
Draft Jamaican Standard

Specification

for

The hygienic preparation and sale of ready-to-eat foods: **Food
prepared in establishments**



BUREAU OF STANDARDS JAMAICA

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Jamaican Standards establish requirements in relation to commodities, processes and practices, but do not purport to include all the necessary provisions of a contract.

The attention of those using this standard specification is called to the necessity of complying with any relevant legislation.

Amendments

No.	Date of Issue	Remarks	Entered by and date

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Foreword

Ready-to-eat food prepared in establishments such as hotels and restaurants are consumed daily. It is therefore imperative that food served in these establishments be safe for human consumption, especially as food can be the cause of illnesses.

This standard was developed to provide guidelines for the hygienic preparation and sale of food prepared in these establishments.

This standard replaces the JCP 4 Part 1: 2003.

This standard is voluntary.

Committee representation

Related Documents

This standard makes reference to:

Food Standards Australia New Zealand Compendium of Microbiological
Criteria for Food

Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

JS CRS 36 Jamaican Standard Specification for Processed foods (general)

Jamaican Standard Specification for the hygienic preparation and sale of ready-to-eat foods: Food prepared in establishments

1. Scope

This standard specifies the general requirements for the preparation of ready-to-eat food in food establishments.

2 Terms and Definitions

For the purpose of this standard the following terms and definitions apply:

2.1

competent authority

an organization or body that has the legally delegated or invested authority, capacity, or power to perform a designated function.

2.2

contamination

the infection of food with toxic substances, undesirable agents such as micro-organisms or the introduction of carriers such as dust and pests.

2.3

establishment

any place where food for human consumption is processed or manufactured, packaged, labelled, stored, handled, prepared, served, displayed, or otherwise engaged. This includes all yard (land) and outbuildings appurtenant thereto.

2.4

equipment

items such as stoves, ovens, slicers, grinders, mixers, scales, meat blocks, tables, food shelves, refrigerators and freezers, sinks and ice makers used in the storage and preparation of food.

2.5

food

any substance, whether processed, semi-processed or raw, which is intended for human consumption.

2.6

hazard

allergen, biological, chemical, physical or radioactive agent in, or condition of, food with the potential to cause an adverse health effect.

2.7

infestation

The presence of rodents, insects, mites or fungi in numbers or other such conditions which present an immediate or potential risk of, loss of, or damage to food.

2.8

potable water

water safe for human consumption (free from micro-organisms of public health significance and from harmful and toxic chemicals).

2.9

ready-to- eat food

foods which are generally eaten in the state in which they are sold or given a mild heat treatment before consumption.

NOTE 1: Foods that may come into this category include, but are not limited to cooked meals, eg cook/chill, sous vide type foods; cooked meats and their products; cooked seafoods and their products; seafood products that are likely to be consumed in that state, eg cold smoked salmon, smoked mussels; prepared desserts and bakery products containing cream or other fillings of high water activity; and dairy products including soft cheeses.

NOTE 2: This includes any substance which has been used in the manufacture, preparation or treatment of food, but does not include cosmetics, tobacco or substances used only as drugs.

2.10

sanitization.

effective bactericidal treatment of the clean surfaces, equipment and utensils used in food establishments.

2.11

toxic

describes a substance which when introduced into the body by ingestion, inhalation or absorption is lethal or injurious to health.

3 Classification

Ready-to-eat food served in food establishments can be categorized as in Table1.

Table 1 —Categories of Ready-to-eat Foods.

Food category		Examples
Category 1	Applies to foods fully cooked for immediate sale or consumption.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hot takeaway food such as pizza, fish and chips, etc. (a la carte)
Category 2a	Applies to foods in which all components of the foods have been cooked but there is minimal handling or storage before sale or consumption.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole cooked bakery products such as pies, sausage rolls, quiches • Whole cooked chicken
Category 2b	Applies to foods in which all components of the foods have been cooked but there is minimal handling and the food is packaged for extended refrigerated shelf life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Packaged cook/chill meals (e.g. curries, pastas, soups) • Vacuum-packed, Modified atmospheric packaged meals or foods (e.g. packaged sliced meats)
Category 3	Applies to foods in which all components of the foods have been cooked and there is some handling and/or refrigerated storage before sale or consumption.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fully cooked bakery products (pies, quiches, cooked deserts etc.) that are chilled/portioned/further handled. • Unpackaged sliced meats • Cooked shellfish (molluscs, crustaceans)
Category 4	Applies to foods which contain some components that have not been cooked.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dips such as hummus, tzatziki etc. • Bakery products containing fresh cream or uncooked fillings (e.g. cold set custard) • Sandwiches • Sushi rolls
Category 5	Applies to foods that either have an inherently high plate count because of the normal microbial flora present or as a result of the processing received. Includes fermented, preserved and dried food products and fresh fruit and vegetables.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fermented vegetables such as sauerkraut, olives • Ripened cheeses, yoghurts and cultured butters • Preserved foods such as pickled, marinated or salted fish or vegetables. • Dried foods such as nuts, seeds, herbs, spices, dried fish or meat • Whole fresh fruits and vegetables and foods that contain them e.g. salads and sandwiches with vegetable ingredients

4 General requirements for ready-to-eat food prepared in establishments.

4.1 Ready-to-eat food prepared and served in establishments shall be:

- a) prepared from wholesome raw materials.
- b) of good quality and safe for human consumption.
- c) free from extraneous matter such as hair.

NOTE: Insect fragments should be absent.

- d) always protected from cross-contamination between foods and from potential contamination by insects, insecticides, rodents, rodenticides while being stored, prepared, displayed, dispensed or served.
- e) free from poisonous or harmful chemical substances.
- f) prepared and stored or held under prescribed conditions.

5 General requirements for establishments

5.1 Establishments shall comply with the JS 36 and other relevant legislation as prescribed by the competent authority.

5.2 Buildings and facilities

5.2.1 Buildings shall have adequate ventilation and other safeguards as may be necessary to prevent condensation coming in contact with equipment, utensils, food ingredients and prepared food.

5.2.2 Premises shall be so designed to separate raw material from ready-to-eat product areas.

5.2.3 Floors, walls and ceilings shall be kept clean and in good repair.

5.2.4 Walls and ceilings of areas in which food is prepared or where utensils and hands are washed shall be easily cleaned, smooth, light -coloured and be maintained in good repair.

5.2.5 Light fixtures, vent covers, wall-mounted fan, decorative materials and similar attachments to walls and ceilings shall be easily cleaned and be maintained in good repair.

5.2.6 Potable, running water shall be of adequate supply for the preparation and cleaning of equipment and utensils.

5.2.7 Sanitary facilities shall be adequate to facilitate personal use and cleanliness and in accordance with the Competent Authority.

5.2.8 Suitable facilities shall be provided for prompt collection and disposal of waste and refuse.

5.2.9 Proper effluent and waste disposal system shall be available to ensure environmental protection.

5.3 Equipment and utensils

5.3.1 Utensils shall be designed of such materials and workmanship as to be smooth, easily cleaned, durable and in good condition.

5.3.2 Food contact surfaces of such utensils shall be easily accessible for cleaning, non-toxic, corrosion-resistant and relatively non-absorbent.

5.3.3 Eating and drinking utensils shall be thoroughly cleaned and sanitized with a food safe sanitizer after each use.

5.3.4 All utensils shall be stored in pest-proof enclosures.

5.3.5 Cold surfaces (e.g., refrigeration units) can be sources for psychrotrophic bacteria, especially *L. monocytogenes*. Condensate from refrigeration unit pans should be directed to a drain via a hose or drip pans should be emptied, cleaned and disinfected on a regular basis. Insulation should be designed and installed in a manner that it does not become a harbourage site for *L. monocytogenes*.

5.4 Personnel

Persons engaged in handling food, drink, utensils or equipment shall:

- a) have a valid Food Handlers Permit and adhere to the guidelines of the competent authority.
- b) have control of food handler practices and hygiene, to prevent potential communicable diseases that could be foodborne (CAC 1 1969)
NOTE: Persons affected with a boil, infected wound, sores, cold, diarrhoea, gastrointestinal upsets, respiratory infection or any such conditions shall be referred to the competent authority.
- c) wear hairnets, headbands, caps, snood or any other effective hair restraints - as well as appropriate outer garments.
- d) maintain adequate personal cleanliness.
- e) have adequate and continuing training in hygienic handling of food and personal hygiene so that they understand and practice the precautions necessary to prevent contamination in food.
- f) wash hands frequently and thoroughly with soap and water and dry them before handling any food.
- g) avoid unhygienic practices such as spitting, sneezing or coughing over the food.

- h) avoid smoking during the preparation and serving of food.

5.5 Food preparation

5.5.1 Food shall be prepared with minimum of manual contact and should be prepared on food contact surfaces with utensils which have been cleaned and sanitized.

5.5.2 Food-contact surfaces and utensils shall be cleaned and sanitized for each new operation such as the processing of raw beef, pork, poultry and seafood.

5.5.3 Salads and other ready-to-eat foods shall be prepared in areas designated for each specific activity.

5.5.4 Potentially hazardous foods such as potato salads, sandwiches and cream filled pastry products should be prepared from chilled products.

5.6 Food storage

5.6.1 All food while stored, prepared, displayed, served or sold or otherwise offered for human consumption shall be protected from contamination and infestation.

5.6.2 Potentially hazardous food shall be maintained at a safe temperature (-18°C to -22°C for frozen foods, and 1° C-6°C for refrigerated items) except during minimum periods of actual preparation.

5.6.3 Raw fruits and vegetables prepared for serving should be thoroughly washed with potable water before being used.

5.6.4 Stuffings for meat shall be thoroughly cooked before being served.

5.6.5 Hermetically sealed packages shall be so handled as to maintain container integrity.

5.6.6 Food ingredients such as flour, sugar, salt, baking powder, cooking oil or vinegar shall be stored in containers appropriately labelled according to First In First Out (FIFO) practices.

5.6.7 Food, once served to the patron and which has been subjected to possible contamination by the consumer through mishandling, droplet infection or other forms of contamination shall not be reserved or reused for human consumption.

5.6.8 Poisonous or toxic substances used for sanitization purposes shall be properly identified, stored separately and used in such manner and condition so as not to contaminate food or constitute a hazard to employees or consumers according to FIFO practices.

5.7 Identification quality control system

5.7.1 Raw materials shall be labelled with the date of receipt, name of supplier, place or country of origin and any other relevant information such as expiry date, name of competent personnel who received the goods and record to be made available to the Public Health Inspector.

5.7.2 Cooked food to be stored should be wrapped or placed in clean containers, labelled with the date of preparation, type of food, and stored at refrigerator or freezer temperature as required.

5.7.3 Quality control procedures should be executed routinely by competent personnel.

5.7.4 Measuring tools used for quality control should be calibrated and functional.

5.7.5 Samples of food items taken from each batch should be kept in a sterile container in refrigerated conditions for instances such as.

- a) shelf life assessment
- b) routine microbial assessment
- c) customer complaint investigations

5.8 Surroundings

5.8.1 The surroundings shall be kept clean and free of litter and other pollutants.

5.8.2 The establishment and surrounding areas shall be regularly inspected for evidence of infestation.

5.8.3 An effective pest control programme shall be maintained.

6 Microbiological requirements

6.1 Criteria for Ready to eat foods

The microbiological criteria of ready to eat foods in general consist of three components.

- a) aerobic colony count, also known as standard plate count.
- b) Hygienic indicator organisms- E.coli and Enterobacteriaceae
- c) Specific foodborne pathogens

6.2 Classification of Microbial Quality

The microbiological assessment of ready-to-eat food on the above components will lead to the classification of microbial quality into one of the following three classes:

- a) **Satisfactory:** test results indicating good microbial quality, with results within expected microbiological levels (lower range). No food safety concern present.
- b) **Marginal:** test results that are not unsatisfactory but are on the upper range of acceptability, which indicate the potential for development of public health problems and unacceptable risk
- c) **Unsatisfactory:** Test results that are outside expected microbiological levels which indicate poor food handling practices. Actions shall be taken to re-establish effective food handling controls.

- d) **Hazardous:** Test results that exceed expected microbiological levels to a point where it presents an immediate food safety concern. Further action shall be required to:
- a) Prevent the affected product from being distributed or sold.
 - b) Determine the cause of the problem and ensure corrective actions are implemented.

The actions to be taken by operators are as follows in Table 3:

Table 2 — Interpretation of results for Standard Plate counts in ready-to-eat foods.

Food Category	Result cfu/g		
	Satisfactory	Marginal	Unsatisfactory
Category 1	$<10^3$	$10^3- <10^5$	$\geq 10^5$
Category 2a	$<10^4$	$10^4- <10^6$	$\geq 10^6$
Category 2b	$<10^4$	$10^4- <10^7$	$\geq 10^7$
Category 3	$<10^5$	$10^5- <10^7$	$\geq 10^7$
Category 4	$<10^6$	$10^6- <10^7$	$\geq 10^7$
Category 5	N/A	N/A	N/A

Table 3— Interpretation of results for testing of indicator organisms in RTE foods

Indicator	Result cfu/g	Interpretation	Likely Cause	Actions
Enterobacteriae	>10 ⁴	Unsatisfactory	For processed foods, this indicates that contamination has occurred post processing such as food contact surfaces, raw products, food handlers) Poor temperature time control may also be a contributor	Review: a) processing controls used (such as cooking temperatures) b) cleaning and sanitising practices for premises and equipment c) food handler hygiene d) time and temperature control. Additional food or environmental samples may be required for investigation.
	10 ² -10 ⁴	Marginal	Cross contamination or inadequate processing	Operators shall conduct proactive investigation to ensure hygiene and processing controls are being implemented. Operators shall compare results with other food samples from the production environment for interpretation
	<10 ²	Satisfactory		No action required

Indicator	Result cfu/g	Interpretation	Likely Cause	Actions
Escherichia coli	>10 ²	Unsatisfactory	For raw and processed foods: Indicates potential faecal contamination from poor hygienic practices such as cross contamination from food contact surfaces, raw foods or food handlers. Inadequate processing is also a likely contributor. NOTE: For ready-to-eat foods such as fresh produce that have not been processed, contamination from primary production environment shall be considered.	The operator shall review: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) processing controls used such as cooking temperatures b) cleansing and sanitising practices for premises and equipment c) food handler hygiene d) time and temperature control e) primary production controls (harvest practices, water quality, fertilizers, other necessary inputs)
	3-<10 ²	Marginal	While low levels may be detected in RTE food, widespread detection in several foods or areas of the food production environment indicate poor hygienic practices	Measures shall be taken to ensure processing and hygiene controls are being implemented
	<3	Satisfactory		No action required

Indicator	Result cfu/g	Interpretation	Likely Cause	Actions
Listeria spp (other than L.monocytogenes)	>10 ²	Unsatisfactory	Detection at this level signifies that conditions may also be favourable for L. monocytogenes to be present. This may be due to poor food handling controls or cross contamination. Higher levels may also indicate poor temperature control or inappropriate length of shelf life.	The operator shall undertake an investigation of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the raw materials used b) adequacy of cleaning and sanitising of premises and equipment c) adequacy of construction and maintenance of premises d) the effectiveness of process controls <p>NOTE: additional sampling, including environmental sampling shall be considered. This includes specific testing for L. monocytogenes.</p>
	<10 ²	Marginal	Indicates that food handling controls or cross contamination pose a threat	Measures shall be taken to ensure production, processing and hygiene controls are being implemented as intended. Additional sampling of the environment and food products shall be considered.
	Not detected in 25g	Satisfactory		No action required

ANNEX A (informative)

Table A.1 Guidance on the interpretation of results for specific foodborne pathogens in ready to eat food in general

Criterion	Colony Forming Unit (Cfu/g)		
	Satisfactory	Borderline	Unsatisfactory (Potentially injurious to health and/or unfit for human consumption)
Campylobacter spp.	Not detected in 25g	N/A	Detected in 25g
E. coli 0157 (and other shiga toxin producing E.coli)	Not detected in 25 g	N/A	Detected in 25g
Salmonella spp.	Not detected in 25g	N/A	Detected in 25g
Vibrio Cholerae (O1 and O139)	Not detected in 25 g	N/A	Detected in 25g
Shigella spp. ^a	Not detected in 25g	N/A	Detected in 25g
Listeria monocytogenes			
1. for refrigerated food ^b (excluding frozen food) or food intended for infants	Not detected in 25g	N/A	Detected in 25 g
2. For other ready to eat food		N/A	Detected in 25g
Vibrio parahaemolyticus	<20	20-≤10 ³	>10 ³
Staphylococcus aureus and other coagulase-positive staphylococci	<20	20-≤10 ⁴	>10 ⁴
Clostridium perfringens	<10	10-≤10 ⁴	>10 ⁴
Bacillus cereus	<10 ³	10 ³ -≤10 ⁵	>10 ⁵

NOTE: a Shigella spp. would be tested in the cases of food poisoning investigation or food complaint if the organism is implicated but not recommended for routine surveillance

b applies to all refrigerated food (excluding frozen food) unless there is scientific evidence supporting that the food concerned does not support the growth of *L. monocytogenes* under refrigeration.

END OF DOCUMENT

Draft Jamaican Standard

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5. The Standards Council recommends the document to the Minister for publication.
6. The Minister approves the recommendation of the Standards Council.
7. The declaration of the standard is gazetted and copies placed on sale.
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