

Food Safety

is a Shared Responsibility

Introduction

Food safety means that when food is consumed, it does not contain contaminants at levels which cause harm. All persons, whether they produce, manufacture, distribute, prepare or consume food, are part of the food chain. As such, the assurance of food safety is a shared responsibility which requires a multi-sectoral effort by governments, food industries and consumers.

AVA is our food safety champion

AVA is the national authority for food safety in Singapore. AVA regulates the safety of both fresh produce and processed food, from production or point of import to just before they enter the retail chain.

AVA has put in place an integrated food safety system to ensure that food sold in Singapore is safe. Our food safety requirements are stringent and consistent with international standards.

The system involves checking of food produced at source, inspection of food, testing and analysis, and source tracing. It also includes surveillance and monitoring for food threats.

In addition, AVA continuously scans the horizon for potential threats to food safety and updates its systems to tackle such problems.

The role of the food industry and trade

The food industry is also responsible for the safety of the food it offers to consumers. Food manufacturers, importers and distributors in Singapore have to maintain a high standard of food safety by complying with the stringent requirements of AVA.

Responsible food industry players raise public confidence in their products by incorporating food safety assurance programmes and hygienic practices in their operations.

AVA also works closely with the food industry and trade to advise them on food safety issues.

The role of consumers

Government authorities can exert some control over the quality and safety of food produced or imported through legislation and enforcement. However, formal control is not possible at the household level.

As a consumer, you have direct control over the safety of food prepared for yourself and your household. You can do this by equipping yourself with knowledge of food safety risks, and safe food practices to avoid the risks.

By taking appropriate actions, you can play a part in protecting your own well-being and the well-being of your family.

TOGETHER, LET'S KEEP FOOD SAFE



Food Safety
is also
My Responsibility

FOOD SAFETY TIPS FOR SEAFOOD



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Keep Seafood Safe!

Singaporeans consume an average of 100,000 tonnes of seafood each year. While seafood is generally safe to eat, we can still take measures to minimise food safety risks through careful selection and handling.

The following tips will enable you to enjoy safe seafood all year round.

Buying Seafood

- ✓ Buy seafood that is properly iced or refrigerated.
- ✓ Select packaged seafood before its expiry date and check that packages are not torn.
- ✓ Fresh seafood should not have excess liquid when packaged.
- ✓ Avoid seafood that has a strong ammonia smell. Dead shellfish is not edible and should be avoided.
- ✓ When buying fish, choose those that are shiny, bright, and with scales intact. Fresh fish should have bright, clear and full eyes and firm flesh. Fish gills should be red to liver-red and free from slime.
- ✓ Head home immediately after buying seafood so that they will not be left unrefrigerated for too long.
- ✓ Buy only what you can eat within a few days.



Storing Seafood

- ✓ Do not overstock your seafood supply.
- ✓ Wash and dry fresh seafood before placing them in clean plastic bags or containers for storage.
- ✓ Follow the recommended safe handling and storage information on the packages, if any.
- ✓ If you need to freeze the seafood, divide into portions based on your normal serving size.
- ✓ Do not open refrigerator or freezer doors more often than necessary to avoid temperature fluctuation.
- ✓ When storing or thawing seafood in the refrigerator, place the seafood in containers or trays to prevent the juices from contaminating other food.
- ✓ Store live oysters, clams and mussels in the refrigerator and keep them damp. Do not place them on ice, or let them come into contact with fresh water. Do not place them in airtight containers.
- ✓ Do not re-freeze seafood that has been completely thawed.



Handling Seafood

- ✓ Thaw seafood safely in the refrigerator or use the microwave oven.
- ✓ Separate raw seafood from cooked or ready to-eat food to avoid cross-contamination.
- ✓ Thoroughly wash knives, containers and cutting boards before and after handling raw seafood.
- ✓ Scrub and clean the shells of scallops, mussels, clams or oysters under cold water before opening or cooking them in the shell.
- ✓ Always cook seafood thoroughly until it is opaque and flaky to kill bacteria.



Your Storage Guide for Seafood

PRODUCT	REFRIGERATOR (4°C)	FREEZER (-18°C)
Chilled Seafood		
Fish	1 - 2 days	2 - 4 months
Clams, Mussels, Oysters and Squids	1 - 2 days	3 - 4 months
Crabs, Crayfish, Prawns and Lobsters	2 - 3 days	2 - 3 months
Cooked Prawns and Mussels	3 - 4 days	2 - 3 months
Fishballs and Yong Tau Foo - pre-packed	Use-by date	Do not freeze
- loose	1 - 2 days	Do not freeze
Frozen Seafood		
Fish	1 - 2 days	3 - 6 months
Prawns	1 - 2 days	9 - 12 months
Oysters - shucked	1 - 2 days	3 - 4 months
- shelled	1 - 2 days	2 - 3 months
Fishballs (cooked)	3 - 5 days	Use-by date