
Guidance for Developing Good Operating Practice Procedures: Incoming Materials

August 2011
Amendment 1

1 Purpose / Scope

Write up your purpose and scope for Incoming Materials.

Example: To ensure all incoming materials (i.e. food ingredients, cleaning and sanitation products and packaging materials) that are added to or associated with the food, are safe and suitable for their intended use.

See also:

- Building, Facilities and Equipment;
- Storage and Transport.

These topics have been covered individually in other guidance documents.

2 Authorities and Responsibilities

Write up who has specific authorities and responsibilities for Incoming Materials. Think about managers, supervisors and other people as may be necessary, including any contractors.

Example: The business operator has overall responsibility for Incoming Materials.

Other staff responsibilities are assigned as follows [specify who is responsible for]:

- checking incoming materials against the order (e.g. type, quantity and specification) and ensuring there is no visible contamination or damage to the product &/or packaging on receipt and that the materials arrive having been subject to appropriate transport conditions (e.g. temperature);
- checking and retaining the supplier documentation / assurances for incoming materials; and
- ensuring incoming materials are stored in appropriate conditions, in segregated storage if necessary, within an appropriate timeframe for that material.

3 Control Measures

Write up how you ensure incoming materials are safe and suitable for intended use.

Consider at least the following points:

3.1 Ordering

- how you ensure the safety and suitability of the goods you order is controlled, e.g.:
 - ensuring the supplier is compliant with regulatory requirements (e.g. checking registration / exemption from the requirement to be registered; inspect supplier premises and delivery vehicles); establish a preferred supplier programme to manage supplier use;
 - ensuring raw materials are appropriate for the use (e.g. check with the supplier; refer to product information data sheets);
 - ensuring any food additives, vitamins and minerals, and processing aids are permitted for uses in food (refer to the appropriate standards in [the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code](#) for detail);
 - ensuring all raw materials, ingredients and packaging comply with the relevant Food Standards Code requirements; and
 - ensuring all non-food chemicals are suitable for uses in food premises (e.g. check with the supplier; refer to material safety data sheets; refer to cleaning and maintenance compounds approved for uses under the Animal Products Act and Wine Act (refer to [registers and lists](#) on the MAF website for detail)).
- how you ensure you receive the materials you require, when you require them (e.g.; supplier agreements; standard order forms; stock management systems to enable timely re-ordering of goods).

3.2 Delivery

- how you ensure the safety and suitability of goods at receipt is controlled, e.g.:
 - ensuring perishable goods are delivered at a time when someone is available to check them into storage; if deliveries are made outside business hours, ensuring there is access to appropriate storage areas;

- checking the delivery matches what was ordered (e.g. against a copy of the order; against the product specifications);
- how you ensure you accept only food that has been protected from the likelihood of contamination, e.g.:
 - inspecting goods to ensure they have been received in the right condition and at an appropriate temperature to control growth of any micro-organisms which may be present in the food;
 - checking that food packaging and/or seals are intact and there is no evidence of pests;
 - checking separation of raw and ready-to-eat foods, and separation of food from other possible contaminants e.g. non-food chemicals during transport; and
 - random inspection of delivery vehicles for cleanliness, hygiene and conduct of delivery personnel.
- how you ensure rejected food does not cause contamination of other food (e.g. rejected food is clearly identified and held in a separate area until it can be reworked, returned to the supplier, discarded or destroyed).

3.3 Storage

- Refer to separate procedure covering Storage and Transport.

3.4 Release

- Refer to separate procedure covering Process Control.

4 Monitoring

Write up how you check that the safety and suitability of incoming materials is controlled.

Consider the following checks:

4.1 On Ordering

- check if your supplier has been approved by a regulator as a food business; and
- product checks to ensure physical, chemical and microbiological specifications are appropriate.

4.2 On Delivery

- spot-check delivery vehicle (cleanliness, temperature and separation of goods) and handling of goods during delivery;
- check documentation (e.g. delivery dockets, certificates of analysis); and
- check the product (e.g. visual inspection; temperature of chilled foods; frozen food is frozen solid).

4.3 Storage

- Refer to procedure covering Storage and Transport.

4.4 Release

- Refer to procedure covering Process Control.

5 Corrective Action

Write up how you correct any problems that monitoring identifies, or that you otherwise become aware of.

Include how you cover the following:

1. Defining the extent of the problem (i.e. what has happened, why and when it happened, and how much product is affected);
2. Restoring control (i.e. take immediate action to fix the problem) e.g. reject the product and notify your supplier;
3. Handling of affected things (preventing any unsafe product from being used - see the separate guidance for Complaints, Non-conforming Product, Corrective Action and Recall); and
4. Prevent re-occurrence (e.g. using information gained from the problem to make improvements such as amending your procedures, initiating a complaint to your supplier; reviewing the supplier agreement; filling gaps in staff training etc.).

6 Documentation and Record Keeping

Determine what records you need to keep for this procedure. These will help you to introduce and maintain consistent good practices, and to demonstrate to your verifier (auditor) that you are sufficiently controlling those factors that can impact on the safety and suitability of the food.

Assess any records you already have, and introduce any additional records you need for the monitoring and corrective action activities you specify in your procedure. When monitoring, you may have an option to either:

- record every check; or
- indicate that checks have regularly been carried out (e.g. throughout a week) and only record the results of a specific check where something went wrong. In these instances, always make a record of what you did to put things right (the corrective action).

Keep blank record forms handy for staff to use and let people know where they are. Keep completed record forms together where they can be found easily for your regular internal verification checks.

For your [general programme requirements](#) refer to the guidance document on the appropriate risk-based programme or plan which can be found on the Food Safety website.