



FOOD AND DRUGS AUTHORITY

CODE OF PRACTICE FOR THE STORAGE OF PREPACKAGED FOOD IN A DRY WAREHOUSE

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1. INTRODUCTION

In exercise of the powers conferred on the Food and Drugs Authority (FDA) by Part Seven, Section 148, Sub-section 2(g) of the Public Health Act, 2012, Act 851, this Code of Practice applies to the storage of dry prepackaged foods in order to ensure their safety and quality.

This code of practice applies to the storage of all dry prepackaged food products that are

a) Locally manufactured/produced/processed

b) Imported

and are intended for human and animal consumption, distribution or to be offered for sale in Ghana.

This code of practice is intended to provide prepackaged food manufacturers, producers, processors and prepackaged food importers with the requirements of the FDA.

This code of practice is hereby promulgated for information, guidance and strict compliance by all concerned.

2. GLOSSARY

For the purpose of these guidelines the following definitions shall apply:

“**Dry warehouse**” means a suitable structure where food products that do not need refrigeration are kept

“**Pest**” means organism with a characteristic to contaminate food product.

“**Food**” means articles used for food or drink for human or animal consumption including chewing gum

“**Warehouse manager**” means any person, partnership, corporation, association, cooperative or other business unit having the direct and primary responsibility for the maintenance and operation of a food storage warehouse.

“**Wholesome**” means food in sound condition, clean, free from adulteration and otherwise fit for human consumption.

“**Hazardous substances**” is a substance or mixture of substances which is toxic, corrosive, an irritant, flammable, or which generates pressure through heat, decomposition or other means and which may cause substantial personal injury or substantial illness during or as a result of handling or use, including ingestion by children.”

“**Prepackaged food**” means a food substance packaged or made up in advance in a container, ready for offer to the consumer, or for catering purposes.

“**Non-conforming food product**” means prepackaged food product that does not meet the manufacturer’s standard for that particular product.

“**Requirements**” means the criteria relating to trade in food, covering the protection of public health, the protection of consumers and conditions of fair trade.

3. REQUIREMENTS

3.1 WAREHOUSE SURROUNDINGS

The area around a food storage warehouse under the control of the warehouse manager or owner shall be free from conditions which may result in the contamination of food including, but not limited to, the following:

3.1.1. Improperly stored equipment, litter, waste, refuse, uncut weeds, or grass within the immediate vicinity of the warehouse, which may constitute an attractant, breeding place, or harborage for pests.

3.1.2. Inadequately drained areas and excessively dusty roads, yards, or parking lots which may constitute a source of contamination to food products by providing a breeding place for pests.

3.1.3. Inadequate and open refuse containers which may be an attraction for pests.

3.2 WAREHOUSE FABRIC AND STRUCTURE

Warehouse buildings shall be suitable in size, construction, and design to facilitate maintenance and sanitary operations of a food storage warehouse. Also,

3.2.1. Facilities shall be so designed, fabricated, and finished as to minimize the entry of insects, birds, rodents, dogs, cats, and other pests.

3.2.2. All necessary ventilation doors, windows, louvers, or other openings shall be effectively screened against insects, rodents, and birds.

3.2.3. All service connections through the exterior wall of the warehouse, including water and electrical connections shall be appropriately sealed to prevent the entry of insects, rodents, and birds.

3.2.4. Cracks, crevices, tunnels, or other openings at floor-wall junctions, floor mouldings, pipes, and windows caused by poor construction, settling, or any other reason which will

provide easy entry or harborage of insects, rodents, or other pests shall be repaired.

3.2.5. All parts of the food storage warehouse shall be illuminated so as to permit the activity

for which the premises are used to be carried on safely and to permit effective cleaning and inspection of the products.

3.2.6. Where needed and appropriate, rooms shall have sufficient ventilation to prevent any undue condensation of water vapor, objectionable odors or early deterioration of food products.

3.2.7. Floors shall be constructed of easily cleanable and reasonably smooth material. They shall be kept clean and in good repair.

3.2.8. Walls and ceilings shall be kept reasonably free of dirt, dust, cobwebs and shall be in good state of repair.

3.2.9. Floor drains shall have effective traps or screens to prevent the entry of pests through drainage lines.

3.3 STORAGE PRACTICES

The warehouse manager shall take reasonable measures to protect all areas where food is kept or stored in a food storage warehouse against the entry, breeding, or harborage of pests including rodents, birds, flies, cockroaches, and weevils.

3.3.1. No dogs, cats, fowl, birds, or other types of animals shall be permitted in a food storage warehouse.

3.3.2. All hazardous substances including, but not limited to, corrosive and caustic chemicals, lighter fluids, insecticides, pesticides, liquid detergents, bleaches, and dyes shall be stored in a separate area from food products in such a manner as to preclude any possible contamination of the stored foods.

3.3.3. Pesticides shall be placed in covered bait boxes (tamperproof) to prevent spillage or possible contamination to stored foods and danger to employees. The bait boxes shall be properly labeled with warning notice. All pesticide baits shall be applied in such manner as to prevent contamination of stored food products. Pest control activities are to be handled by a properly certified individual or firm.

- 3.3.4. All pesticides used shall be of approved type and shall be applied in such a manner as to protect stored foods.
- 3.3.5. Cleaning materials, pesticides or any other such hazardous substances or chemicals used in the operation of a warehouse shall be stored in properly labeled containers and away from food products.
1. When a licensed pest control service is employed, the service shall file at the warehouse a diagram of the bait station locations and the chemical used. If a service is not contracted, the warehouse manger shall designate a trained employee to be responsible for the pest control program being used.
- 3.3.6 Storage methods shall be used which will minimize deterioration and prevent contamination of stored food products. Shelves, cabinets, and pallets shall be used to protect food products from contamination and deterioration. All food items, except those stored on shelves, cabinets and metal racks shall be stored at least 50cm away from the walls.
- 3.3.7 A program of stock rotation including adequate identification of each lot shall be maintained to assure rapid and proper rotation of goods.
- 3.3.8 Non-food items such as vehicle tires, trash, unused equipment, or any other material or condition which may potentially provide a harborage for insects, birds, and/or rodents shall be removed from a food storage warehouse.
- 3.3.9 Walls and ceilings shall be reasonably smooth, clean and in good repair.
- 3.3.10 The warehouse manager shall.
1. provide a demarcated area for the accumulation and holding of all damaged foods or foods which are or may be unwholesome or non-conforming.
 2. maintain a program of timely and proper disposal of unwholesome food to prevent development of insanitary conditions or feeding and harborage areas for pests.
- 3.3.11 The warehouse shall be provided with a conveniently located toilet which shall be kept clean and in good repair. The toilet room shall be completely enclosed and well lit. Any window opening to the outside shall be screened to prevent entry of pests.
- 3.3.12 A hand washing facility shall be provided adjacent to or in the toilet room and shall be kept clean and in good repair. A sign directing employees to wash their hands before returning to work shall be placed in all toilet rooms.

3.4 GENERAL HOUSEKEEPING AND WASTE DISPOSAL

- 3.4.1. The warehouse shall be free of unnecessary litter and rubbish, such as paper, empty containers, or other materials which may serve as a harborage for pests.
- 3.4.2. All food wastes held for disposal shall be kept in leak-proof nonabsorbent, easily cleanable containers so as to be inaccessible to pests.
- 3.4.3. The warehouse manager shall require that all refuse be disposed of at regular intervals and of sufficient frequency as to prevent the creation of objectionable conditions.
- 3.4.4. Packages, cases, or lots containing leaking cans, torn bags, or other damage which may be an attractant to pests shall be repaired or removed.
- 3.4.5. Trash, spillage, excess paper, and other debris shall be removed, swept, and /or vacuumed to prevent an accumulation of dirt and rubbish.

3.5 TRANSPORTATION PRACTICES

- 3.5.1. All cars, trucks, or other vehicles used in the transportation of food products shall be kept clean at all times.
- 3.5.2. Food products shall be handled in such a manner as to protect all food from deterioration while in transit.
- 3.5.3. Foods while in transit shall be protected in such manner as to preclude being contaminated by hazardous substances.

3.6 RECORDS AND DOCUMENTATION

The warehouse manager is required to develop policies and keep records on all essential warehouse activities that have to be carried out to ensure the safety and quality of the food products in storage. These activities include but are not limited to product receipt, product dispatch, product recall, safe disposal of unwholesome products, cleaning and sanitation and pest control program

3.7 MISCELLANEOUS

These provisions relating to food storage warehouses are in addition to and not substitute for all other applicable laws or regulations relating to this type of business operation. The FDA shall at any time, when necessary, take other procedures or steps to ensure that food handled, stored, offered for sale for human or animal consumption, is wholesome and unadulterated.

4. SANCTIONS

Failure on three counts of caution on non-adherence to this code of practice will result in suspension or revocation of license.

5. PENALTIES

Where non-adherence to this code of practice results in exposure of consumers to a food safety hazard, the FDA will impose an administrative fine in accordance with Public Health Act, 2012, Act 851, Section 148, Sub-section 4 & 5.