

Section 6, Terminology

Some words have been underlined in the text.
These words have been explained in this section.
Terms are listed in alphabetical order.

Accessibility

Accessibility means that people with disabilities and other people with mobility difficulties have equal access to buildings, premises and services. Such people must also be able to function and receive services equally to others.

Additives

Food additives are substances that are not usually consumed as actual food. They are added to foodstuffs for reasons such as guaranteeing the shelf-life of the product or modifying its colour. The use of additives must comply with the requirements of EU legislation.

Allergen

An allergen causes an allergic reaction. Allergens include, for example, pollen, mould spores, pharmaceutical substances (such as penicillin), foodstuffs (such as peanuts, fish, egg whites and milk). Almost any food can cause an allergic reaction.

Allergy

In food allergies, an ingredient of the food causes an allergic reaction. This can manifest as a rash, abdominal pain, diarrhoea, itching of the mucous membranes of the mouth and throat, swelling of the pharynx or nasal discharge. In severe cases, the allergy may be life-threatening and requires immediate treatment.

The most common allergies in children are to milk, cereals, nuts/seeds, eggs and fish.

In adults, the symptoms are often caused by intolerance of certain root vegetables, fruits and spices. Typical causes of food allergies in adults also include nuts and fish. Any food can cause an allergic reaction if the person has become oversensitive to the food or one of its ingredients.

Application for approval

You can only begin operating after obtaining approval from the authorities. As a rule, approval is applied for in writing.

You must describe the nature of your planned operations in the application for approval. In addition, you will need to describe your production facilities.

When your facility is compliant with the statutory requirements, the authority will approve it. You will receive a written decision on the matter.

Bacteria

Bacteria are small organisms or microbes. Some bacteria are harmful to humans, while others are useful. Bacteria are present almost everywhere: in waters, in the soil, on people's skin and in the intestinal tract. Some bacteria are unpleasant or even dangerous, since they cause diseases.

Bajamaja

A Bajamaja is a portable chemical toilet suitable for outdoor use.

Best before date

See "Date of minimum durability".

Building permit

All new buildings and major renovation projects require a permit. This permit is called a building permit. In the first instance, the permit is applied for through the electronic permit service, but can also be applied for in writing from the building supervision authority of the municipality in which the building is located.

Building supervision authority

Municipal building supervision authorities grant building and minor construction permits and have a role in the supervision of construction work. They also provide assistance and guidance for building and repairs. Every municipality has a building supervision authority.

By-products

By-products refer to whole animal carcasses, carcass parts and other animal products that are not intended or fit for human consumption.

The by-products of establishments in which meat is handled can include, for example, carcasses or parts in which pathogenic bacteria have been

detected. For this reason, they will not be used as foodstuffs. By-products also include products that have fallen to the floor during processing. The use of such products is not permitted.

By-products are divided into three categories according to the severity of the risk they pose to human and animal health. They must be collected, stored and labelled in a manner that ensures they will not come into contact with foodstuffs.

More information on the requirements concerning by-products can be found via the links on the web page of this course.

Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment

The Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment are responsible for the regional implementation and development tasks of the central government in Finland. There are 15 Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment, and they are referred to with the abbreviation ELY Centre. More information about your local ELY Centre is available at the address www.ely-keskus.fi/en/web/ely-en.

Cold chain

The cold chain means keeping the temperature of food sufficiently low for the entire duration of transport from the place of production, through the point of sale all the way to the consumer's refrigerator. An unbroken cold chain is one of the most important factors in safe food production and self-monitoring checks.

Colostrum

When a cow has given birth to a calf, it will produce colostrum for a few days. Colostrum is usually sold frozen since it is highly perishable.

Compliance documents (of contact materials), declarations of compliance

These are documents that indicate the purpose of use for which materials and articles are suitable and which statutory requirements they comply with.

Compound ingredients

Compound ingredients refer to food products used in the manufacture of other foodstuffs. A compound ingredient consists of more than one ingredient. For example, a chicken fillet roll containing the following compound ingredients: garlic cream cheese and herb pesto.

Contaminate, contamination

Food is contaminated when it contains a substance harmful to humans or a cause of food poisoning or spoilage. Contamination can take place directly from one food or ingredient to another. It can take place through dirty utensils and surfaces, the air or the hands of employees.

Vegetables can be contaminated during cultivation by coming into contact with contaminated irrigation water. Airborne contamination as a result of coughing or sneezing is also possible.

Date of minimum durability

The date of minimum durability or best before date refers to the date until which the food, properly stored, retains its typical characteristics, such as taste or colour. Products can be sold or used even after this date, provided that its quality has not deteriorated materially.

Declarations of compliance

See “Compliance documents”.

Deep-freezing

Deep-freezing refers to the preservation of food products by freezing them as quickly as possible. Food is usually deep-frozen with an appliance specifically designed for the purpose. As a rule, food products cannot be deep-frozen with other, less powerful equipment, such as household freezers or other devices intended for the storage of frozen food.

Deep-freezing stops or significantly slows the the growth of micro-organisms that spoil food. After deep-freezing, all parts of the product must be maintained at a temperature of -18 °C or lower.

Deviation

A deviation can be, for example, an overly high temperature in a refrigeration appliance. Through your own-check activities, you can ensure that you will notice deviations and can rectify the situation. This may mean, for example, fixing the refrigeration appliance and disposing of the foodstuffs if the deviation has lasted for a long time.

Disinfectants

Disinfectants are used to kill microbes, clean surfaces and both human and animal hygiene.

Food companies use disinfectants for purposes such as cleaning facilities and equipment after they have been washed with detergent. In addition, disinfectants are used to clean the hands after washing them with soap.

***E. coli* bacteria**

Escherichia coli (*E. coli*) is a bacterium found in the gastrointestinal tracts of humans and animals. It can be transmitted to food from an employee’s unwashed hands, for example. Some *E. coli* bacteria can cause food poisoning in humans. One such pathogen is the EHEC bacterium, which causes bloody diarrhoea. In children and the elderly, infection can lead to particularly serious consequences, such as renal failure.

Enterobacteria

Some enterobacteria cause intestinal diseases. Enterobacteria include, for example, salmonella, *E. coli* and yersinia. Enterobacteria assays performed in a laboratory can be used to evaluate hygiene.

Evira

The Finnish Food Safety Authority Evira plans, directs, develops and carries out food control at the national level. The goal of Evira's operations is to ensure the safety and quality of foodstuffs and the health of plants and animals through research and control.

Final (decision, permit)

A decision made by an authority is final when the deadline specified in the decision for submitting an appeal or complaint has passed.

Final inspection

The final inspection checks whether the building corresponds to its building permit and that it has been built in accordance with the law. A record will be made of the final inspection. The final inspection must be requested while the building permit is still valid.

Food control authority, food inspector, supervisory authority

The municipal food inspector can be a veterinarian, a health inspector or other municipal food inspector. Food inspectors work for food control authorities, which can include, for example, environmental centres.

The purpose of food control is to ensure the safety of food and ensure that it has been labelled with the correct information.

The majority of food control is performed by the municipalities. Smaller municipalities have organised their food supervision jointly through dedicated co-management areas. Evira is responsible for the monitoring of slaughterhouses and facilities connected to them and for meat inspections.

Food group

Food can be divided into groups based on its characteristics. Food groups include, for example, raw meat and raw meat products, raw fish and raw fish products, dry bakery goods and ready-to-eat foods. The segregation of different food groups is important in order to ensure that, for example, bacteria that cause food poisoning or allergens are not transmitted to the food.

Food hygiene

Food hygiene refers to all measures intended to ensure the safety, healthiness and purity of foodstuffs from primary production to consumption, in other words, from the field to the table.

Food improvement agents

Food improvement agents refer to additives, flavourings and enzymes used in food products.

Additives and enzymes can be added to food to improve its shelf-life or structure, among other things. Flavourings can also be used to improve or change the smell and taste of food.

The use of food improvement agents must comply with the requirements set for additives, flavourings and enzymes in EU legislation.

Food information regulation

The food information regulation refers to the regulation of the European Union on the provision of food information to consumers. The food information regulation specifies the consumer information that must be stated on the food's packaging or otherwise conveyed to the consumer.

The official title of the regulation is Regulation (EU) NO 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council.

Food inspector

See "Food control authority".

Food poisoning

Food poisoning is a condition contracted from drinking water or food. What is normally called food poisoning is an intestinal infection contracted from food. Typical symptoms include diarrhoea, nausea, vomiting and stomach ache.

In the worst case, food poisoning can lead to death.

Foreign object risk

Foreign object risk refers to the risk of objects or materials, such as glass, metal or jewellery worn by employees, being left in the food.

Freezing

Freezing refers to a less powerful freezing method than deep-freezing, such as one taking a considerably longer time.

Health examination, salmonella examination

If necessary, the employees must be able to reliably demonstrate that they do not have salmonella infection.

A new employee's health must therefore be examined at the start of employment. If necessary, a Salmonella test will also be taken.

HPAC drawings

The HPAC drawings indicate the types of heating, plumbing and ventilation systems used on the premises.

Hygiene

Hygiene refers to the promotion and maintenance of health. In food companies, good hygiene ensures that disease-causing microbes, dangerous chemicals or other factors that can cause diseases do not end up in food. Good hygiene includes, for example, washing one's hands and surfaces.

Hygiene levels and areas

Hygiene levels and areas are determined by the work hygiene and cleanliness required by the tasks performed on the premises.

Examples of hygiene levels at establishments in which meat is handled:

- High-hygiene premises and areas
 - Processing areas of ready-to-eat food such as premises on which minced meat for steak tartare is prepared or ham is sliced.
- Hygienic premises and areas
 - Processing areas of unprotected ingredients, such as a cutting plant or meat preparation area.
- Hygienically neutral premises and areas,
 - for example, storage facilities and the dispatch centre for packaged products.
- Unhygienic areas
 - For example, waste-disposal rooms and by-product storage areas.

Hygiene passport

The hygiene passport is a certificate of competence. It proves that you know how to process food hygienically. You will need a hygiene passport if you process perishable, unpackaged foodstuffs in, for example, cafés, restaurants, institutional kitchens, food shops or bakeries.

Intolerance (food intolerance or food hypersensitivity)

Food hypersensitivity that does not fulfil the criteria of an allergy is called food intolerance. Lactose intolerance, for example, is caused by the inability of the body to digest milk sugar, i.e., lactose.

In coeliac disease, on the other hand, a protein contained in rye and barley, gluten, causes an inflammatory reaction in the mucous membrane of the small intestine, which interferes with the absorption of nutrients.

Meat preparations

Meat preparations refer to meat or minced meat to which, for example, salt, additives or spices have been added. Meat preparations are normally intended to be cooked before consumption.

Meat products

Meat products refer to, for example, cooked or dried foods with meat or organs as an essential ingredient. Meat products include sausages, cold cuts, ready-to-eat meatballs and dry-cured ham.

Mechanically separated meat

Mechanically separated meat refers to meat separated from bone with a mechanical squeezing process. This separation is performed after the carcass has been stripped of all meat that can be cut with a knife. Mechanically separated meat is used to supplement other meat in the production of sausages and meatballs, among other things.

Microbes

Microbes refer to micro-organisms that are not visible to the naked eye. Microbes include bacteria, viruses, fungi or moulds, yeast, along with parasites or protozoa, tapeworms and nematodes. The growths caused by moulds and yeast on the surface of food can, however, be seen with the naked eye.

Microbes in food can cause the food to spoil or can cause food poisoning in humans.

Microbiological samples and analyses

Laboratory tests for ensuring the quality, safety and shelf-life of food or ingredients.

Microbiological purity

A surface is microbiologically pure if it does not contain microbes. A surface that appears clean to the eye is not necessarily microbiologically pure. For this reason, food companies, for example, use disinfectants in addition to detergent. Disinfectants kill microbes. Microbiological purity is tested with tests specifically designed for this purpose.

Mould

Mould creates growths on the surface of food, spoiling it. Mould can be seen with the naked eye. Mouldy food must not be used. Do not eat or use, for example, bread if mould can be seen on its surface.

Novel food authorisation

A novel food authorisation is required if the product or ingredient has not been used as a foodstuff in the EU before May 1997. The authorisation is applied for from the European Commission. The application must include an account of the new food product's or ingredient's safety.

Organic products

Organic production generates products without causing harm to the environment or the health and well-being of humans, plants or animals.

In the production of organic food, the permitted additives and processing agents have been limited to the absolutely necessary. For example, artificial dyes and sweeteners are not allowed.

Own-check plan

The own-check plan is a document in which are recorded the measurements taken by food entrepreneurs themselves to control the safety and quality of food products.

Period of minimum durability

See "Date of minimum durability".

Perishable foods/foodstuffs

Perishable foodstuffs refers to food in which bacteria that spoil the food or cause food poisoning can grow rapidly if the food is not stored at/in the correct temperature and conditions. For example, meat, fish, grated carrots and raw sausages are perishable foodstuffs.

Non-perishable foodstuffs can keep for a long time at room temperature and dry conditions. These include, for example, nuts, spices and flour.

Pests

Pests include rats, mice, cockroaches, flies and silverfish.

Pests can spread diseases and spoil or soil foods or their packaging.

Process, processing

Processing food can consist of chopping, flavouring or cooking it.

Processing food in a food company requires a hygiene passport and health certificate.

Serving prepared food or moving packaged food from one place to another does not constitute processing that would require a hygiene passport or health certificate.

Raw milk

Raw milk is the milk of domestic animals which has not been heated to over 40 degrees Centigrade or processed in any other way. Nothing has been taken away from or added to raw milk.

Raw milk is also known as farm milk.

Regional State Administrative Agency

Regional State Administrative Agencies carry out executive, steering and enforcement tasks laid down in Finnish law. There are six Regional State Administrative Agencies. In addition, Åland has its own agency. Regional State Administrative Agencies are referred to with the abbreviation AVI. You can find more information and your area's Regional State Administrative Agency at the address www.avi.fi/en/web/avi-en.

Salmonella

Salmonella is an intestinal bacteria that can be transmitted through contaminated food or water and causes food poisoning.

The symptoms of a salmonella infection or salmonellosis can include

- nausea
- abdominal pain
- diarrhoea
- fever and
- headache.

Salmonella infections may also cause permanent damage, such as severe joint pain. In addition, salmonella can cause serious conditions, such as blood poisoning.

Salmonella is most commonly transmitted through raw or poorly cooked poultry or pork, or through raw milk and raw vegetables. Salmonella can also spread through foodstuffs contaminated by an infected worker.

Salmonellosis

Salmonellosis is the name of the disease caused by the salmonella bacteria. Salmonellosis most commonly affects the digestive tract, manifesting as diarrhoea.

Separation in time

Separation in time means that different food groups are processed on the same work surfaces or with the same tools, but at different times. Temporal segregation requires the surfaces and tools to be carefully cleaned between different applications.

For example, handling unwashed root vegetables and gutting fish must be temporally segregated from other processing, if they cannot be processed on dedicated surfaces with dedicated tools. Ingredients that cause allergies and intolerance reactions can also be temporally separated from each other and foods for which they are not intended.

Supervisory authority

See “Food control authority”.

Surface cleanliness samples

Surface cleanliness samples are taken for example from work surfaces. These samples are used for monitoring the microbiological purity of surfaces.

Total bacteria (i.e., aerobic microorganisms)

Total bacteria refers to the amount of bacteria found in foodstuffs or on surfaces or equipment coming into contact with foodstuffs. The total bacteria count only contains bacteria that reproduce in an oxygenated environment.

As a rule, the total bacteria count increases if food is stored for a long time, or if the food is stored at the wrong temperature. The total bacteria count can include both bacteria that spoil food and bacteria that cause food poisoning in humans.

Traceability

Traceability means that you will need to be able to demonstrate the place of purchase of ingredients and other products. Similarly, you must know where the finished products have been delivered.

Trichinella

Trichinella worms are small nematodes that live in the muscles of the host animal, such as a pig. Humans can also be infected with trichinosis if they eat the meat of an infected animal. Slaughterhouses examine all pig and horse carcasses for trichinella worms. Some game species are also inspected, for example, bear, lynx, wild boar and seal.

Use-by date or expiration date

Instead of the date of minimum durability, the packaging of microbiologically perishable food products must indicate an expiration date. This refers to the date until which the foodstuff is safe to use, provided that it has been stored appropriately.

A foodstuff may not be sold after its expiration date or used in the manufacture of foodstuffs for sale or service.

Viruses

Viruses are small particles which cause infections in, for example, the respiratory or digestive tract. Viruses can cause colds, cough, diarrhoea or vomiting.

Viruses can infect humans through food, for example, or via surfaces touched by humans.

Wholesaler

Wholesalers sell goods in large quantities. They sell their products and services to shops, restaurants and other companies.

Wine glass and fork symbol

Packaging or utensils bearing the wine glass and fork symbol are made of material suitable for use with foodstuffs. The wine glass and fork symbol indicates that the product fulfils the requirements set for items and materials that come into contact with foodstuffs.



Withdrawal

If it is discovered that a food product does not comply with the requirements for the safety of foodstuffs, the product shall be withdrawn from the market. This is called withdrawal.