



Food tampering is a crime. It must be reported to the police and your local health department.

If You Suspect You Have A Tampering Incident Remember “INK”

- **Investigate** suspicious activity immediately. Collect as much information as you can. Remove the suspect food from service.
- **Notify** local law enforcement if you suspect food tampering. Also call your local health department.
- **Keep** the food for evidence. Do not handle the food. Wrap it in plastic, or place it in a plastic bag. Label the item clearly, and separate it from your regular supplies.

Contact your local health department for more information



Department of Health

HOW TO PREVENT FOOD TAMPERING



A Guide For Food Service Establishment Operators



WATCH



Intentional food contamination can happen anywhere, anytime

What is food tampering?

Deliberate contamination of food products with the intent to cause harm is food tampering.

Food tampering has happened in processing, storage and retail operations in the past, and may also be a future terrorism strategy.

Who commits this kind of crime?

Anyone can commit this type of crime. In the past, different types of people, including disgruntled employees and pranksters, have committed food tampering.

When can a food product be intentionally contaminated?



A food product can be contaminated at any point in the food supply chain from farm to table.

As a food service operator, you can protect:

- food you purchase,
- food during storage, and
- food during preparation and service.

How do I recognize tampered food?

Unfortunately, you may not always recognize tampered food. However, the following practices may reduce the risk of serving contaminated food:

- Purchase only from reputable vendors.
- Be familiar with the foods you purchase, prepare and serve.
- Schedule deliveries when staff is present to inspect and secure the delivery.
- Examine foods before use. Do not use foods with foreign objects or an unusual odor, texture, or appearance.

Return to the vendor

- Dirty or damaged products.
- Soft packaging with cuts, tears or punctures.
- Cans and jars with signs of leakage, spillage or corrosion.
- Punctured plastic bottles.
- Products with damaged or missing safety seals.

In self-service areas, such as salad bars and buffets

- Know what food you placed in service and when
- Don't add old food to new when replenishing.

Remember

- Keep an accurate inventory.
- Rotate stock.

And in addition ...

- Know your food delivery people. Verify ID of new or different delivery people.
- Keep food storage areas secure, especially those not in view.
- Check daily for things that may be out of place.
- Put self-service areas, such as salad bars and buffets, in view of staff.
- Be aware of anyone lingering in the self-service area.
- Do a complete background check on all employees.
- Supervise all employees, especially new ones.
- Train staff to notice and report signs of food tampering or other unusual activities.
- Keep employee personal items out of food handling areas.
- Make a separate area for employee breaks, located away from storage areas.



Counterfeit packaging may be used to distribute contaminated foods. Always check for:

- Labeling, lot codes and other identifying information that has been altered.
- Lot numbers not in the same format or sequence as the last purchase.
- Labeling that is badly printed, overprinted or missing usual information.
- Shipping boxes that have missing product information.