

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH INFORMATIONAL BULLETIN

TO: Orange County Retail Food Facility Owners/Operators

SUBJECT: Requirements for the Receiving of Food at Retail Food Facilities

The California Retail Food Code (CRFC) establishes requirements for the receiving of food at retail food facilities. This law requires that the owner/operator assume the responsibility for the condition of the food they accept from their suppliers and use in their food facility. The purpose of this Bulletin is to inform you of these provisions of the law and to assist you in complying with them.

Section 114035 of CRFC states in part, "Food shall be inspected upon receipt and prior to any use, storage, or resale. Food shall be accepted only if the inspection conducted upon receipt determines that the food satisfies all of the following:

- Was prepared by and received from approved sources.
- Is received in a wholesome condition.
- Is in containers that are not contaminated or damaged in a manner as to permit contamination of food.
- Is in containers and on pallets that are not infested with vermin or otherwise contaminated.
- Potentially hazardous food shall be inspected for signs of spoilage and randomly checked for adherence to the temperature requirements set forth in Section 113996. No temperatures need be taken of foods that are hard-frozen or visibly well packed in ice.
- Shell eggs shall be clean and sound and may not exceed the restricted egg tolerances for United States consumer grade B standards. (Note: For more detailed information on the requirements for egg handling, refer to the Informational Bulletin on "Requirements for the Storage and Display of Raw Shell Eggs").
- Frozen food shall be accepted only if there are no visible signs of thawing or refreezing.

In addition, there are requirements for the receiving of raw or raw frozen molluscan shellfish. A large number of dead shellfish in any live shipment may mean that there was temperature abuse during shipping. These shellfish may contain high levels of disease-causing microorganisms, such as <u>Vibrio vulnificus</u>, which have caused serious illness and death in individuals with chronic diseases that weaken the immune system.

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With regard to the receipt of shell stock, Section 114039.1 states, "shell stock shall be obtained in containers bearing legible source identification tags or labels that are affixed by the harvester and each dealer that departs, ships, or reships the shell stock." The harvester's or dealer's tag or label shall bear the following information in the following order:

- 1. The harvester's or dealer's name and address.
- 2. The harvester's certification number as assigned by the authority and the original shellstock shipper's certification number.
- 3. The date of harvesting.
- 4. The most precise identification of the harvest location or aquaculture site that is practicable based on the system of harvest area designations that is in use by the shellfish control authority and including the abbreviation of the name of the state or country in which the shellfish are harvested.
- 5. The type and quantity of shellfish.
- 6. The following statement in bold, capitalized type: "THIS TAG IS REQUIRED TO BE ATTACHED UNTIL CONTAINER IS EMPTY OR RETAGGED AND THEREAFTER KEPT ON FILE FOR 90 DAYS."
- 7. The dealer's tag or label shall also indicate the original shipper's certification number, including the abbreviation of the name of the state or country in which the shellfish are harvested.

The shellfish certification tag or label shall be maintained upon the original container until emptied and then retained for a period of not less than 90 days from the date of receipt. In the case of a food establishment that sells full containers of shucked or unshucked shellfish, an invoice or written record containing all of the required shellfish information may be maintained, for a period of not less than 90 days from the date of receipt, in lieu of maintaining the certification tag or label as provided in the preceding sentence. Live molluscan shellfish may not be accepted unless received at an internal temperature of 7 degrees Celsius (45 degrees Fahrenheit) or below; provided, however, that the shellfish may be accepted at a temperature above 7 degrees Celsius (45 degrees Fahrenheit) if received on the date of harvest."

Care should be taken by you, the food facility operator, to closely monitor and adhere to these requirements. During the normal course of an inspection, the Environmental Health Specialist may require you to substantiate compliance with the receiving requirements. Some ways to demonstrate compliance would be through the use of product temperature receiving logs and by maintaining all certification tags and shipping records on the foods received.

If you have any questions regarding the requirements for the receiving of foods, please contact your Environmental Health Specialist at (714) 433-6000.