

Staff Veterinarian Arrival:

LTC Patricia Riley has recently joined SMSgt Sigley as the new Director of the Exchange Food & Drug Safety Program at the Dallas Headquarters. Additionally, LTC Patrick Canchola has replaced MAJ Agresta at AAFES Europe. Please reach out to these individuals for all food and drug safety concerns within the Exchange enterprise.

Ice Machines:

Item 50 on the DD Form 2973 (Food Operation Inspection Report) is one of the most frequently cited deficiencies. This Item is often incorrectly cited as CRITICAL, but that does not mean that CRITICAL findings don't apply to ice machines. Ice machines should be located to prevent ice contamination, and food service patrons should not have access to ice machines supporting food operations. Check for mold and other residues inside of the ice bin (don't forget to look under the lid!) and condensation coils. Filter changes should be conducted according to manufacturers' specifications and properly documented.

Item 10 on DD Form 2973 requires food to be "in good condition, safe, and unadulterated". Presentation of "adulterated" food items is always CRITICAL, and if the inside of the bin of an ice machine is visibly laden with mold and mildew, it's safe to assume the ice in the bin is "adulterated". This will result in a CRITICAL finding every time. Two additional Items under which ice machines may be properly cited with CRITICAL deficiencies include Item 17, regarding clean/sanitized food contact surfaces, and Item 43 regarding plumbing cross-connections and backflow devices. If in doubt about the applicability of any of these provisions, please contact the AAFES Food & Drug Safety Office.

Approved Sources:

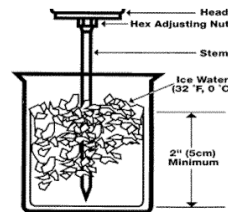
All food items used as ingredients, sold, or served in any AAFES facility must be purchased from Approved Sources. Approved Sources are listed in the *Worldwide Directory of Sanitarily Approved Food Establishments for Armed Forces Procurement*. The *Worldwide Directory* was designed to ensure the food purchased with appropriated or non-appropriated funds is produced, handled and stored in clean, sanitary food establishments to prevent the transmission of contaminants and foodborne disease to members of the US Armed Forces.

Sources identified as suitable for purchase by a particular Name Brand partner may not necessarily meet the requirements for *Worldwide Directory* listing. Before

purchasing food items from a new or different source, please contact the AAFES Food & Drug Safety Office for assistance in navigating the system.

Approved Sources are available for many different commodities worldwide, but they are relative to a particular plant address. For example, three Mission Foods plants in California are currently listed for "tortillas", but an unapproved source for Mission Tortillas was recently identified because the product was found to originate from a fourth, UNLISTED plant. Ensure the products you purchase come from a listed plant's address. This office can provide additional guidance if a new source is required for listing.

Calibrating Thermometers:



The importance of maintaining potentially hazardous foods in the safe temperature zone cannot be stressed enough unless time is used rather than temperature as a control point. The Food Code is not specific on the required calibration

frequency, but it does state that thermometers should be calibrated as often as necessary to ensure accuracy and in accordance with the manufacturer's specification. Our recommendation is to calibrate weekly, when using for the first time, or after being dropped. To calibrate, fill a large cup with finely crushed ice. Add water to the cup and stir well. Immerse the thermometer stem a minimum of 2 inches into the ice/water mixture without touching the sides or bottom of the cup. Wait at least 30 seconds before adjusting. Without removing the stem from the ice, adjust the nut under the head of the thermometer until the pointer reads 32°F.

Infestation Prevention:

Pest infestations are a common problem when storing food items. Many times, products arrive to your storage facility already infested. Military Standard 904 is used by inspection personnel to detect, identify and prevent pest infestation of food. Like the *Worldwide Directory*, it is designed to ensure clean, wholesome food products that are free from physical contaminants and to prevent transmission of foodborne disease. Mil Std 904 is primarily directed at inspection personnel, but may be useful in management of larger storage facilities and distribution centers. The control measures in Sections 5.5.1 through 5.5.3 may decrease the incidence and severity of pest

infestation of stored food items, and are briefly summarized below:

- Housekeeping and sanitation practices, such as immediate clean-up of spilled items, disposal or repair of damaged containers, daily sweeping of floors, and frequent cleaning of all shelving and equipment.
- Warehousing practices to include:
 - storing product on pallets or shelves that are at least 18 inches from walls for ease of cleaning;
 - stacking product in a manner that minimizes crushing and damage of packaging;
 - rotating product, practicing “First-In, First-Out” (FIFO);
 - garbage containers properly covered with covers or lids, and emptied and cleaned daily;
 - bagged animal foods stored in a separate area from other food items because of their tendency for infestation;
 - controlling temperature, moisture and airflow with fans or ventilating machines when practical, improving drainage and installing vents all help airflow, thus aiding in temperature and moisture control.
- Pest proofing storage facilities to minimize rodent, insect, and bird entry and harborage.

Receiving deliveries:

Food products should be inspected to ensure they comply with the requirements for Approved Sources, sanitation, wholesomeness, and condition as well as quality provisions described in the purchase contract. Perishable food items are typically the most expensive items on the inventory, and if improperly handled, reflect poorly not only from a quality perspective, but also pose the greatest risk for undesirable outcomes in the event of a foodborne outbreak. Chapter 4 of EOP 25-04 states all perishables must be wholesome, clean and handled in a sanitary manner. Unsatisfactory deliveries may exhibit signs of temperature abuse such as fluid staining of outer packaging, mold, or mildew. Check temperatures on receipt – chill items should be delivered at or below the appropriate temperature for the product, and frozen items should arrive frozen solid.

Check pack or use-by dates to ensure quality and adequate shelf life. For example, Deli Express products have varying hold times depending on the product in question ([Click here](#) for Deli Express hold times). Ensure delivery personnel are correctly identifying use-by dates when restocking freezer and cooler supplies. **Never** allow delivery

personnel or delivery drivers to put incoming food or supplies in storage until the shipment has been thoroughly inspected, and then **only** under the supervision of an Exchange employee. Above all, check for any evidence of intentional tampering. Food defense is everyone’s responsibility!

Flu season is upon us:

The best way to avoid getting the flu is to receive the influenza vaccine. While you may still get the flu even with the vaccine, usually you will have a much milder case. You and your coworkers can help reduce the risk to yourselves and others by following some very simple steps. Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze and wash your hands frequently with soap and warm water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Make hand sanitizers available to customers for use on shopping carts/baskets, cash registers for cashiers, and close to Snack Avenue areas. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth – these are routes to infection. Try to avoid close contact with sick people. Report any illness to your supervisor immediately and stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities. For more information about the flu and how to reduce the risk of getting the disease, go to the CDC Influenza website: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/index.htm>

The Exchange Food Safety & Defense Internet Portal:

Are you looking for past newsletters on food safety, food defense and barber/beauty/spa sanitation? Previous editions are found by accessing either of the Staff Vet/Food & Drug Safety links at the end of this newsletter. Associates are also able to consult the site for quick access to commonly required AF and DA regulations, references, Exchange policies, and guidance.

Contact Us – Dallas Team

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Useful links (control-click to use links):

- [Worldwide Directory for Sanitarily Approved Food Establishments for Armed Forces Procurement](#)
- [Staff Vet/Food & Drug Safety Program \(AAFES Associates Only\)](#)
- [Staff Vet/Food & Drug Safety Program \(Non-AAFES Associates\)](#)