



DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH
County of Riverside

INFORMATIONAL BULLETIN NO. I12-16-DES

DISTRICT ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES DIVISION

GUIDELINES FOR DETERMINING APPROVED FOOD SOURCES



The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) list food from unapproved sources as one of the top causes of foodborne illness, affecting roughly 48 million Americans each year. All foods sold or used as ingredients by retail food facilities must come from “approved” sources in a safe and wholesome condition to prevent illness. “Approved” source means that the facility where the food is prepared, processed or produced meets the minimum standards of the responsible regulatory agency. To determine if suppliers are an approved source, ask for some verification of approval from the regulatory agency.

The following practices are recommended to food facility operators to ensure the food they are receiving is safe and approved:

- Have written procedures for receiving foods. Your procedures should include:
 - Check-in all deliveries.
 - Do not leave deliveries unattended.
 - Be aware of the delivery condition. Check for tampering, discoloration, pinholes, unusual packages and contamination.
 - Check whether potentially hazardous foods (PHF) are transported at safe temperatures (cold PHF 45°F or below/ hot PHF 135°F or above).
- Keep a list of where food products are purchased and maintain copies of invoices for tracking all purchases.
- Use approved food sources only. When ordering from a vendor for the first time, verify their permit status with the regulatory agency that oversees the manufacturing of that product.

Any food received not meeting the above criteria MUST be rejected!

Remember, an important part of ensuring that the food served or sold by your facility is safe and wholesome is by verifying that all food comes from an “approved” source.

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Department Web Site – www.rivcoeh.org

Description of Regulatory Agencies

Federal Agencies regulate wholesale distributors and processors that operate across state and international borders. These agencies include:	
The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)	Responsible for raw and processed meat and poultry.
The United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA)	Responsible for foods not regulated by the USDA.
The United States Department of Commerce (USDC) Seafood Inspection Program	Voluntary program for fish and shellfish wholesale processors and distributors.
State Agencies regulate wholesale distributors and processors that operate within the state and include:	
The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA)	Responsible for the following products processed in the State of California: milk and other dairy products, game animals, eggs, and retail processing of sausage/chorizo.
The California Department of Public Health Food and Drug Branch (FDB)	Responsible for foods not regulated by the USDA, but processed or distributed in California.
The California Department of Fish and Game	Responsible for regulating Commercial Fishermen.
Local Agencies are responsible for retail distribution of food and include:	
The Riverside County Department of Environmental Health (DEH)	Responsible for retail food distributors in Riverside County.
The following Local Departments of Environmental Health (DEH) that are responsible for all foods processed and distributed wholesale at the local level within their jurisdiction:	
◦ San Diego County ◦ Los Angeles County ◦ Orange County ◦ San Bernardino County ◦ The City of Vernon	



Unapproved Source

*Document available in an alternate format upon request

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