

Transporting food

When you are transporting food, you need to consider two main food safety issues: keeping the food protected from contamination and, if the food is potentially hazardous, keeping it cold (5°C or colder) or hot (60°C or hotter).

Protecting food from contamination

It is important to protect food from contamination by keeping it covered at all times. You can achieve this by using containers with lids or by applying plastic film over containers. Materials used to cover food should be suitable for food contact, to ensure that they do not contain any chemicals that could leach into the food. Aluminium foil, plastic film and clean paper may be used, and food should be completely covered. Packaged products should not need additional covering.

Previously used materials and newspaper may contaminate food and should not be used.

Temperature control

When potentially hazardous foods are transported they should be kept cold (5°C or colder) or hot (60°C or hotter) during the journey. Alternatively, you could use time, rather than temperature, to keep the food safe while it is being transported. See Fact Sheet 4 *Temperature control* for more information.

If the journey is short, insulated containers may keep the food cold. If the journey is longer, you may need to use ice bricks to keep food cold and heat packs to keep food hot.

Place only pre-heated or pre-cooled food in an insulated container, which should have a lid to help maintain safe temperatures.

Insulated containers must be:

- in good condition and kept clean at all times;
- used only for food;
- kept away from other items such as chemicals, pet food, fuel and paint;
- be filled as quickly as possible and closed as soon as they have been filled; and
- kept closed until immediately before the food is needed or is placed in other temperature-controlled equipment.

Transport considerations

- Containers of cool food should be placed in the coolest part of the vehicle.
- If the inside of the vehicle is air-conditioned, cold food may be transported better here rather than in the boot.
- Vehicles should be clean. If the vehicle is normally used for carrying pets or dirty equipment, the food carrying area should be thoroughly cleaned or lined to prevent any contamination. This may not be necessary if food is transported in an insulated container with a tightly fitting lid.
- The journey should be properly planned and should be kept as short as possible.
- When collecting ingredients, cold foods should be collected last and immediately placed in insulated containers or cool bags for transporting to the preparation facility.
- When taking prepared foods to a venue, pack the food into insulated boxes as your last job.
- When you arrive at the venue, make it your first job to unload any hot or cold food and place it in temperature-controlled equipment.

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