caribbean Region.
- (c) to be improved taking into account the experience gathered by each of the products.
- (d) to act as a basis for the preparation of internal regulations for the countries, even more restrictive, in order to protect the tourists' health.

⁴ CX/LAC 02/8.

3. SCOPE

These Guidelines will apply to all food products aimed at food establishments such as hotels, restaurants, bars, coffee-shops, stalls and others, located in places considered of tourist attraction. (These Guidelines supplement the *Recommended International Code of Hygienic Practice - General Principles of Food Hygiene (CAC/RCP 1-1969, Rev. 4-2003)*).

4. DEFINITIONS

Tourist Zones: Areas or places which, due to its natural beauty, geographical location or other specific or social-cultural feature has infrastructure in the shape of establishments such as those mentioned above aimed at the service of people who visit such areas or places on business, for work reasons or for pleasure for periods generally shorter than one year.

Tourists: individuals visiting, either transiently or permanently, areas or places different from those where they usually live.

Tourist industry or business: private management activity facilitating the integration of the local services for the welfare, transit and stay of tourists or the temporary population of the areas visited, for the purposes of providing logistic support and to facilitate the interaction of the interested parties.

Temporary population: individuals visiting, either transiently or permanently, other places and areas for business, study, medical treatment, scientific research, meeting, or symposium purposes, or motives other than pleasure or fun.

Tourism: activity regulated by countries, with the interaction of individuals and the industry of the sector aimed at ordering and facilitating the transit, the stay and the access to the services necessary for the welfare of tourists and the transient population.

For the rest of the items arising from these Guidelines, the definitions expressed by the *Recommended International Code of Hygienic Practice - General Principles of Food Hygiene (CAC/RCP 1-1969, Rev. 4-2003)* and by the *Quality Tourism for the Caribbean Standard (QTC Standard), Food Safety and Sanitation (2001)*, prepared by CAREC and CAST will be considered.

5. GENERAL ASPECTS

The facilities enabling transit and stay of tourists and transient population (airplanes, buses, hotels, hostels, spas, restaurants, indigenous food shops, street stalls, among others) must take care of the health and the physical welfare of tourists and transient population. The general guidelines for this purpose are those established in the *Recommended International Code of Hygienic Practice - General Principles of Food Hygiene (CAC/RCP 1-1969, Rev. 4-2003)*, and in the *Code of Hygienic Practice for Precooked and Cooked Foods in Mass Catering (CAC/RCP 39-1993)*.

5.1 Water: The tourist industry must give special attention to obtaining a sufficient supply of clean and drinking water in keeping with the national regulations which define drinking water and also must make every effort for water to be used rationally and to prevent waste.

The national water authorities in each country must ensure the supply of clean and drinking water to the tourist development centres defined in the relevant National Plans related to the tourist development approved by the countries.

It is necessary to carry out ongoing information and education with specialized technicians on this matter, aimed at tourists in particular, in all those cases in which water safety is not ensured.

In the event of lacking an adequate supply of drinking water provided by the public utilities, the individuals in charge or responsible for the tourist establishment must provide for the drinking water requirements coming from a private or property source whose type (artesian well, surface water, etc.), location, treatment, disinfection for potability and sanitary monitoring be in conformity with the legislation in force in each country. In any case, the existence of residual chlorine must be checked, and the performance of adequate microbiological controls recommended by the relevant bodies must be regularly requested from specialized laboratories.

The water used for the preparation of edible ice must be potable. The guidelines for drinking and bottled water will be those prescribed by the relevant local legislation, taking as a basis the latest edition of the *Guidelines for Drinking Water Quality of the World Health Organization (Volumes 1 and 2)* and the Codex texts *Recommended International Code of Hygienic Practice for the Collecting, Processing and Marketing of Natural Mineral Waters (CAC/RCP 33-1985)* and the *Code of Hygiene Practice for Bottled/Packaged Drinking Waters other than Natural Mineral Waters (CAC/RCP 48-2001)*.

Drinking water, for all the purposes it is intended for, must be in keeping with the recommendations laid down in the latest edition of the *Guidelines for Drinking Water Quality of the World Health Organization (Volumes 1 and 2)*.

5.2 Food offered to tourists and to transient population: As well as offering the regional, national or local food, the collective food establishments in tourist resorts must consider the need for preparing, and making available to their clients, special diets whenever the circumstances so indicate.

In very cold or hot climates, or in high areas over sea level, the food offered to individuals not adapted to those conditions must be such that help them resist those situations that may alter their diet or their normal life pace.

Food handlers in food establishments in tourist areas, irrespective of their size or status, must have the necessary supply or the capacity to prepare food aimed at children, at grown-ups, at individuals recovering from surgeries or other illnesses. Taking into consideration that these groups of individuals are especially vulnerable to foodborne diseases (FBDs); for this reason, special care must be taken in the clean and safe preparation and suitable preservation of the food served to them.

5.3 Reference documents and local legislation: Recommendation is made that all food establishments located in tourist zones have written information through reference documents and local, federal and international basic legislation in the field of handling food and food hygiene. These pieces of legislation must be available, and establishment owners, general managers, chefs, chef assistants, waiters, other handlers and support personnel in direct contact with the food must be familiar with them. Also, they must serve as a basis for the establishment of internal operational practices and procedures for each establishment.

The international and regional reference documents recommended in this matter are the following:

- (a) Recommended International Code of Hygienic Practice - General Principles of Food Hygiene (CAC/RCP 1-1969, Rev. 4-2003).
- (b) Code of Hygienic Practice for Precooked and Cooked Foods in Mass Catering (CAC/RCP 39-1993).
- (c) Code of Hygienic Practice for the Preparation and Sale of Street Foods (Regional Code - Latin America and the Caribbean) (CAC/RCP 43-1995, Rev. 1-2001).
- (d) GMC Resolution 80/96 of MERCOSUR⁵.
- (e) Quality Tourism for the Caribbean Standard (QTC Standard), Food Safety and Sanitation (2001), a guide developed particularly for the Caribbean.
- (f) Local legislation relating to food hygiene and handling.

6. RECEPTION AND INITIAL INSPECTION OF GOODS

The legally responsible individuals or the owners of food establishments in tourist zones may issue written specifications on the aspects to be demanded from each of the purchases to be made, and may verify them at each of the purchase events of food or raw materials regarding food safety. These rules may consist in verification records or forms to be made available on a permanent basis to the individuals responsible for the purchases or acquisitions. Furthermore, these establishments must have a book with pages numbered sequentially to write down all the daily observations and keep them available to the relevant authorities for a period which shall not be shorter than six (6) months.

⁵ GMC: Spanish acronym for "Grupo Mercado Común" (Common Market Group).
MERCOSUR: Spanish acronym for "Mercado Común del Sur" (South Common Market).

6.1 Place: It is recommended that a pre-determined space is aimed at the reception of goods, whose lighting and ventilation must be adequate, and which shall be clean and at suitable temperature. This includes the places where the goods are to be stored.

Furthermore, next to the reception area, the necessary specific sinks with drinking water in sufficient and adequate supply shall be placed, in order to eliminate the dust and dirt that may come with the raw materials, especially vegetables, fruit and other fresh plants. Food raw materials must be inspected upon arrival, in order to verify whether these comply with the prescribed specifications, or whether they present evidence of deterioration or the presence of pests that may be transmitted to the establishment.

6.2 Time: For the purposes of acquiring and receiving the goods, this process is recommended to be carried out at times where the activity in the establishments is reduced and, if possible, whenever clients are not around. It is also convenient to program the reception of goods in such a way that suppliers never arrive at the same time. This concept is also related to the need of providing all the food and ingredients the most adequate storage in the shortest time possible.

6.3 Operational control: it is convenient to establish and comply with certain procedures for the monitoring of the reception of goods: selection of suppliers, inventory, preservation conditions according to the different products, prevention of biological, chemical and physical contamination, and a “first in, first out” program. Also, it is convenient to keep a registry of the operations to be considered critical for food safety, such as meat, fish and dairy product temperature, aiding to the selection of suppliers, the assessment of products and the ongoing improvement of products.

7. PREMISES, EQUIPMENT AND UTENSILS

7.1 Kitchen: The kitchens in tourist area food establishments must meet specified features making them suitable to act as such. These environments must be designed to prevent the cross contamination of the microbial hazards, taking also into consideration the labour security, including the prevention of accidents and fires. The first priority to be considered is the drinking water and sewage facilities, and the existence and placement of the cold chambers or freezing equipment. Also floors, walls, ceilings, storage rooms, lighting, ventilation, rooms for the staff to change their clothes and circulation hallways must be taken into consideration.

All the surfaces must be designed and built in such a way as to make cleaning and sanitation easy.

As regards the design of the kitchen and of the facilities in general, the considerations in the *Recommended International Code of Hygienic Practice - General Principles of Food Hygiene (CAC/RCP 1-1969, Rev. 4-2003)* must be taken into account.

7.2 Dining rooms and banquet rooms: These areas must meet the requirements to maintain the quality and hygiene of food, and the materials these areas are built must allow for adequate cleaning. For the purposes of avoiding the accumulation of humidity, adequate ventilation is necessary and, if necessary, the installation of air conditioning devices adequately distributed and maintained in suitable condition. Also, good lighting is essential; lack of good lighting may promote the contamination of the food offered, since food handling failures may be favoured.

7.3 Sanitation services and elimination of trash: Appropriate sanitary services, supply of drinking water and sewages must be taken into account, as well as the areas and utensils used for the collection and elimination of trash and solid waste.

The establishments must care for and carry out the necessary activities to check that the water consumed actually complies with the international standards for drinking water.

In those cases in which the national standards are more stringent than the international standards, compliance with the national standards for drinking water or the equivalent rate will be demanded. An adequate supply of drinking water must be ensured, as well as the necessary pressure. The containers where water is to be stored (tanks) must be sufficiently protected to prevent water from being contaminated by birds, rodents, insects, dust, rain, etc.

The use of non-drinking water, as required, for example, to clean or to water plants, as well as for steam production, must lead to take extra precautions to prevent the accidental use of such water in the preparation of food, the washing of utensils, or as a drink; for this reason, it must be identified with the international standard colours.

Sewage pipes must be closed, and the drains and sewers must have trap doors in order to control the emission of odours, and will be built in such a way that the elimination of sewage outside the establishment is enabled.

There must be enough sanitary services for the personnel and for the maximum number of customers to be served. If possible, those aimed for the personnel must be separate from those offered to clients.

7.4 Equipment: The equipment in contact with food must meet all the requirements for their easy cleaning and sanitation, and be built in non-toxic and resistant material. Whenever necessary, it must have devices preventing food contamination or making food contamination difficult. It must allow the monitoring and surveillance of its operation, and the equipment of cold and freezing maintenance, and those which are used for cold maintenance (about 65°C) must continuously work correctly and suitably.

8. PERSONNEL

In order to prevent food borne diseases (FBDs) that may be caused by contamination provoked by handling failure, the personnel must be demanded the following: compliance with the international or regional good manufacturing practices; good health; knowledge and application of the procedures of hygienic handling of food; and rigorous bodily hygiene. Compliance with these requirements by food handlers will be achieved by training obtained in a training course for food handlers.

A manager certified in quality and food safety must always be in the establishments preparing and serving food. This certification must be issued by an official body, or an officially acknowledged body.

All information related to health and hygiene of the food handler is included in the *Recommended International Code of Hygienic Practice - General Principles of Food Hygiene (CAC/RCP 1-1969, Rev. 4-2003)*.

9. HYGIENE, CLEANING AND DISINFECTION

9.1 Cleaning and disinfection scheme: All the food services or establishments in tourist zones must establish in writing and comply with a cleaning and disinfection scheme. This scheme must inform clearly and precisely on the importance of cleaning and disinfecting, and their purposes.

The scheme will define the specific procedures, taking into consideration whether an area or piece of equipment must be the subject of dry or wet cleaning. Also the frequency and time, and the procedure to be used with relation to each place, surface, equipment or utensil will be stated. Whenever necessary, the scheme will have instructions on the assembly and disassembly of certain pieces of equipment, such as cheese and cold meat slices. Specification will be made as to who the individual responsible is to clean and disinfect, which tools and utensils will be used, and which cleaning and disinfecting agents will be used, whose concentration will be recorded in the relevant logs.

The cleaning and disinfection products used must be biodegradable and warranted by ISO 14000 Environmental Rules or its international equivalent. In general, the use of products without environmental contraindications must be favoured, and which do not cause adverse effects to the tourists' health.

The written and detailed scheme must be shown in a suitable place, must be visible or available to users; that is, the personnel responsible for the company's scheme. Whenever necessary, the records must be assessed to ensure due compliance with the procedures established.

9.2 Cleaning procedures and application: The cleaning must be dry or wet, as already mentioned. It is necessary to clean each room or surface as appropriate, thus avoiding damage.

9.3 Disinfection: It is necessary to take into account that no disinfectant must be used to replace a thorough cleaning of surfaces and utensils.

Big establishments are recommended seek the services of a food microbiology lab to provide advice and to carry out the appropriate tests to ensure compliance with the scheme.

10. STUDY AND PEST CONTROL

In this field, the best measure to be taken is an Integrated Pest Control Scheme whose purpose is to prevent the proliferation of harmful animals in the premises, detect them in time if they succeed in entering the establishment and, in this event, destruct them or turn them away immediately. Whenever it may be necessary to eradicate pests which are already in place, it is important to take any necessary measure for the proper use of chemical substances, the protection of food and the reduction of the direct exposure of customers and workers to pesticides.

The Scheme may be designed and executed by the company itself, in the case of big companies and with sufficient financial, administrative and human resources. The scheme must be specifically prepared by specialized companies and must be approved by the local authorities.

The Integrated Program for Pest Control must specify the precautions that must be adopted in the construction of the premises or services of the place, including the supply of water and the local sewages or the modifications or repairs that are to be done if the premises were already built, to prevent dangerous animals from coming in. These practices include, among others, the consideration of the foundations, the walls and floors, the pipes, the windows, the doors, the ventilation pipes as a likely entryway for specific pests, such as cockroaches and “mus” mice.

11. PERSONNEL TRAINING

Training in food hygiene, handling, quality and safety must be provided not only to handlers but to all the personnel performing in food establishments in tourist zones.

11.1 Necessary information and knowledge for owners, managers and administrators of tourist area food establishments: suggestion is made that training for owners, managers and administrators be qualified by agencies or associations engaged in the operational training and authorization the individuals working with the production and preparation of food. The training courses must, without limitation, deal with the following topics:

- (a) Knowledge of Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP).
- (b) Knowledge of the physical, chemical and biological hazards.
- (c) Basic knowledge of the HACCP system (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points).
- (d) Knowledge of the critical control points for potentially hazardous food prepared and stored.
- (e) Basic knowledge on food borne diseases (FBDs).
- (f) Understanding of the time/temperature combination to cook and expose food and its impact on food safety and quality.
- (g) Knowledge of the procedures to keep food efficiently preserved.
- (h) Understanding the need to train, motivate and supervise the handling personnel.
- (i) Knowledge of the suitable procedures and times for an adequate cleaning of the equipment used.
- (j) Awareness of the importance of management programs as an ongoing assessment of activities and services for the ongoing improvement of food and service safety and quality.
- (k) Awareness of food crossed contamination hazards, or through surfaces, handling or utensils.

11.2 Necessary information and knowledge for cooks, assistants and handlers in general: The training of these professionals must include the physical capacity for the performance of their work. They must be qualified and trained by other professionals, through specialized agencies and associations. Qualification and capability must be assessed consistently to allow for reinforcements or new training courses. The topics to be included include, without limitation, the following ones:

- (a) Understanding the hazard of the crossed contamination and the need for hand washing after touching raw food, and a thorough cleaning of the surfaces of equipment in contact with raw food.
- (b) Understanding the principles of heat treatment to destroy microorganisms, quick cooling and adequate storage.

- (c) Understanding the need to communicate to supervisors whenever symptoms of disease appear that may be or cause food borne diseases.
- (d) Theoretical and practical knowledge of the procedures for adequate cleaning and disinfection of utensils and equipment.
- (e) Understanding the need and procedures to clean and disinfect clothing, clothes, and cleaning utensils.
- (f) Understanding the importance of working with operational procedures established by the establishment's managers.

11.3 Information to customers and tourists in particular: Tourists/customers of the establishments must be informed on the precautions regarding the consumption of indigenous food of each tourist place. Furthermore, in the event of carrying food to be consumed in hotel rooms, sightseeing and excursions, this food must be in a proper container, duly lidded, and information and instructions must be provided to include the identification of the product, preparation or elaboration date, the name of the individual responsible for its elaboration, transport, preservation, and handling time and temperature conditions necessary to maintain food safety and customers' correct use.

11.4 Cooperation between the tourism zones and relevant bodies to control food: Efforts must be made for the tourism zones and the bodies responsible for food control to work in mutual cooperation and harmony, to enable training, awareness and application of all the mechanisms and strategies to improve food quality, hygiene and safety in tourist zones.

11.5 Monitoring food safety and hygiene: Constant monitoring is important to assess food safety in tourist zones. Surveys to users, especially tourists, on the safety and quality of the food offered are recommended, which may provide very useful information to the private and public sector in order to improve the control and monitoring of food for tourists and transient population.

12. HYGIENE AND PRIMARY PRODUCTION

To all the aspects not contemplated in items 5 to 12 of these Guidelines, the following recommendations will be applicable:

- (a) The hygiene recommendations relating to primary production of fresh meat are included in the *International Recommended Code of Hygiene Practice for Fresh Meat (CAC/RCP 11-1976, Rev. 1-1993)*.
- (b) The hygiene recommendations relating to primary production of poultry are included in the *International Recommended Code of Hygiene Practice for Poultry Processing (CAC/RCP 14-1976)*.
- (c) The hygiene recommendations relating to the production of pre-cut fresh fruit and vegetables are included in the *Code of Hygiene Practice for Fresh Fruit and Vegetables (CAC/RCP 53-2003)*.
- (d) The hygiene recommendations relating to the primary production of dairy products are included in the *Code of Hygiene Practice for Milk and Milk Products (CAC/RCP 57-2004)*.
- (e) The hygiene recommendations relating to the primary production of fish and fish products are included in the *Code of Practice for Fish and Fishery Products (CAC/RCP 52-2003)*.

13. REQUIREMENTS FOR SUPPLIERS

In this respect recommendation is made that the food service establishments for hotels in tourist zones establish selection programs of suppliers and, whenever necessary, to carry out some educational and informational task to suppliers, and consider the detainment of the services of a company or association to provide training.

Suppliers must be registered with the relevant governmental services and be chosen out of those meeting the requirements of the *Recommended International Code of Hygienic Practice - General Principles of Food Hygiene (CAC/RCP 1-1969, Rev. 4-2003)*.

Application is recommended of the *Guideline Procedures for the Visual Inspection of Lots of Canned Foods for Unacceptable Defects (CAC/GL 17-1993)* whenever suppliers provide canned food.

14. TRANSPORT

In addition to the recommendations in the *Recommended International Code of Hygienic Practice - General Principles of Food Hygiene (CAC/RCP 1-1969, Rev. 4-2003)* and the Codes cited in Section 13, measures must be adopted for:

- (a) Verification and confirmation that transport be suitable for the food transported (for example, cold chamber or freezing chamber) to be cleaned easily, and that no contamination exist with physical objects such as wood, dust, etc..
- (b) Verification and assessment of the physical condition of the transport.
- (c) Verification the state of cleanliness of the transport as well as odours (there cannot be odd odours different from the product transported).
- (d) Verification and certification that the products transported are placed in such a way that there cannot be crossed contamination.
- (e) Surveillance of the procedure and conditions of food unload.

15. STORAGE

When the food, ingredients and other products arrive at the establishment, no time will be wasted in storing them in accordance with their nature. Frozen products will be kept in freezing chambers or in compartments designed for frozen products.

The places where fresh, elaborated or semi-elaborated products must comply with the following requirements:

- (a) The places must be built with materials allowing for an easy and through cleaning.
- (b) Food must be stored at, at least, 15 cm (6 inches) above ground level.
- (c) The cold room must not be filled above its capacity.
- (d) Reading must be made of the temperatures of the freezing equipment at regular intervals, and due record must be kept of these temperatures.
- (e) Entry to cold chambers must be restricted. Doors must not be left open for long periods.
- (f) The products must be rotated with the FIFO (first in, first out) methodology.
- (g) Food, in general, must not be stored in bathrooms, cleaning rooms or cloakrooms for the staff, in rooms where litter baskets or bags are placed, boiler rooms, mechanic workshops, in the open, places where cleaning products or pesticides are kept, under piping nets, under staircases and, in general, wherever there is the chance of microbial, chemical or physical contamination.
- (h) Meat or meat products cannot be piled up.

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