

8 December 2020

Dear Sir/Madam,

CIRCULAR ON OBSERVING GOOD FOOD SAFETY AND PERSONAL HYGIENE PRACTICES AND ENSURING SAFE MANAGEMENT MEASURES DURING FESTIVE SEASON

The year-end festivities are approaching and there is an anticipated increase in consumers dining out or purchasing cooked/ready-to-eat food. In view of this, the Singapore Food Agency (SFA) would like to remind all food operators to exercise extra care and to take the necessary preventive measures to ensure that the food they supply and sell to consumers is prepared hygienically and is safe for consumption. Food operators should also ensure a safe eating environment for their customers and workers by ensuring compliance to Safe Management Measures (SMMs) at all times.

Food Safety is a Joint Responsibility

2. Food safety is a joint responsibility between the government, industry and consumers. Food operators are reminded to ensure that all their food handlers have attended the requisite basic hygiene training and are registered with SFA, and that food handlers do not engage in any food preparation if they are unwell. Food operators should also refrain from taking orders beyond their operations or premises' capacity as this could result in hygiene lapses and compromise food safety.

Adopting Good Food Safety Practices

3. Food operators should remain vigilant and remind food handlers and staff working in the food preparation area to exercise good food safety practices at all times. In particular, please pay attention to the following:

- a) Do not prepare or handle food if food handlers or staff are unwell (for e.g. vomiting, diarrhea or fever) or if they have infected wounds, skin infections or sores.
- b) Wash hands thoroughly and regularly with soap and water, especially after handling raw food, visiting the toilet or handling waste;
- c) Obtain food supplies from approved sources;
- d) Upon receiving food or ingredients, store them at appropriate locations and at safe temperatures;
- e) Store raw food and cooked/ready-to-eat food separately;
- f) Cook food thoroughly. Keep hot food above 60°C;
- g) Take extra precaution when handling and preparing food that is frequently consumed raw or uncooked (for e.g. oysters, sashimi etc.);
- h) Use separate chopping boards and utensils for raw food and cooked or ready-to-eat food;
- i) Wash and peel raw vegetables and fruits that can be peeled before consumption;
- j) Keep food preparation areas and premises clean and pest-free, and ensure preparation surfaces, utensils and cooking equipment are clean.

Adopting Good Personal Hygiene Practices

4. An infected person can contaminate the food or food packaging but the risk of infection of Covid-19 due to contact with contaminated surfaces of food and food packaging is very low and can be further reduced through good public and personal hygiene practices. As such, SFA continues to emphasize the importance of good public and personal hygiene practices to uphold high public health standards in Singapore. These includes:

- a) Seeking medical attention promptly and staying home if unwell;
- b) Wear a mask covering the nose and mouth at all times;
- c) Avoid touching your face with your hands;
- d) Covering mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing/sneezing, and throwing the tissue away into a bin immediately;
- e) Not sharing food/drinks with others.

Safe Management Measures (SMMs)

5. To provide a safe environment for customers and workers, F&B operators currently in operation must comply with Safe Management Measures (SMMs) as required by the Ministry of Manpower and comply with the COVID—19 (Temporary Measures) (Control Order) Regulations. Kindly refer to the following web-link for more information (https://www.sfa.gov.sg/docs/default-source/covid/advisory_safe-management-measures-for-fb_reopening.pdf).

6. Please share this advisory with all staff involved in food preparation and operations (i.e. delivery, storage etc.). For more guidelines on food safety practices, please visit SFA's website at www.sfa.gov.sg/food-retail.

7. Thank you and best wishes for the coming festive season.

Yours faithfully,

Dr Abdul Jalil Abdul Kader
Senior Director
Joint Operations Division
(For Director General / Food Administration)

NB: This is a computer-generated letter. No signature is required.