# FOOD SAFETY TRAINING FOR PANTRIES



Our Community, Our Food Bank

# **FOOD SAFETY TRAINING FOR PANTRIES**

ACCORDING TO THE CENTER FOR DISEASE CONTROL, EACH YEAR 76 MILLION INDIVIDUALS GET SICK FROM FOODBOURNE ILLNESSES; 325,000 INDIVIDUALS ARE HOSPITALIZED; 5,000 INDIVIDUALS DIE.

# WHY FOCUS ON FOOD SAFETY?

- EVEN THOUGH PANTRIES DO NOT PREPARE MEALS, CARE MUST ALWAYS BE TAKEN IN GIVING FOOD TO THE PUBLIC, ESPECIALLY TO POPULATIONS WITH A HEIGHTENED SUSCEPTIBILITY TO FOOD-BORNE ILLNESSES:
  - o INFANTS, CHILDREN, ELDERLY, PREGNANT WOMEN
  - INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE UNDERNOURISHED, PHYSICALLY DISABLED, OR HAVE WEAKENED IMMUNE SYSTEMS
- Donated product is different than retail store product:
  - DONATED PRODUCT IS OFTEN HANDLED BY MORE PEOPLE IN ITS LIFETIME THAN PURCHASED PRODUCT
  - IT IS HARDER TO ESTABLISH THAT EVERYONE HANDLING DONATED FOOD HAS HANDLED IT APPROPRIATELY
  - DONATED PRODUCT IS MOST LIKELY CLOSER TO CODE DATE THAN RETAIL STORE PRODUCT
- IN THE EVENT OF AN ILLNESS, ORGANIZATIONAL LIABILITY IS REDUCED ONLY IF YOU CAN
  DEMONSTRATE THAT PROCEDURES HAVE BEEN FOLLOWED TO MAINTAIN THE CHAIN OF FOOD
  SAFETY

# **HOW FOOD BECOMES UNSAFE:**

- BIOLOGICAL HAZARDS SUCH AS BACTERIA, VIRUSES, PARASITES AND FUNGI CAN'T BE SEEN, TASTED, OR SMELLED AND CAN CONTAMINATE FOOD (THESE ARE CALLED PATHOGENS)
- CHEMICAL HAZARDS SUCH AS CLEANING PRODUCTS, SANITIZERS, PEST CONTROL POISONS, ETC.
   CAN CONTAMINATE FOOD
- PHYSICAL HAZARDS SUCH AS DIRT OR RUST ON TOP OF CANS, METAL SHAVINGS, GLASS FRAGMENTS, ANIMAL DROPPINGS, INSECT CASINGS, ETC. CAN CONTAMINATE FOOD
- Pantries are at highest risk for Time and Temperature abuse of product, which means letting food stay too long in the Temperature Danger Zone:
  - o Temperature Danger Zone (41° F 135° F) is the range in which pathogens grow fastest

- o Meat, poultry, fish, shellfish and dairy products, whether cooked or uncooked, should not be left in the Temperature Danger Zone for more than 1 hour
- O ANY COOKED VEGETABLE, STARCH OR GRAIN PRODUCTS INCLUDING RICE, PASTA AND POTATOES SHOULD NOT BE LEFT IN THE TEMPERATURE DANGER ZONE FOR MORE THAN 1 HOUR
- FROZEN PRODUCT SHOULD NOT REMAIN IN THE TEMPERATURE DANGER ZONE FOR MORE THAN 4 HOURS OVER THE COURSE OF THE PRODUCT'S LIFETIME

# PROPER STORAGE ENVIRONMENT:

- ACCESS TO STORAGE SHOULD BE LIMITED TO AUTHORIZED STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS WHO HAVE AN AWARENESS OF FOOD SAFETY ISSUES
- DRY STORAGE AREAS SHOULD BE CLEAN, DRY, AND PEST-FREE:
  - CLEAN STORAGE AREAS REGULARLY
  - STORAGE AREAS SHOULD BE WELL VENTILATED
  - KEEP THE DRY-STORAGE ENVIRONMENT BETWEEN 50° AND 70° F WITH HUMIDITY LESS THAN 60%
  - IF THERE IS A "MUSTY" SMELL OR THERE IS CONDENSATION ON WALLS, INSTALL A DEHUMIDIFIER
  - KEEP RECORDS OF PEST INSPECTIONS AND DOCUMENT WHAT STEPS WERE TAKEN IF EVIDENCE OF PESTS WAS DISCOVERED:
    - IF YOU DO NOT HAVE A CONTRACT WITH A PEST CONTROL SERVICE, CREATE YOUR OWN LOG THAT TRACKS INSPECTIONS & TREATMENTS
    - Ensure that all access points for pests and vermin are sealed
    - STORE CEREALS, GRAINS, SUGAR & FLOUR IN AIRTIGHT CONTAINERS TO PREVENT INFESTATIONS
- FOOD SHOULD BE STORED AT LEAST 6 INCHES ABOVE THE GROUND AND (IDEALLY) 2 INCHES AWAY FROM THE WALLS:
  - PREVENTS PRODUCT FROM CONTAMINATION SHOULD THERE BE MINOR FLOODING
  - REDUCES PEST ACCESS
  - ALLOWS FOR EASIER CLEANING
  - TO MAXIMIZE STORAGE, PUT NON-FOOD ITEMS ON THE FLOOR OR LOWEST SHELF
- SEPARATE DRY-STORAGE PRODUCT FROM CHEMICALS:
  - STORE CLEANING PRODUCTS AND OTHER CHEMICALS IN A SEPARATE ROOM FROM FOOD STORAGE
  - o IF THIS IS NOT POSSIBLE, STORE SUCH ITEMS ON A SEPARATE SET OF SHELVES
  - DO NOT EVER STORE CLEANING PRODUCTS OR CHEMICALS ABOVE FOOD ITEMS
- AVOID STORING PRODUCT:
  - BENEATH WATER OR SEWER LINES
  - NEAR HEAT SOURCES SUCH AS OVENS, FORCED AIR VENTS, OR FURNACES
  - NEAR WINDOWS THAT RECEIVE DIRECT SUNLIGHT
- Maintain cold-storage units appropriately:
  - ENSURE THAT REFRIGERATORS ARE HOLDING TEMPERATURES BETWEEN 33° F AND 40° F
    - Below 32° F and product may freeze
    - COLONIES OF BACTERIA THAT CAUSE FOODBOURNE ILLNESS CAN DOUBLE IN 20 MINUTES IF FOOD IS STORED IN THE TEMPERATURE DANGER ZONE (41° F - 135° F)
  - ENSURE THAT FREEZERS ARE HOLDING TEMPERATURES BETWEEN -10° F AND 0° F
    - FOOD STORED BELOW 30° F MAY APPEAR TO BE FROZEN, BUT CERTAIN YEASTS AND BACTERIA CAN CONTINUE TO GROW AT 15° F
  - RECORD COLD STORAGE TEMPERATURES AT LEAST ONCE A WEEK
  - CLEAN AND/OR DEFROST ALL UNITS AT LEAST QUARTERLY

# **EVALUATING PRODUCT FITNESS - CODE DATES:**

- Dates are printed on many food items, but product dating is **not required** by federal regulations except on infant formula and baby foods
- **CLOSED DATES**, PACKING NUMBERS, OR JULIAN CODES APPEAR AS A SERIES OF LETTERS AND/OR NUMBERS AND ARE CREATED BY THE MANUFACTURER:
  - USUALLY APPEAR ON SHELF-STABLE PRODUCTS SUCH AS CANS OR BOXES
  - REFER TO THE DATE OR TIME OF MANUFACTURE, NOT PRODUCT EXPIRATION
  - ENABLE MANUFACTURERS TO ROTATE THEIR STOCK
  - ENABLE MANUFACTURERS TO LOCATE PRODUCT IN THE EVENT OF A RECALL
- CALENDAR DATES HELP STORES DETERMINE HOW LONG TO DISPLAY PRODUCT FOR SALE:
  - O RELATE TO THE PEAK QUALITY OF FOOD, NOT PRODUCT SAFETY
  - FOUND PRIMARILY ON PERISHABLE FOODS, SUCH AS DAIRY, EGGS, MEAT AND POULTRY
- THREE COMMON TYPES OF CODE DATES:

"BEST IF USED BY" RECOMMENDED FOR BEST FLAVOR OR QUALITY; NOT A PURCHASE OR SAFETY DATE

"SELL-BY" DATE

TELLS THE STORE HOW LONG TO DISPLAY THE PRODUCT FOR SALE; RECEIVE THE

PRODUCT BEFORE THIS DATE EXPIRES

THE LAST DATE RECOMMENDED FOR USE OF THE PRODUCT WHILE AT PEAK QUALITY;

THE MANUFACTURER OF THE PRODUCT HAS DETERMINED THIS DATE

- SHELF-STABLE OR FROZEN PRODUCT THAT IS PAST CODE DATE IS GENERALLY SAFE TO
  DISTRIBUTE; HOWEVER, PRODUCT COLOR, TASTE, OR NUTRITIONAL CONTENT MAY BE AFFECTED
- Refrigerated items should be distributed on or shortly after code date:
  - EGGS CAN BE DISTRIBUTED 3-4 WEEKS AFTER THE SELL-BY DATE
  - O YOGURT CAN BE DISTRIBUTED UP TO 7 DAYS PAST THE SELL-BY DATE
- BASED ON PRODUCT TYPE, AVAILABLE CODE DATES, OR WHEN THE PRODUCT WAS RECEIVED, YOU SHOULD **DETERMINE A SAFE LAST DATE FOR DISTRIBUTION**:
  - o IT IS ASSUMED THAT MOST PANTRY CONSUMERS WILL USE THE PRODUCT WITHIN A FEW DAYS
  - O BABY FOOD AND INFANT FORMULA CANNOT BE DISTRIBUTED PAST THE USE-BY DATE
  - CANNED GOODS CAN BE DISTRIBUTED AT LEAST A YEAR PAST CODE DATE
    - LOW-ACID CANNED GOODS CAN BE DISTRIBUTED LONGER PAST CODE DATE THAN HIGH-ACID CANNED GOODS (E.G., POTATOES VS. TOMATOES)
  - BOXED PASTAS, RICE, AND BEANS CAN BE DISTRIBUTED AT LEAST A YEAR PAST CODE DATE
  - Non-frozen perishables must be distributed within or soon after code date
  - RETAIL MEATS FROZEN ON OR BEFORE THE SELL-BY DATE SHOULD BE DISTRIBUTED WITHIN 6 MONTHS.

# **EVALUATING PRODUCT FITNESS - CANS:**

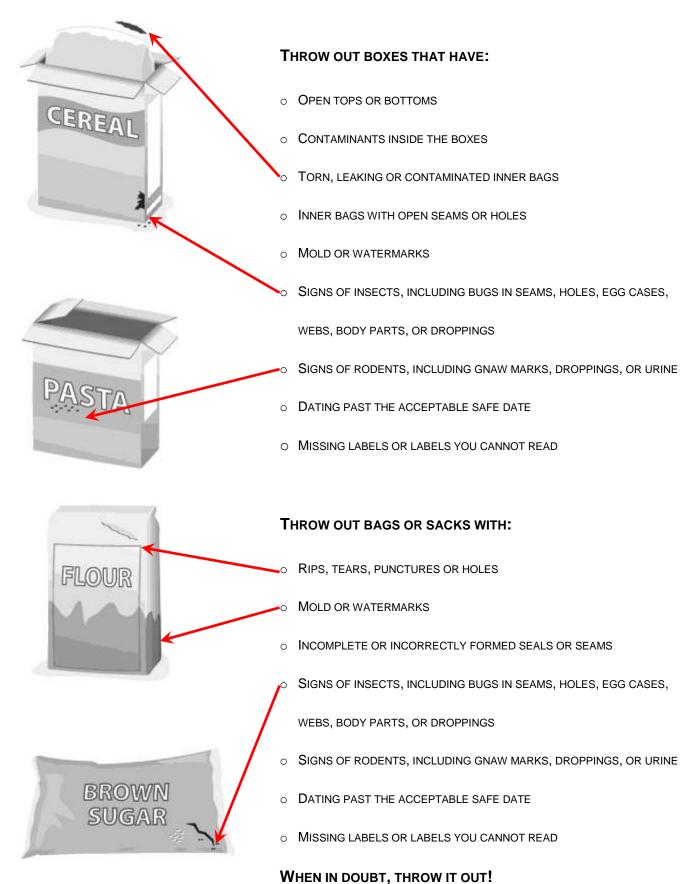


## THROW OUT CANS WITH:

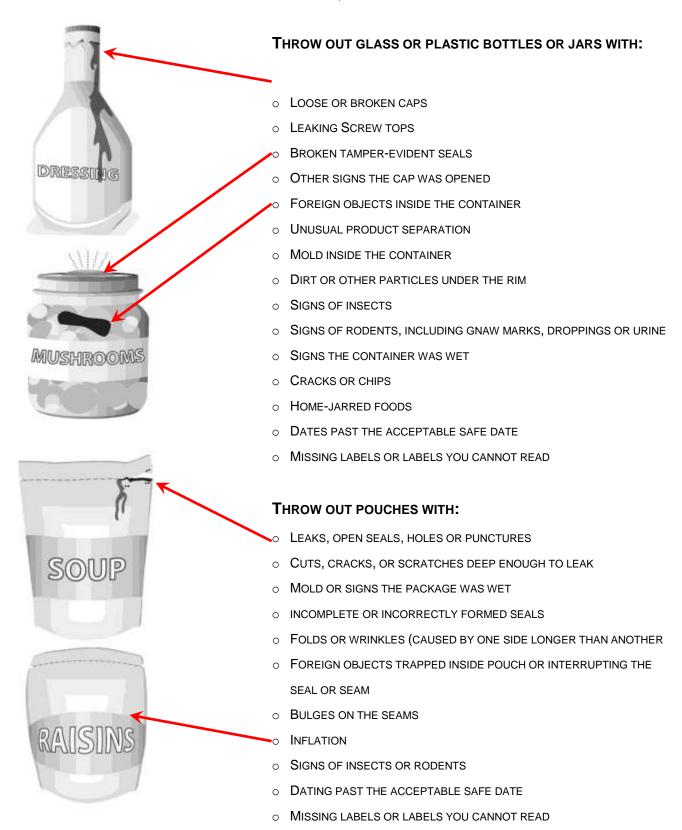
- O DENTED OR PINCHED TOP OR BOTTOM RIM
- DENTS ON THE SIDE SEAM OR AN INCORRECTLY WELDED SEAM
- O DEEP DENTS THAT DO NOT ALLOW STACKING (EXCEPT FOR DRY
  GOODS SUCH AS GROUND COFFEE, POWDERED DRINK MIXES)
- SWOLLEN OR BULGING END, OR AN END THAT GIVES WHEN PUSHED
   (AGAIN, EXCEPT FOR DRY GOODS SUCH AS GROUND COFFEE, ETC)
- RUST OR SOIL THAT DOES NOT WIPE OFF
- O DENTS AROUND THE SCORE LINES UNDER A PULL-TAB; OPENINGS
- o LEAKS
- O DIRT UNDER A PULL-TAB TOP
- MOLD OR WATERMARKS
- EVIDENCE OF EXPOSURE TO TEMPERATURE EXTREMES (SUCH AS SCORCH MARKS OR FROST)
- SIGNS OF INSECTS, INCLUDING EGG CASES, BODY PARTS, WEBS, AND DROPPINGS
- O SIGNS OF RODENTS, INCLUDING GNAW MARKS, DROPPINGS, OR URINE
- O DATING PAST THE ACCEPTABLE SAFE DATE
- MISSING LABELS OR LABELS YOU CANNOT READ

WHEN IN DOUBT, THROW IT OUT!

# **EVALUATING PRODUCT FITNESS - BOXES & BAGS:**



# **EVALUATING PRODUCT FITNESS - BOTTLES, JARS & POUCHES:**



# WHEN IN DOUBT, THROW IT OUT!

# **EVALUATING PRODUCT FITNESS - FROZEN MEATS:**



#### THROW OUT MEATS THAT HAVE:

- A STRONG ODOR OF SPOILAGE
- BLOOD POOLED ON THE UNDERSIDE OF PACKAGING
- PUNCTURED OR TORN PACKAGING
- A GREEN TINGE TO THE MEAT
- A SELL-BY DATE PAST 6 MONTHS

## WHEN IN DOUBT, THROW IT OUT!



#### **MEATS ARE GENERALLY SAFE EVEN IF THEY HAVE:**

- A DARKER RED OR EVEN BROWN COLOR

  THIS IS DUE TO OXYGENATION OF BLOOD
- "PUFFY PACKAGING"
  - DUE TO MODIFIED ATMOSPHERE PACKAGING, WHERE NITROGEN OR  $\text{CO}_2$  IS INJECTED INTO THE INTERIOR TO PREVENT OXYGENATION AND MAINTAIN THE COLOR OF THE MEAT
- ICE CRYSTALS ARE A SIGN THAT MEAT HAS PARTIALLY THAWED AND REFROZEN; GENERALLY MEAT IS STILL SAFE TO CONSUME

## **RECEIVING PRODUCT:**

- EVALUATE THE SOURCE:
  - IF YOU HAVE CONSISTENTLY RECEIVED MARGINAL PRODUCT FROM A SOURCE, BRING THIS TO THEIR ATTENTION AND EXPLAIN YOUR FOCUS ON FOOD SAFETY
  - IF YOU HAVE ANY CONCERN THAT THE SOURCE HAS NOT FOLLOWED KEY FOOD SAFETY STANDARDS, ASK
     FOR DETAILS ABOUT THEIR OPERATIONAL PRACTICES
  - IT IS ADVISABLE THAT YOU DO NOT ACCEPT
    - PREPARED FOODS FROM RESTAURANTS OR CATERERS
    - PREPARED FOODS FROM ORGANIZATIONS OR INDIVIDUALS COOKING IN UNLICENSED KITCHENS
    - MEAT THAT HAS NOT BEEN PROCESSED IN A USDA-CERTIFIED FACILITY (E.G. VENISON FROM A HUNTER)
- EVALUATE PRODUCT APPROPRIATENESS AND FITNESS:
  - o PRODUCT SHOULD BE APPROPRIATE FOR WHAT YOU CAN SAFELY STORE
    - If you don't have adequate freezer space, don't receive frozen product
    - If you don't have adequate refrigerator space, don't receive refrigerated product
    - If PRODUCT CAN NOT FIT IN YOUR PANTRY AREA, CONSIDER NOT TAKING AS MUCH
  - DO NOT ACCEPT PRODUCT THAT IS CURRENTLY OR WILL SOON BE UNFIT FOR CONSUMPTION
  - If Such Product is received, discard it immediately

# **RECEIVING PRODUCT (CONTINUED):**

- Keep receipts of product received:
  - INDICATE SOURCE, DATE RECEIVED, ITEMIZE PRODUCT & QUANTITY
  - O RECEIPTS CAN BE USED TO TRACK DOWN PRODUCT RECALLS
  - O RECEIPTS CAN BE USED TO THANK DONORS
- LABEL PRODUCT WITH A "DISTRIBUTE BY" OR "RECEIVED ON" DATE
  - O IF THERE IS A CODE DATE ON THE PRODUCT:
    - DETERMINE THE LAST SAFE DATE TO DISTRIBUTE THE PRODUCT
       (IT IS ASSUMED THAT MOST PANTRY CONSUMERS WILL USE THE PRODUCT WITHIN A FEW DAYS)
    - LABEL THE PRODUCT WITH THE "DIST BY" DATE
  - o IF YOU PURCHASED THE PRODUCT AND THERE IS NO CODE DATE, YOU CAN ESTIMATE THE "DIST BY" DATE
  - IF THE PRODUCT IS DONATED AND THERE IS NO CODE DATE, LABEL IT WITH A "RECEIVED ON" DATE
  - O DISTRIBUTE PRODUCT WITH A "RCVD" DATE BEFORE ALL OTHERS, AS THERE IS NO WAY TO DETERMINE HOW OLD IT MAY BE.

# TRANSPORTING PRODUCT:

- BRING PRODUCT BACK TO YOUR STORAGE LOCATION IN THE SHORTEST TIME POSSIBLE
- ENSURE THAT THE VEHICLE IS CLEAN; DO NOT STORE CHEMICALS IN THE SAME AREA WHERE
  PRODUCT IS TO BE PLACED
- REFRIGERATED OR FROZEN PRODUCT SHOULD BE WRAPPED IN INSULATED BLANKETS OR PUT IN COOLERS DURING TRANSPORT

# MAINTAINING INVENTORY - GENERAL RULES:

- OLDER PRODUCT SHOULD BE MORE ACCESSIBLE THAN NEWER PRODUCT
  - MOVE OLDER PRODUCT TO THE FRONT OF SHELVES
  - IF YOU HAVE SHELVING DEDICATED TO THE NEXT DISTRIBUTION, PUT OLDER PRODUCT FROM YOUR STOCKROOM ON THESE SHELVES
- DO NOT STOCKPILE LARGE QUANTITIES OF FOOD FOR AN EMERGENCY
- DO NOT OPEN PACKAGES AND SUBDIVIDE PRODUCT INTO SMALLER PORTIONS FOR DISTRIBUTION
- GO THROUGH YOUR ENTIRE INVENTORY QUARTERLY AND THROW OUT PRODUCT PAST THE "DISTRIBUTE BY" DATE OR SIGNIFICANTLY PAST THE "RECEIVED ON" DATE

# Maintaining Inventory - Cold Storage:

- DO NOT OVERFILL YOUR COLD STORAGE UNITS OR PLACE PRODUCT TOO CLOSE TO VENTS; COLD AIR MUST BE ABLE TO CIRCULATE THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE UNIT
- GO THROUGH ALL YOUR REFRIGERATED INVENTORY WEEKLY AND THROW OUT PRODUCT PAST THE "DISTRIBUTE BY" DATE OR SIGNIFICANTLY PAST THE "RECEIVED ON" DATE
- GO THROUGH ALL YOUR FROZEN INVENTORY QUARTERLY AND THROW OUT PRODUCT PAST THE
   "DISTRIBUTE BY" DATE OR SIGNIFICANTLY PAST THE "RECEIVED ON" DATE
- TO IDENTIFY LOSS OF POWER IN THE FREEZER, PLACE A PENNY ON TOP OF WATER FROZEN IN A BOTTLE; IF THE PENNY SINKS OVER TIME, THE FREEZER HAS STOPPED WORKING AT SOME POINT
  - o IF YOU CANNOT DETERMINE HOW LONG MEAT HAS REMAINED UNFROZEN, DISCARD IT IMMEDIATELY
  - MEAT THAT HAS BEEN IN A FULL BUT NON-FUNCTIONAL FREEZER FOR LESS THAN FOUR HOURS CAN BE REFROZEN AND DISTRIBUTED

# MAINTAINING INVENTORY - CHECKING FOR RECALLS:

- CHECK THE USDA AND FDA WEBSITES REGULARLY FOR PRODUCT RECALLS
  - O THE USDA REPORTS ON MEAT, DAIRY AND EGG RELATED RECALLS
  - THE FDA REPORTS ON ALL OTHER FOOD-RELATED RECALLS
- LOCAL AND NATIONAL NEWS BROADCASTS ABOUT PRODUCT RECALLS SHOULD LEAD YOU TO FIND OUT DETAILS FROM THE USDA OR FDA WEBSITES
- CHECK TO SEE IF ANY RECALLED PRODUCT IS OR WAS IN YOUR INVENTORY:
  - FIRST REVIEW PRODUCT RECEIPTS
  - VISUALLY INSPECT YOUR INVENTORY FOR AFFECTED PRODUCT
- IF YOU HAVE AFFECTED PRODUCT IN INVENTORY, FOLLOW DISPOSAL AND REPORTING GUIDELINES ASSOCIATED WITH THE RECALL
- IF YOU KNOW THAT AFFECTED PRODUCT HAS BEEN DISTRIBUTED, CONTACT PANTRY RECIPIENTS
  - O NOTE: THIS REQUIRES KEEPING CONTACT INFORMATION FOR PANTRY RECIPIENTS

## **DISTRIBUTING PRODUCT:**

- GIVE OUT OLDER PRODUCT BEFORE NEWER PRODUCT
- Do not distribute frozen food from a table unless it is insulated
- DO NOT THAW FROZEN MEAT TO GIVE TO CONSUMERS AS THEY MAY REFREEZE IT AT HOME;
   HOWEVER, IT IS SAFE TO REFREEZE BREAD
- EDUCATE ATTENDEES ABOUT THE SAFETY OF FOOD PAST CODE DATE, WHEN TO CONSUME FOOD WHEN TIME IS A FACTOR, AND HOW TO STORE FOOD RESPONSIBLY