

Dairy and Frozen Desserts Requirements

Dairy products are one of the most regulated foods and must be handled properly at all stages of production, distribution and use in order to be safe for human consumption. The following recommendations are critical in maintaining safe, quality product.

Milk

Refrigeration is the single most important factor in maintaining the quality of milk. By law, Grade A milk must be maintained at a temperature below 40°F. to prevent the growth of spoilage bacteria. It is critical that these temperatures be maintained through warehousing, distribution, delivery, handling and storage. It is wise to refrigerate milk promptly after purchase and each use. Properly refrigerated, milk should last 3-5 days beyond the sell date. The colder milk is kept the longer it lasts.

According to Section 22-133-132 of the Regulations of the State of Connecticut, each raw milk container that is not pasteurized and is offered for retail sale must bear a label that conspicuously and legibly bears the exact language below in letters no less than 1/8 inch in height and be of a color that contrasts with the rest of the label:

Raw milk is not pasteurized; pasteurization destroys organisms that may be harmful to human health.

Licenses

The following licenses are required in the state of Connecticut:

Retail Raw Milk, Raw Milk Cheese Mfg

If you produce, retail raw milk and/or manufacture raw milk cheese

Milk Dealer License

If you want to process or distribute milk, yogurt, egg nog, cheese, and dry milk

Cheese Manufacturer

If you pasteurize milk and manufacture cheese

Milk, Distributor

If you want to distribute (only) fluid milk and/or yogurt

Milk, Retail Store License

If you sell fluid milk and milk products at retail

Cheeses

Fresh (un-aged) and soft and semi-soft cheeses must be maintained at a temperature below 40°F. and must be made from pasteurized milk. Any cheeses produced from raw

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milk must be aged for a minimum of 60 days and maintained at a temperature less than 45°F. Proper labeling for all cheeses is required

Milk, Soft and Semi Soft Cheese

C.G.S. § 22-194 applies to fluid milk and milk products such as milk, flavored milk, cream, sour cream and yogurt, these products must be maintained at a temperature below 40°F to retard the growth of spoilage bacteria and in the case of Retail Raw Milk this temperature will also retard the growth of most pathogens. Soft spreadable cheese and semi-soft cheese are manufactured from pasteurized milk, sold as a fresh product and must be stored at the temperatures prescribed in the Food Code (below 45°F). Any ice used to maintain refrigeration temperatures must be made from potable water. Care must be taken not to contaminate the pouring lip of containers. Coolers must be cleaned and disinfected before each use. It is critical that these temperatures be maintained through warehousing, distribution, delivery, handling and storage. Consumers should be advised to refrigerate milk promptly after purchase and each use. Properly refrigerated, milk should last 3-5 days beyond the sell date. Refrigeration is the single most important factor in maintaining the quality of dairy products.

Aged and Hard Cheeses

These cheeses are characterized by their moisture content, texture, pH, water activity and aging. The relative safety of these cheeses at certain temperatures and their storage requirements vary considerably based on these characteristics. All cheeses are required to be maintained at 45°F or below, unless approved by the local health department based on adequate laboratory data submitted to the health authority for review. Long term storage of these products such as overnight storage must comply with the Food Code (below 45°F) as well as cheese lacking the documentation cited above. Per the Code of Federal Regulations and R.C.S.A. § 22-133-128 any cheese manufactured from unpasteurized milk must be aged for a minimum of 60 days before being offered for sale. Proper labeling for all cheeses is required. Consumers should be advised as to the best handling and storage practices for each type of cheese.

Frozen desserts

Anyone manufacturing frozen desserts for wholesale or retail sale must be licensed by the Department of Consumer Protection. Examples of frozen desserts are soft serve ice cream, batch made ice cream, shakes, and popsicles.

For more information concerning dairy products (other than frozen desserts) contact the following:

Department of Agriculture
Bureau of Inspection and Regulation – Dairy Division
165 Capitol Avenue, G8A
Hartford, CT 06106
(860) 713-2508

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FAX: (860) 713-2515

Statutory Reference:
Sec. 22-127 through 22-203z.

For more information on frozen desserts contact:

Department of Consumer Protection
Division of Food and Standards
165 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106
(860) 713-6160
FAX: 860-713-7237

Statutory Reference:
Sec. 21a-48 through 21a-58

Last edited 3/27/2009