

STORAGE

Storage Conditions and Cooler Sanitation

B C P

- At all times stored meat must be **covered and protected** from pests, dust, condensation, or any other unsanitary condition. Meat storage should never be located in an area used for locker rooms, washrooms, garbage storage, mechanical rooms, under dripping pipes or in chemical storage areas. Fresh meat must be appropriately wrapped to **prevent leakage** onto other products and if leakers are found any residues should be removed as soon as possible.
- If **pallets** are used for storage they should be inspected for loose nails or broken boards which may present a physical hazard. If **shelves** are used they must not be constructed from unsealed wood or other materials which are not smooth and cleanable.
- Care must be taken to **avoid condensation** in coolers which can drip down on boxes and potentially contaminate products. Refrigeration units should be checked for excess condensation which, if present, should be removed as required. Also **refrigeration units** should be cleaned and maintained on a periodic basis as per a written schedule. **Cooler walls** and floors should be cleaned and sanitized when needed.

Box Placement

B

- Ensure that boxes in coolers are **not placed** against a wall or directly on the floor. The use of pallets and an approximate 10cm (4 inches) space between product and the cooler walls permits air flow which facilitates rapid cooling. An **air space** between boxes and use of dividers between layers on a pallet is also useful. As a general rule warmer temperatures will be encountered by product placed higher up or closer to the door of the cooler. When possible **ground and cooked products**, which are especially vulnerable to warm temperatures, should be stored away from the warmest locations in the cooler.

Storage Temperature and Shelf Life

B

- Fresh meat should be stored at **no more than 4°C** and lower temperatures between -1.0° and 2°C if possible. This will promote extended shelf life by slowing growth of spoilage bacteria (packaged fresh meat will begin to freeze at -1.5°C). For frozen meat, temperature should be maintained at -18°C and product properly wrapped to prevent freezer burn.

First In – First Out Rotation System

B

- A FIFO system is important to enable the customer to receive the **freshest and safest** product. Remember to organize boxes in the cooler to facilitate a first in–first out rotation system.

Storage Temperature and Food Safety

B

- Given the crucial nature of temperature for food safety, whenever possible alarm systems should be used to **monitor cooler temperatures**. If boxes show signs of significant warming they should be inspected by management to determine suitability for use. It is especially important that ground, chopped or rolled meat products which have spent significant time **over 4°C** be destroyed.

Cooler and Freezer Facilities

B

- Ensure that the volume and temperature of the product in the cooler or freezer is not more than the **refrigeration capacity** of the unit can handle under the conditions of use.

B C P
Biological Hazard Chemical Hazard Physical Hazard



www.beefinfo.org