



Section 6, Terminology

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

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

Condensation basins

Water condensating on cooling devices and in chilled rooms can be disposed of in a controlled manner with the help of condensation basins.

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.

Cooperative

Working in a cooperative is working together with other producers.

Cross-contamination

Cross-contamination means that microbes are transferred from one foodstuff to another through direct contact or through a medium for ex. through hands, utensils or equipment.

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.

Description of own-check

A description of own-check activities is a description involved with primary production and its premises in which activities significant to the safety of food production are included.

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.

Disinfection and 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.

Extra salt content marking

If the salt content of a foodstuff is over a certain limit, a warning for high salt content is obligatory. The marking is obligatory for packed foods and also for some unpacked foodstuffs such as

1. cheeses
2. sausages
3. meat products used as cold cuts and
4. bread.

Finnish Food Authority

- promotes, monitors and studies the safety and quality of food; the health and wellbeing of animals; plant health; fertiliser products, animal feeds and plant protection products that are used in agricultural and forestry production; and propagating materials i.e. seeds and planting materials.
- is responsible for the use of the funds provided by the European Union's agricultural guarantee and rural development funds in Finland, operates as the EU's paying agency and monitors the implementation of EU and national grants – farming subsidies, project, entrepreneurship and structural subsidies as well as market subsidies.

In addition, the Finnish Food Authority develops and maintains the information systems used in rural business administration, develops online services, maintains and develops the registers used in the field, and also produces information management services for the agencies and departments that operate under the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry as well as other public authorities.

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. Finnish Food Authority is responsible for the monitoring of slaughterhouses and facilities connected to them and for meat inspections.

Food establishment notification

A food establishment, such as a restaurant, is required to file a notification of starting business operations. A notification is also required for any material changes, suspension or termination of operations and when the operator changes. The notification is filed with the food control authority of the municipality in which the establishment is located.

A written or electronic notification must be filed no later than four weeks before the start of operations or any material changes to them. Additional information is available from the municipal food control authority.

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.

Further processing

Primary products are further processed into foodstuffs.

Graded, grading

Eggs are graded ie. checked at the packing establishment. Shops and supermarkets can only sell grade A eggs.

Health certificate

A certificate of a person’s state of health and suitability to work with foodstuffs given by the healthcare personnel.

Health examination, salmonella test

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.

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 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.

Low-Risk Decree (number 1258/2011)

This is Finnish national legislation. It defines the amounts of own produce which can be sold with alleviated requirements.

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 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.

Microbiological samples and analyses

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

Microwave, microwaving

A microwave oven is an appliance for heating food and drink with the help of microwaves. A microwave oven can also be referred to as a 'microwave' or 'micro'.

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.

Overhead watering

Plants in cultivation are watered from above.

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.

Prepared for sale

Preparing for sale means the removal of soil, the tops, ie. the parts on top of the ground, or the top leaves. In some cases it means washing of vegetables and cutting bigger vegetables in small pieces.

Primary production

Primary production produces foodstuffs and raw materials, which are then delivered to, for example, shops, the food industry for processing, or directly to consumers.

Primary production includes farming such as dairy production, egg production, beef cattle breeding, and the cultivation of fruits, vegetables and cereals. Primary production also includes the exploitation of wild produce, such as collecting berries and mushrooms, fishing and fish farming.

Primary production notification

A primary production notification must be filed for a farm engaged in primary production. The notification is filed with the municipal food control authority. There is a specific form for the notification.

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.

REKO food rings

A REKO food ring sells directly to the end consumer through a remote medium. REKO food rings operate through private Facebook-groups.

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.

Salmonella test, health 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.

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.

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.

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.

Vegetable produce, vegetable products

Vegetable products are primary products originating from plants. They are used as foodstuffs as such or through a production process.

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.



Wine glass and fork symbol

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.

Work hygiene

The production of foodstuffs require good work hygiene. This includes personnels' good hand hygiene, good health status and clean work clothing as well as good cleaning of premises and equipment and prevention of cross-contamination.