

## Food Tampering or Food Contamination Incident

### Guidance for Food Facility Operator

No one wants to think that their food may have gotten accidentally or intentionally contaminated. Food production and food handling is not perfect and occasionally mistakes happen. If you become aware of a potential food contamination issue, whether accidental or intentional, you must take certain precautions to secure the food in question to protect any illness or injury from occurring.

- DO NOT dispose of any potentially contaminated food or suspect food.
- Notify your regulatory agency immediately.
- After notifying The Department of Agriculture of your Local Health Department you must:
  - Follow any directions given by your regulatory agency in relation to the suspect food.
- It is also strongly suggested that you:
  - Do not touch with bare hands, smell or taste the suspect food;
  - Hygienically remove ALL suspect food from service from sale or service (unless otherwise directed by your regulatory agency). If not packaged, wrap it in plastic, place it in a plastic bag or similar to contain the product.
  - Label the item clearly (e.g. "Suspected unsafe food") and separate it from your regular supplies.
  - Keep the food for evidence separate from other food. If your food business is part of a chain.
  - Record the time, date and details of the suspected intentional contamination of food, including which foods are suspected of being contaminated, what you observed, action taken and any customer details if applicable.
  - Check other food products for contamination. Especially check for item with the same lot codes as the suspicious food. Pull from sale or service and segregate any suspicious items.
  - Ensure any foods which may have been transferred off the premises are isolated.
  - Maintain records of instructions received and actions taken; and
  - Advise any customer whom you believe may have been affected but are not sick to seek medical advice

The regulatory agency will initiate an investigation and give you guidance on handling this contamination incident. If necessary to fully protect public health, your regulatory agency will involve other agencies, such as local government, police, State health Departments, FDA, USDA, CDC, and similar.