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اشتراطات تداول الأغذية الجاهزة للأكل  
Requirements for handling of ready – to – eat foods

Prepared by:

GSO Technical Committee for sector standards of food and agriculture products

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## **FORWARD**

Standardization Organization for GCC (GSO) is a regional Organization which consists of the National Standard Bodies of GCC member States.

One of GSO main functions is to issue Gulf Standard/ Technical regulation through specialized technical committees (TCs).

GSO through the technical program of committee TC No: (5) "Technical Gulf committee for food and agriculture product standards" has prepared this standard by state of Qatar .This draft has been prepared after review the Arabic, foreigner and international standards and related compiled references .

This standard has been approved as Gulf Technical regulation by GSO Board of Directors in its meeting No...../.....held on     /     /     H,     /     / , will replace and supersede GSO 1909: 2008.

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## Requirements for handling of ready to-eat foods

### 1. Scope and field of application:

This Gulf Technical regulation is concerned with the requirements for handling of Ready – to – eat foods, handling, preparation, its requirements and keeping .

### 2. Complimentary references:

2.1 GSO (9): "Labelling of prepackaged food stuffs".

2.2 GSO (21): "Hygienic regulations in food plants and their personnel "

2.3 GSO (123): "General requirements for fresh fruits and vegetables".

2.4 GSO (149): "Unbolted drinking water".

2.5 GSO (323): "General requirements for transportation and storage of chilled and frozen foods".

2.6 GSO (168): "Requirements of storage facilities for dry and canned food stuffs ".

2.7 GSO (815): "Code of hygienic practice for preparation, transportation, handling and storing of fresh meat".

2.8 GSO (1002): "Chicken eggs".

2.9 GSO (1026): "Code of hygienic practice for preparation, transportation, handling and storing of fresh fish".

2.10 GSO (150-1): "Expiration dates for food products- Part 1".

### 3. Definitions:

#### 3.1 Ready – to – eat food:

Any food (including beverages) which is normally consumed in its raw state or any food handled, processed, cooked or other wise prepared into a form in which it is normally consumed without further processing".

#### 3.2 Perishable food:

Food that consists wholly or partly of milk, milk products, eggs, meat, poultry, fish or shell fish, or ingredient that are capable of supporting the progressive growth of microorganisms that can cause food spoilage or food poisoning and other food borne illness.

#### 3.3 Street foods:

Ready to eat foods and beverages, prepare and/ or sold in streets and other similar public places.

#### 3.4 Food handler:

Any person who directly touches packaged or unpackaged food, food equipments, utensils or food contact surfaces .

**3.5 Contaminant:**

Any biological or chemical agent, foreign matter, or other substances not intentionally added to food which may comprise food safety or suitability.

**3.6 Contamination:**

The introduction or occurrence of a contamination in food or food environment .

**3.7 Disinfection:**

The reduction, by means of chemical agents and/or physical methods, of the number of microorganisms in the environment, to a level that does not comprise food safety or suitability .

**3.8 Food hygiene:**

All conditions necessary to ensure the safety and suitability of food at all stage of the food chain.

**3.9 Mobile vender:**

Any person with/without a vehicle going from place to place for the purpose of preparing, serving, distributing or delivering street foods.

**3.10 Food poisoning:**

A case stroked person or more with the same illness symptoms as a result to consumed the same food, and produced from the arrival of food which contain microbe or its secreted poison or some poison chemical matters to the human.

**3.11 Food spoilage:**

Undesired change in food appears in physical characteristics as color, taste, odor and texture or which caused with the affect of microorganisms or by chemical composition of food product.

**3.12 Food containers:**

Any food grade containers such as cans hermetically sealed containers. sealed jars, milk bottles or cans and similar containers with seals.

**3.13 Street food center:**

Any public place designated by the relevant authority for the preparation and sale of street foods.

**3.14 Water container:**

Any form of food grade container which is used for the purpose of storing and has not been previously for any other purpose which could caused contamination of the water stored in it.

## **4. Requirements:**

### **4.1 General requirements:**

- 4.1.1 The places for preparation, handling and sale of ready to eat foods shall be complying with Gulf standard mentioned in item (2.2).
- 4.1.2 Raw materials used in ready to eat foods shall be complying with Gulf Standards specification each.
- 4.1.3 Ready to eat foods shall be free from pig products and alcohols.
- 4.1.4 Water used in the washing and preparation of ready to eat foods shall be comply with Gulf standard mentioned in item (2.4).
- 4.1.5 Persons for the processes of purchasing and preparing these foods shall be free from ills and pestilences according to Gulf standard mentioned in item (2.2).
- 4.1.6 Food storing process used in the preparation of the product shall be complying with what has mentioned in Gulf standard stated in item (2.2).

### **4.2 Requirements for inputs and ingredients:**

#### **4.2.1 Purchase of inputs and ingredients:**

- 4.2.1.1 Purchase food grade input and ingredients from authorized retailers or approved source, under adequate storage conditions, with refrigeration / freezing, stored on shelves or boxes and protected from contamination.
- 4.2.1.2 Purchase packaged inputs and ingredients that bear a manufactures name, and do not purchase food products that are unlabelled and/or without a clearly stated shelf life, and the labels shall be comply with Gulf standards mentioned in items (2.1, 2,10).
- 4.2.1.3 Only purchase inputs and ingredients whose organoleptic properties are correspond to the specific characteristics or nature of the fresh food are raw material and that do not show signs of any kind of alteration and/or adulteration.
- 4.2.1.4 Only purchase perishable inputs and ingredients maintained at adequate temperature.
- 4.2.1.5 Only purchase food products in quantities not lead to heap up and that corresponds to adequate storage of freezer and refrigerators and dried food stores capacity.

#### **4.2.2 Transport, reception and storage of in puts and ingredients:**

- 4.2.2.1 Transport of all purchased product in adequate conditions, avoiding hazard of chemical, physical or biological contamination and spoilage of the goods, mentioning or adequate temperature, and isolating each item to prevent cross-contamination, it should not be transported foods products together with toxic and/or chemical substance (disinfectants, detergent, pesticide. etc). For packaged product follow the manufacturer's instructions

on the label and/or storage conditions complying with general principles of food hygiene and legal provisions in force.

- 4.2.2.2 The vehicle, containers and packaging used for transportation should be adequately clean, and should have sufficient internal space and comply with Gulf standard mentioned in item (2.5).
- 4.2.2.3 Inputs and ingredients must be received and kept in clean places, meat, fish and other perishable products should be placed on containers under refrigeration and/or freezing, and bulk commodities in clean containers.
- 4.2.2.4 Shelves, boxes and storage places, should be clean and protected from dust and other contamination agent.
- 4.2.2.5 Keep recipients containing food clearly labeled in separated areas from non-edible product like soap, disinfectants, pesticides and other toxic substances.
- 4.2.2.6 Rotate the stock of products on a first in, first out basis.
- 4.2.2.7 Keep the food protected from contamination by pests (insects, rodents, and other biological agent).

### **4.3 Requirement for the area of preparation:**

- 4.3.1.1 The designation of these areas should be comply with has been mentioned in Gulf standard stated in item (2.5).
- 4.3.1.2 All section of the Organization should be far from any source of contamination sources (off odors, smokes, dusts, or any other contaminants), and should be in area not subjected to submersion with water from any source, and should have sufficient and homogenize natural or artificial lighting (in case of artificial lighting, all lamps should be covered to avoid the physical contamination in the case of broken).
- 4.3.1.3 All section of the Organization should be provided with A.C. with suitable numbers and sizes for the section area, the temperature should be less than 25 C, with periodically adequate cleaning and maintenance from inside and outside to keep its efficiency.
- 4.3.1.4 The building should provide with suitable ventilation to prevent higher of heat and steam condensation, dusts and to remove contaminant air, the direction of the air should not be from contaminant areas to clean areas, the production room should be provided with internal adequate ventilation.
- 4.3.1.5 Equipment's should be made from stainless steel and easy cleaning and disinfecting.
- 4.3.1.6 Containers for water storage should be clean.
- 4.3.1.7 Waste water should be adequately disposed of and not present a hazard to potable water, food, surrounding area or food handlers.

- 4.3.1.8 The working area, including surfaces in contact with food (utensils table surface, cutters, water outlets, etc.) should be from stainless steel and easy to clean and disinfect and in good condition and properly maintained and should be washed with potable water and disinfectants.
- 4.3.1.9 Do not use, for food, containers previously used for substance that are toxic or harmful to human health, such as insecticides, paints or motor oil.
- 4.3.1.10 does not keep fuel, toxic substances in or inflammable products in direct contact with food, working shall be carried out according to relevant authority.

#### **4.3.2 Outdoor places for food organization:**

- 4.3.2.1 It should be clean and protected from sun, dust and wind and should not be in direct contact with public and consumers.
- 4.3.2.2 Equipments, such as stoves or similar appliances, must be contracted and maintained safely and adequately.
- 4.3.2.3 The potable water supply should be sufficient for all needs, and when not from a public source of potable water, the water must be of similar quality.
- 4.3.2.4 The area where the food is prepared should be at least 60-70 Cm from the ground and suitable for the quantity of food prepared, handled and kept.
- 4.3.2.5 Surrounding area should be clean, good maintenance and disinfected.

#### **4.3.3 Hygienic facilities:**

- 4.3.3.1 Transported water should be kept in appropriate containers (easy to clean, non-toxic material and hermetically sealed) to preserve the water and prevent contamination.
- 4.3.3.2 Containers, utensils and working surfaces for food preparation, should be of a non-corrosive material, not absorbed, easy to clean and resistant to high temperature when used for cooking.
- 4.3.3.3 Cleaning and disinfectant material used for cleaning and disinfecting working surfaces and utensils used in the organization should be suitable for the purpose used for it, and safe for food stuffs, if it is used according to the manufacturer's directions.

#### **4.3.4 Hygienic practice:**

- 4.3.4.1 Person in contact with directly or indirectly foods, should be in a state of health complying with requirements mentioned in Gulf standard stated in item (2.2).
- 4.3.4.2 Hair must be covered during food handling and preparing, nails should be short and clean.



- 4.3.4.3 Pearson's in contact with food should have healthy behavior (refrain from spitting, sneezing, smoking or behavior / habits that can compromise food safety) during all steps of food chain.
- 4.3.4.4 Food handlers should wear union light clothes, consist of jacket with long hand, drawers, mareol and shoes safe for workers, and hair cover to complete cover for the hair, and prevent from failing it, and should be keep clean.
- 4.3.4.5 Pearson's contact with food should not wear rings or bracelets while handing food.
- 4.3.4.6 Hands should be carefully washed with potable water and infecting soap after use of the toilet or direct handling of fresh foods, such as meat, fruit and vegetables, and before handling of prepared or semi – prepared foods.
- 4.3.4.7 Pearson's should be trained in the hygienic handling of food to protect food at all time.
- 4.3.4.8 Utensils, dishes, glasses, water outlets and working surface should be cleaned and disinfected after each instance of food preparation using cleaning and disinfectants, materials suitable for food organization, which should be safety on the food according manufacture directions.

#### **4.4 Requirements for food preparation:**

##### **4.4.1 Requirements for preliminary preparation:**

###### **4.4.1.1 Fruits and vegetables:**

- a. only used fruits and vegetables that have been protected from contamination and properly conserved.
- b. Select sound and suitable fruit and vegetables and fit human consumption and should be comply with what has been mentioned in Gulf standard stated in (2.3).
- c. Wash and disinfect fruit and vegetables before using then directly or as a food ingredient.
- d. Prepare each kind of fruit and vegetable in the appropriate manner and according to its intended use, using disinfectant tables according to manufacture directions.
- e. Peel, Squeeze and/or cut, as appropriate, fruits and vegetables with appropriate equipment's and utensils.
- f. keep previously prepared fruits and vegetables in and properly covered recipient at suitable temperature.

###### **4.4.1.2 Fresh meat and fish:**

- a. When necessary, thaw frozen meat and fish in refrigerator at temperature not exceed 4 C using food grade plastic containers or from stainless steel, provided with strainers or with well closed cover during thawing of meat,

fish or poultry to separate the blood producing from thawing process to prevent its contamination, a microwave can be used to accelerate thawing, Avoid thawing at room temperature.

- b. Handle fresh meat and fish in such away as to prevent direct as indirect cross contamination of the working surfaces, utensils and other food product it should be comply with what has been mentioned in Gulf standard stated in item (2.6) when preparing handling and storage of fresh meat.
- c. Clean the fresh meat and fish, removing undesirable parts, when necessary.
- d. It should be comply with what has been intended in Gulf standard stated in item (2.9) when preparing, transporting, handling and storage the fish.

#### **4.4.1.3 Other foods:**

- a. Cheeses, sausage, salami and similar foods:
  - a.1 Avoid content with hand, conduct all operations such as slicing, cutting, grinding with appropriate instruments and avoid exposure at room temperature.
  - a.2 Prepare to amount necessary for a mutinous of four hours of work.
  - a.3 Food containers and packaged foods should not present any alteration (corrosion visual alteration, etc).
  - a.4 Grains flour , sugar , salt and similar products should not contain evident humidity and should be kept in appropriate covered containers to prevent alteration and contamination .
  - a.5 Do not use raw eggs in the preparation of foods and beverages intended for direct consumption , that are not to be cooked afterwards, the egg shall be comply with Gulf Standards mentioned in item (2.8) .
  - a.6 The manufacturer should be provided instructions on storage and use , which would comply with rules of hygiene .

#### **4.4.2 Requirements of final preparation:**

- 4.4.2.1 Cook the food at sufficient temperature: the temperature of the thermal center for food product during cooking shall arrived to 75 C minimum noting corresponding in color, aspect or consistency .
- 4.4.2.2 Protect the food after cooking, from all possible sources of contamination, if prepared food is to be seasoned with uncooked ingredients, it should be before direct consumption .
- 4.4.2.3 The time between preparation and consumption, should not be exceed as follows :
  - a – Up to 6 hours when foods are kept at a temperature above 60°c .
  - b – Up to one day when foods are kept at a maximum temperature of 4°c , provided that time for hot foods should not be more than 2 hours to reach a temperature of 4°c .

- c – Reheat only once refrigerated food completely to a temperature of 82°C , immediately before consumption.
- d – Sandwiches prepared at sales point should be prepared at the moment of consumption .
- e – Fresh salads and fresh fruit, should preferably prepared at time of consumption .
- f – Fresh salad (vegetable with added mayonnaise or other salad creams, cheese, Luncheon...etc.) should be kept below 5°c from preparation to final consumption .
- g – Foods to be cooked or heated immediately before consumption, should be kept below 5°c .
- h – Only prepare the foods what can be sold in a day .

#### **4.5 Requirements of the transport of prepared foods :**

- 4.5.1 Vehicles for the transport of prepared foods should have a separate compartment protected from direct sun, dust, rain and other contaminants.
- 4.5.2 The compartment to transport prepared foods should be made of appropriate material for the transportation of food and easy to clean .
- 4.5.3 The transportation of waste foods should be separated from transport vehicles of foods .
- 4.5.4 Foods should be transported in appropriate containers (made of non –toxic materials and thoroughly cleaned and disinfected), properly sealed and protected from contamination .
- 4.5.5 The temperature should be controlled, avoiding room temperature exposure of foods that must be kept hot or refrigerated .
- 4.5.6 When the transportation time exceeds two hours, the food container should be placed I thermal boxes .
- 4.5.7 Place prepared hot foods in thermal boxes separate from prepared cold or chilled foods, use thermal different boxes of these two types of prepared foods .

#### **4.6 Requirement of street food marketing :**

- 4.6.1 The sales stall (kiosk , barrow , mobile stall – etc ) should be built of solid material and should be sufficiently high from the ground to be easily sanitized .
- 4.6.2 The sales stall and its surrounding should be kept clean, free of litter and in good condition .
- 4.6.3 When sales stall not in use, it should be kept under cover and be kept in a clean place .
- 4.6.4 The outdoor sales area should not be used for any other purpose .

- 4.6.5 The outdoor sales area should be located in a zone determined by the authorities so that is protected from contaminant sources and from animals.
- 4.6.6 The sales area should be free from personal belongings, such as clothes, foot wear, blankets, tobacco ...etc.
- 4.6.7 Adornments, such as vases with or without flowers or plants and other items may be placed in such away that they do not represent a source for food contamination .

#### **4.7 Requirements for protection and sale foods :**

- 4.7.1 Food and beverages should be served using disposable plates, utensils, glasses and napkins, used disposable items should be deposited in to a suitable and separate containers .
- 4.7.2 Leftovers in dishes, glasses ...etc. should be deposited in covered, secure and appropriate containers to avoid attracting domestic animals .
- 4.7.3 Take – away food should be wrapped in unused non – contaminating , food grade paper and / or plastic. The use of printed plastic or paper is forbidden.
- 4.7.4 When hot food was chilled, reheating must be at above 82°C at thermal center minimum before direct consumption.
- 4.7.5 Salt, sugar, mustard, ketchup, mayonnaise and similar products to be used by the consumer should be supplied in dispensers that will avoid their contamination .
- 4.7.6 Utensils used to server food portions for consumption should be cleaned and disinfected when necessary .
- 4.7.7 Avoid direct hand contact with ready –to- eat food of any kind, including peeled fruits .
- 4.7.8 Do not handle money and similar things when preparation of food, when necessary, wash and disinfect hand before preparing food .
- 4.7.9 If the outdoor point of sale is a vehicle, the driver compartment should be duly separate from the compartment used for final food preparation, storage or sale .

#### **4.8 Requirements of vendors :**

- 4.8.1 Waste containers should be kept far from the working surfaces, marketing places, sale places..., storing area and have a foot self-closing lid, and should be of resistant material, water proof and easy to clean .
- 4.8.2 Waste water should be collected and disposed of separately from solid waste, and disposed in the public drainage system, and not thrown on to the ground or in to surface water such rivers and lakes.

4.8.3 Solid waste should be disposed of according to municipal regulations .

4.8.4 Food waste should be disposed of in such a way as not to attract insects and animals such as flies, dogs and cats .

4.8.5 Pest control should be carried out in accordance with municipal regulations .

The application of chemical substances for pest control should only be done by authorized technical personnels. The procedure should avoid the contamination of food, personnels and the environments.