SOUTH CAROLINA

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

FOOD SAFETY DIVISION

"GUIDELINES FOR FOOD PROCESSORS"

2015 (REVISED)

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

"PRODUCT TO PRODUCTION" – GETTING STARTED FROM SCRATCH

If you plan to manufacture your product yourself, you need to contact the following for Rules and Regulations:

- If your product is sold **retail only**, call DHEC Food Protection – 803-896-0640
- If your product contains **more than 3% raw or 2% cooked Beef, Pork, Chicken or Lamb, call SC Meat & Poultry Inspection Service – 803-788-8747.**
- If your product is a **Dairy, Soft Drink or Bottled Water Product**, call DHEC Dairy – 803-896-0644.
- If your product is a **Shellfish** product only, call DHEC Shellfish – 843-846-1030.
- If your product is an **alcoholic** product, call ATF – 803-251-4640
- All other products, call South Department of Agriculture – 803-737-9690.

SCDA regulated Specialty Food firm using a DHEC inspected kitchen

The owner/operator of the DHEC kitchen must get approval from their DHEC inspector to allow the use of their kitchen. The owner/operator of the DHEC kitchen **AND** the Specialty Food Manufacturer must submit, in writing, a statement granting the Specialty Food Firm permission to use the DHEC **kitchen during non-operational hours**. The letter must be submitted to SCDA and DHEC prior to manufacture and sale of product. DHEC, as the primary agency, can refuse permission for the Specialty Food Manufacturer to operate in the DHEC kitchen if in their opinion the operation would adversely impact the operation or maintenance of the DHEC facility.

Business Counseling and Training

For valuable information on how to run a successful business, schedule an appointment with Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE), 803-765-5131. SCORE is a volunteer program sponsored by the U.S. Small Business Administration. SCORE volunteers work in or near their home communities to provide management counseling and training to first-time entrepreneurs and current small business owners. Visit the SCORE web site at www.sba.gov.

South Carolina Business One Stop or SCBOS is the official South Carolina business web portal. It enables anyone with an existing business or anyone starting a new business to file permits, licenses, registrations, or pay taxes. Visit the SC BOS Website at https://www.scbos.sc.gov/.

Funding a Startup Business

Startup funding is necessary before any revenue is generated from product sales. Since it is costly to start any business, the use of an inspected facility such as a restaurant or caterer may be the best route initially. DHEC and SCDA must be involved with this option and must grant approval.

Product Liability Insurance

Investigate the cost of product liability insurance. Many large customers require sellers to show proof of liability insurance. Check with your homeowner's insurance provider for assistance. This is not a SCDA or Federal requirement.

Labeling Requirements

Research compatibility between the chosen label and the bottle (package) and what you and your co-packer use before any final decisions are made. Labels must comply with the Fair Packaging and Labeling Act and the Food Allergen Labeling and Consumer Protection Act. The SCDA will review your label prior to printing to ensure compliance. Food labels that are not in compliance are considered misbranded, therefore adulterated, and can be removed from sale.

UPC Coding

A UPC Code may be needed to sell your product in supermarkets. Call 1-800-543-8137 for more information about UPC Codes. This is not a SCDA or Federal requirement.

Product Analysis/Thermal Process Schedule

Product analysis by a recognized Process Authority to determine the nature of your product, shelf life, processing requirements, and other important characteristics is recommended for many products. An analysis for pH, water activity and thermal processing requirements will be required for Acidified and Low Acid foods. A product analysis can be obtained from the **Processing Authorities** at Clemson University Food Science or NC State University. For Clemson, please contact Kimberly Baker, 864-359-3386, kabaker@clemson.edu or Adair Hoover, 864-656-9986, cpope@clemson.edu. For NC State, please contact Dr. Fletcher Arritt, 919-513-2090, fmarritt@ncsu.edu or Tristan Berry, tkberry@ncsu.edu. Products will be classified as **ACID FOODS** (most jams and jellies), **ACIDIFIED FOODS** (relishes, pickles, some sauces), or **LOW ACID FOODS** (vegetables, milk based sauces, and soups). Acidified and Low-Acid Foods will require attending a **Better Process Control School.**

Minimum Cooking Temperatures

Internal Temperature: Beef (145*F), Pork (150*F), Fish (145*F), Poultry (165*F), Eggs (145*F) Ground: Beef (155*F), Pork (155*F), Poultry (165*F) External Surfaces: Beef (155*F), Pork (155*F), Poultry (165*F) Hold Temperature (of already-cooked foods): 130*F or above or 45*F or below

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GUIDELINES FOR FOOD PROCESSORS

SECTIONS

1. Definitions.
2. Grounds.
3. Building and facilities.
4. Equipment and utensils.
5. Sanitary operations.
6. Processes and controls.
7. Personnel.

Section 1. Definitions.

The definitions and interpretations contained in S**ection 39-25-20 of the South Carolina Food and Cosmetic Act** are applicable to such terms when used in these guidelines. The following definitions shall also apply:

- "Food processing area" means any place where food products or their ingredients intended for human consumption are prepared, processed, repacked, handled or manufactured. A food processing area shall also include any room used for washing and storing utensils, equipment or other apparatuses that come into contact with foods or ingredients of foods.

- "Potentially hazardous foods" means any perishable food, which consists in whole or in part of milk or milk products, eggs, meat, poultry, fish, shellfish or other ingredients capable of supporting rapid and progressive growth of infections or toxigenic microorganisms.

- "Sanitize" means effective treatment to physically clean surfaces of equipment, walls, refrigerators and utensils by a process that is effective in destroying microorganisms, including pathogens.

- "Shall" and "should." As used in these guidelines, "shall" refers to mandatory requirements and "should" refers to recommended procedures or equipment.

Section 2. Grounds.

The grounds around a food processing area under the control of the operator shall be free from conditions, which may result in the contamination of food. Standing water, excessively dusty road, uncut weeds, litter and wastes that may attract insects, birds, rodents or other animals shall not be permitted.

Section 3. Building and facilities.

Food processing areas shall be suitable in size, construction and design to permit easy maintenance and a sanitary operation. Food processing areas shall be completely separated from living quarters by solid, impervious walls with no connecting openings.

- Walls and ceilings - Walls and ceilings shall be kept clean and in good repair. They should be constructed of tile, smooth surface concrete, cement plaster, FRP (Fiberglass Reinforced Plastic), or other suitable materials. The paint should be an oil base paint or epoxy and should be light colored.

- Floors - Floors shall be kept clean and in good repair. Floors should be constructed of smooth surface concrete, tile or other waterproof materials that can be easily cleaned.

- Drains - Drains shall be installed where needed. Drains shall be adequate in size to prevent back-up clogging. They shall have proper traps and shall be kept in good repair.

- Sinks - There shall be a minimum of a mop sink-hand sink combination and a separate utensil sink to adequately clean and sanitize all utensils as needed.

- Water and sewage - The Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) shall approve the Water Source and Sewage Disposal System whether private or public (Telephone 803-898¬3432 for information). Plumbing shall be installed in a manner that will prevent back-flow. All Sinks, Drains and Toilets shall drain into a DHEC approved Sewage Disposal System.

- Hot water - An adequate supply of hot water shall be supplied to all sinks. The temperature should be maintained at a minimum of 140 deg. F at all sinks except hand washing sinks which should be maintained at a minimum of 110 deg. F.

- Hand-washing facilities - Convenient hand-washing facilities shall be available for use before handling any foods, their ingredients or equipment. There shall be adequate hot water and bactericidal soap at each hand-washing station. Single service, disposable towels should be supplied also.

- Lighting - There shall be ample light available to promote cleanliness and safety. Light bulbs over processing areas or open food or ingredients must be protected to prevent glass getting into the product.

- Ventilation - There shall be adequate ventilation to prevent condensation and disagreeable odors. All windows and doors left open for ventilation purposes shall be properly screened with #16-mesh screen. If an outside door opens directly into a processing room, an air or plastic curtain should be present.

- Rest room facilities - Rest room facilities shall be provided for personnel. Where rest room facilities are provided, associated hand-washing facilities shall also be provided. A sign shall be posted directing personnel to wash their hands with soap after using the toilet.

Section 4. Equipment and utensils.

All equipment and utensils should be suitable for their intended purposes and properly maintained.

- Rusted and corroded equipment shall not be used.
- Food contact surfaces should be smooth, free from pits and crevices and relatively non-absorbent.
- Sponge rubber, stone slab, linoleum and unglazed ceramic shall not be used in equipment construction. Wood handled utensils should not be used.
- Each freezer and cooler shall be equipped with an accurate, easily readable thermometer.

Section 5. Sanitary operations.

Floors, walls, ceilings, tables, work surfaces, equipment and utensils shall be clean and sanitary when put into service.

- Food contact surfaces, equipment and utensils shall be cleaned and sanitized as necessary to maintain sanitary conditions. Sanitization may be accomplished with steam, hot water, chlorine or other approved bactericidal agents.
- Cleaned and sanitized equipment and utensils shall be stored in a clean, dry manner protected as much as possible from dust and other contaminates.
- Waste materials shall be removed promptly to prevent development of unsanitary conditions and feeding areas for insects and rodents.
- A rodent and insect control program should be maintained and handled by a qualified individual or firm.

Section 6. Processes and controls.

All reasonable precaution shall be taken to assure that production procedures do not cause contamination of food during processing.

- Raw materials shall be inspected to ensure that they are free from any contamination and fit for human use. Must be from approved sources.
- Meaningful codes should be used so that positive identification of specific lots can be made.
- Potentially hazardous foods shall be stored at an air temperature of 45 deg. F or less. Frozen foods shall be stored at an air temperature of 0 deg. F or less.
- Storage and transportation of finished products shall be under conditions that will prevent contamination and undesirable deterioration of the product and the container.

Section 7. Personnel.

- No person infected with a communicable disease shall work in a food processing area. Personnel shall wear clean outer garments and maintain a high degree of personal cleanliness.
- Employees shall wash their hands thoroughly (and sanitize where necessary) before starting work, after each absence from the work area and any other time their hands may have become soiled or contaminated.
- Employees shall wear hairnets, caps, or other effective hair restraints.
- Personnel shall not eat or use tobacco in any form in a food processing area.

For more information on how to manufacture and label your product, contact

Angie Culler-Matthews, State Manager

SCDA Food Safety & Compliance Program

803-737-9690

aculler@scda.sc.gov