



Food safety advice

Storing food safely in the freezer

Here is a simple guide for storing frozen food safely.

Temperature Control:

- Frozen Foods must be stored at -18°C or lower.
- These temperatures should be checked and recorded daily, as part of your Food Safety Management System.
- When using a temperature probe, it must be calibrated regularly to ensure its accuracy.



Deliveries:



- Put frozen food in a freezer as soon as it is delivered.
- If you collect food from a supplier or shop yourself, make sure it is kept at the correct temperature when you transport it. Then put it in a freezer as soon as possible.
- If frozen food starts to defrost, harmful bacteria could grow.

Cover or wrap all foods:

- All foods must be covered and wrapped to prevent cross contamination and also freezer burn.



- Freezer burn is caused by air coming into contact with the surface of the food inside the freezer. To help prevent it and maintain quality, place food in air-tight containers or freezer bags, unless they are already suitably packaged by the manufacturer.



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Separate raw foods from cooked/ready to eat foods:

Separating foods avoids cross contamination and will also makes it easier to find and rotate stock.

- If you have an up-right freezer then use the drawers or shelves to separate your food items.
- For a chest freezer you might want to split it into compartments, and also organise items in baskets or plastic boxes.



Labelling:

- Ensure all foods (including unit produced items) are properly labelled.
- Rotate stock using oldest first. First in, first out (FIFO)
- **Use foods within shelf life:**
 - Purchased product: follow manufacturers instructions on the packaging.
 - Frozen in unit: recommend using within one month.



Products should be discarded when past 'use by' date.

Cleaning:

- Maintain the freezer and its containers in clean condition.
- It is important to clean the outside as well as the inside. As the handle is the main touchpoint, when the unit is opened and closed.
- The freezer should be listed on the business' cleaning schedule, and up-to-date cleaning records should be kept.



DAILY CLEANING CHECKLIST			
TASK / EQUIPMENT	PROCESS	CHEMICAL	✓ or x
WALLS / TILING	Remove any marks, wipe clean, report any damage	DETERGENT	
FLOORS	Sweep, then scrub floor before mopping, use safety signs	DETERGENT	
FRIDGES	Wipe internal walls and base, clean handles	DETERGENT SANITISER	
FREEZERS	Remove any remaining items/food debris, defrost and sanitise	DETERGENT SANITISER	
DRY STORES	Sweep floors, clean food debris off shelving, wipe down	DETERGENT SANITISER	

For further information please contact:

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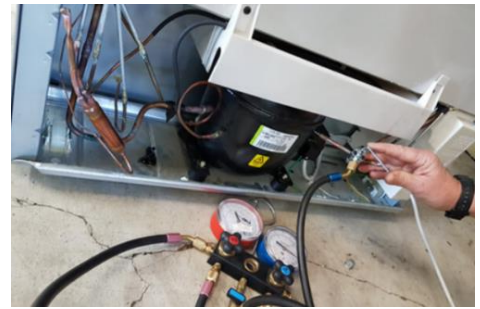
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Maintenance:

- Freezers **MUST** be properly maintained. If you notice anything that is not right, then correct it or inform your manager/owner.
- Follow the procedure for refrigerator and freezer breakdown that is in your Food Safety Management System.
- Request maintenance for any defective equipment.
- Remember if equipment is faulty, the food may defrost and harmful bacteria could grow.



What to do if something goes wrong:

If you find that your freezer or frozen display unit is not working properly, you should do the following things:

- Food that is still frozen (i.e. hard and icy) should be moved to an alternative freezer straight away.
- Food that has begun to defrost (i.e. starting to get soft and/or with liquid coming out of it) should be thrown away unless it is intended to be sold defrosted, in which case move it to a suitable place to continue defrosting. Always follow the manufacturer's defrosting instructions.
- Food that has fully defrosted (i.e. soft and warm) should be thrown away, unless it is a product designed to be defrosted by you and then sold to the customer at room temperature (or 'ambient') e.g. 'thaw and serve' products such as muffins.

Do not sell food that is intended to be sold frozen if it has defrosted, or started to defrost.

Do not refreeze food once it has started to defrost, e.g. ice cream – you will have to throw it away.