

FOOD RECEIVING & DELIVERY INSPECTION CHECKLIST

(Before & At the Truck)

Before & At the Truck

Date: Supplier: Receiver:

TASK	PASS	FAIL	TEMP / NOTE
Delivery scheduled for a time when trained staff can inspect it properly, not during peak service.			
Delivery vehicle is clean, organized, and free of pests, odors, or contamination.			
Refrigerated and frozen products were transported in separate, correct temperature zones.			
Driver hygiene and handling are acceptable; product was not left on the dock in the danger zone.			
Invoice/purchase order matches the delivery: correct items, quantities, and approved supplier.			
Inspect and prioritize TCS (Time/Temperature Control for Safety) and frozen items first.			
Calibrated probe thermometer is on hand and sanitized before checking product.			
<i>Additional Task:</i>			

Instructions:

Receiving is the one moment a food handler can stop unsafe food before it enters the kitchen. Schedule deliveries when trained staff have time to inspect properly — food left on a dock creeps into the danger zone (41–135°F) before it reaches storage. Use only approved suppliers that are inspected and follow HACCP/GMP practices. Check the internal temperature of the food, not just the truck's air reading — a truck gauge may read 38°F while the product has absorbed heat during stops. Inspect the most temperature-sensitive items first.

FOOD RECEIVING & DELIVERY INSPECTION CHECKLIST

(Temperature Verification)

Temperature Verification

Date: Supplier: Receiver:

TASK	PASS	FAIL	TEMP / NOTE
Cold TCS food received at 41°F (5°C) or lower. Reject if above 41°F.			
Hot TCS food received at 135°F (57°C) or higher. Reject if below 135°F.			
Frozen food received frozen solid. Reject if soft, thawing, or showing ice crystals/water stains (thaw-refreeze).			
Live shellfish: air temperature 45°F or below, internal no higher than 50°F; cool to 41°F within 4 hours.			
Shellfish received with shellstock identification tags; retain tags 90 days from last use.			
Fish to be served raw/undercooked received with required documentation (e.g., parasite-destruction).			
Milk and dairy, eggs, and produce checked to their specified receiving temperatures.			
Measure internal food temperature (not just truck air); for vacuum/ROP packages, place probe between two packages.			
Record the actual temperature of each TCS item on the receiving log.			
Additional Task:			

Instructions:

Verify against FDA Food Code receiving temperatures: cold TCS $\leq 41^{\circ}\text{F}$, hot TCS $\geq 135^{\circ}\text{F}$, frozen solid. Large ice crystals or fluid/water stains in a frozen case mean the product thawed and was refrozen — reject it even if it is hard-frozen at inspection, because it was time-temperature abused. Always measure the food's internal temperature with a calibrated probe; for reduced-oxygen or vacuum-sealed packages, read between two packages rather than puncturing the seal. Record every TCS temperature — in the eyes of the FDA and health inspectors, if it isn't documented, it didn't happen.

FOOD RECEIVING & DELIVERY INSPECTION CHECKLIST

(Condition, Packaging & Documentation)

Condition, Packaging & Documentation

Date: Supplier: Receiver:

TASK	PASS	FAIL	TEMP / NOTE
Packaging is intact, clean, and dry. Reject leaks, dampness, water stains, tears, or punctures.			
No signs of pests, rodent damage, or insect activity in or on the packaging.			
Color, texture, and odor are normal. Reject slimy surfaces, discoloration, or sour/ammonia/off odors.			
Poultry: reject purple/green discoloration around the neck, dark wing tips, stickiness, or off odor.			
Cans: reject swollen or bulging ends, deep body dents, dents on the seam, rust, or leakage.			
Reduced-oxygen packages (ROP/MAP): reject bloated, leaking, or punctured packages.			
Dates are valid: reject items past their use-by or expiration date, or missing manufacturer dates.			
Required documents present (shellstock tags, raw-fish documentation) and legible.			
Product is labeled correctly; check for undeclared allergens against your allergen list.			
Additional Task:			

Instructions:

Visual inspection works alongside temperature checks. Reject any package with leaks, dampness, or water stains; damaged packaging exposes food to contamination. A swollen or bulging can can indicate dangerous contamination (including botulism risk) and is an automatic rejection. Slimy poultry, ammonia-like odor, or off color are signs of spoilage. Do not accept anything past its use-by date, and confirm required documentation (shellstock tags, raw-fish parasite-destruction records) is present. When in doubt, reject at the dock – once unsafe food enters storage it can be used by mistake.

FOOD RECEIVING & DELIVERY INSPECTION CHECKLIST

(Acceptance, Rejection & Storage)

Acceptance, Rejection & Storage

Date: Supplier: Receiver:

TASK	PASS	FAIL	TEMP / NOTE
For any rejected item: document the item, reason, quantity, and note it on the invoice/delivery record.			
Set rejected product aside and clearly mark it so it is not mistakenly used or stored.			
Communicate the rejection to the driver and arrange return/credit; keep the rejection record.			
Move accepted TCS and frozen food into proper storage immediately to preserve the cold chain.			
Date-mark and label accepted items; apply FIFO (first in, first out) rotation in storage.			
Store items at correct temperatures: coolers ≤41°F, freezers 0°F or below, dry storage cool and dry.			
Store raw meats below and away from ready-to-eat foods to prevent cross-contamination.			
Complete the receiving log: date, item, supplier, temperature, condition, and receiver's name.			
Additional Task:			

Instructions:

Rejecting a delivery is always correct when safety can't be verified — never 'accept it and sort it out later.' Document every rejection with the reason; this creates the paper trail that protects your facility during a health inspection and supports supplier credit. Get accepted TCS and frozen product into storage right away to hold the cold chain, date-mark everything, and rotate FIFO. Store raw proteins below ready-to-eat foods. Complete the receiving log for the whole delivery — the log is your HACCP proof that receiving controls were followed.