

# SIU MEI

## Food Safety Guidelines for Food Businesses



# Introduction and scope

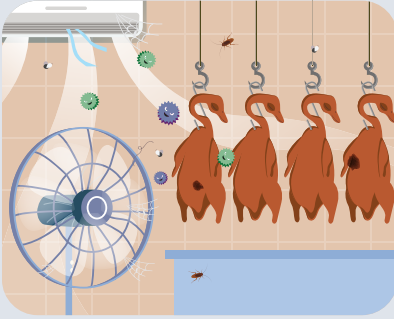
*Siu mei* is a popular local delicacy commonly found on the dining tables of people in Hong Kong. *Siu mei* generally refers to a type of meat products that have been roasted at a temperature of 200°C or above. It is usually made from pork and poultry meat. The most common examples are roasted pork, BBQ pork, roasted duck and roasted goose. Due to high property prices, limited space in restaurants and the emergence of chained food outlets, *siu mei* is usually mass-produced in factory buildings or premises with lower operating costs before being delivered to restaurants and retail outlets. If *siu mei* is not properly handled during packaging and delivery, there will be risks of cross-contamination and bacterial growth. *Siu mei* suppliers must comply with the licensing requirements and conditions for their food licence concerning the production and sale of *siu mei*.

This set of guidelines is intended for food business operators (FBOs) that prepare and/or sell *siu mei* at premises. It aims to facilitate their adoption of food safety measures in their operations in order to produce and supply safe and wholesome *siu mei*. While this is not a legal document and its use is voluntary, it reviews some essential parameters related to Good Hygiene Practices and recommends best practices that any FBO should consider in providing safe foods to consumers.



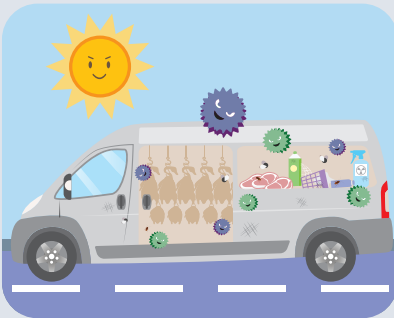


# Common food safety problems related to siu mei



## Unhygienic air-drying process

- Unhygienic environment for air-drying of *siu mei* after roasting
- Prolonged air-drying process



## Poor protection during transportation

- Use of vehicles not designated for delivering ready-to-eat products
- Improper protection of pre-prepared *siu mei* from contamination during transportation



## Dirty equipment and poor personal hygiene

- Contamination of *siu mei* by dirty equipment such as hanging hooks, cutting boards and scales, etc.
- Contamination of *siu mei* by food handlers with poor personal hygiene

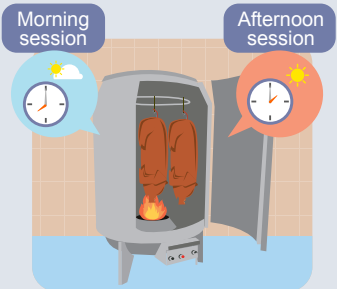
# Food safety measures for producing and selling siu mei

During the production of *siu mei*, roasting is a critical control point (CCP). Meat products are roasted at a temperature of 200°C or above until thoroughly cooked. At this temperature, the meat is thoroughly cooked and bacteria are killed. The roasted products then undergo a series of handling procedures (e.g. packing, delivery, display and cutting) before reaching consumers. It is the current practice of the trade to deliver and display roasted products for sale at room temperature. Improper food handling increases the risk of cross-contamination, while prolonged storage at room temperature promotes the growth of bacteria. Therefore, observation of food and personal hygiene practices during post-roasting handling and display for sale is crucial for the food safety of *siu mei*. Food handlers should adopt the following control measures.

## Production

### Planning 1

- Accurately estimate the required quantity to avoid over-production.
- Plan the production schedule to avoid too early production before sale and prolonged storage of roasted products at room temperature. Two rounds of roasting – one morning session and one afternoon session – are preferred in order to cater for the demand during lunch and dinner hours.



### Defrosting 2

Thaw frozen meat with correct methods, i.e.:

- Place under refrigeration at a temperature of 4°C or below; or
- Place under cool running water.

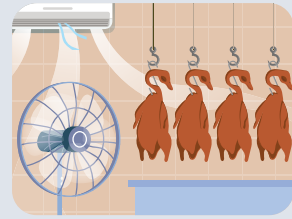
Do not thaw frozen food under room temperature.

### Removing charred areas (for roasted pork) 3

Use a knife instead of a metal wire brush to scrape charred areas off the roasted pork to eliminate the physical hazard of broken wire fragments trapped inside the meat.

## 4 Air-drying (for roasted duck / goose / chicken)

- If air-drying in an open area, conduct the drying process for no longer than 6 hours in a well-ventilated location, separated from the food preparation area for cooked or ready-to-eat food. Ensure that the core temperature of the duck / goose / chicken does not reach more than 25°C throughout the drying process.

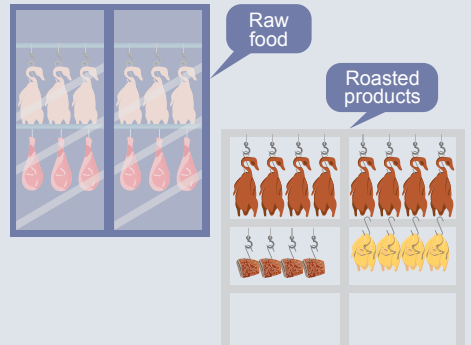


- If the ambient condition is not optimal for the air-drying process, e.g. over 25°C or humid condition, conduct the air-drying process for a shorter period of time in an oven instead.

## Post-roasting handling

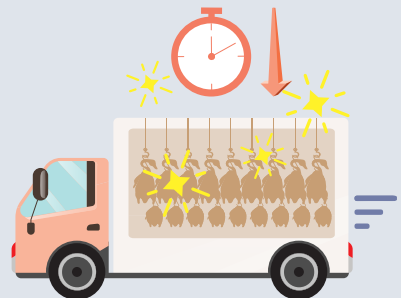
### 1 Cooling and packing

- Designate a clean area, away from raw food, for cooling and packing of roasted products.
- Properly sanitise all containers for holding roasted products before use.
- Provide proper covers for the containers.
- Properly clean hands before direct contact with roasted products. Use gloves when necessary.



### 2 Transportation

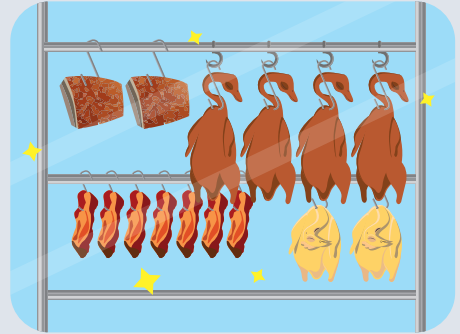
- Use a clean vehicle to reduce the risk of cross-contamination.
- Ensure that the vehicle is not used at the same time for transportation of raw food or chemicals.
- Cover roasted products while leaving room to prevent moisture build-up.
- Shorten the delivery time as far as practicable to prevent prolonged storage of roasted products at room temperature.



# Display for sale

## Storage 1

- Well estimate the demand, do not order or produce excessively.
- Store and display roasted products in insect-proof and dust-proof showcases at retail outlets. Do not store raw food inside the same showcases.
- Ensure that there is sufficient space for display or storage to avoid stacking of roasted products.
- Use hanging hooks or BBQ pliers to minimise direct contact with roasted products with bare hands, or take steps as necessary to protect the food from contamination.
- For roasted products that have been displayed at room temperature for:



**Less than  
2 hours**

They can be refrigerated for later use or consumed within the 4-hour limit.



**More than 2 hours  
but less than  
4 hours**

They should be consumed within the 4-hour limit and should not be returned to the refrigerator.



**More than  
4 hours**

They should be discarded.

Throw  
away!



## Cutting and packing 2

- Cut roasted products only upon purchase.
- Roasted products, especially those packed, are preferred to be sold within 2 hours after cutting.
- Food handlers who are responsible for cutting and packing roasted products should avoid switching job positions (e.g. cashier). If such an arrangement is inevitable, wash hands and change gloves before handling food.



# Advice on personal and environmental hygiene for food handlers

## Personal hygiene

- Wear clean overalls.
- Wear a face mask when handling food. Discard masks that have been damaged, soiled, or used for a prolonged period.
- Discard disposable gloves that have been damaged, soiled, or taken off during breaks. Wash hands between glove changes and after removal of gloves.
- Wash hands before handling food, after using the toilet or after touching unclean items (e.g. after handling garbage or cash). Rub hands with liquid soap for at least 20 seconds. For details, please refer to the **Hand Washing Guideline for Food Handlers** of the Centre for Food Safety (CFS).
- Properly cover open wounds and wear gloves.
- Suspend from handling food when suffering or suspected to be suffering from an infectious disease or having symptoms of illnesses such as flu, diarrhoea, vomiting, jaundice, fever, sore throat and abdominal pain. If you have symptoms of respiratory tract infection, wear a surgical mask and seek medical advice promptly.

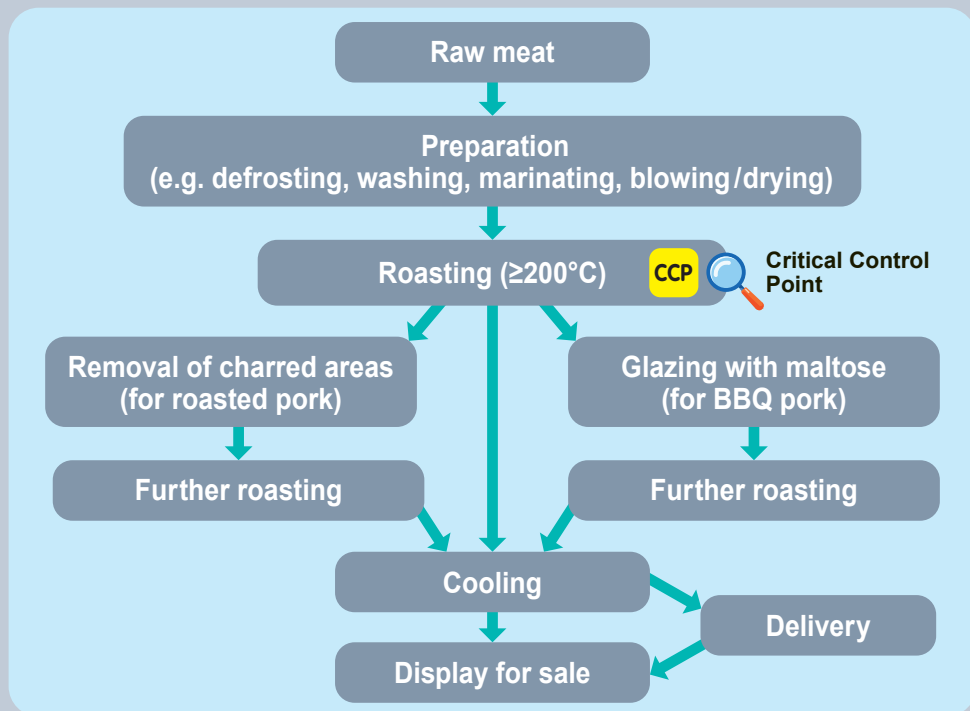


## Environmental hygiene

- Hand washing and drying facilities should be suitably located in food preparation or production areas and supplied with hand soap. Where possible, hand washing facilities should be equipped with non-hand operated taps and single-use towels.
- Use designated utensils and equipment to handle raw food and cooked food separately.
- Regularly sanitise utensils (including cutting boards and knives), equipment, working tables and wiping cloths with boiling water or approved bactericidal agents. Follow the manufacturer's instructions, e.g. the required contact time, correct concentration, and shelf life after dilution, etc., for the use of bactericidal agents.
- Use chopping boards that are in good condition. Replace those that are badly scratched, pitted or scored.



# Flow diagram of key steps in siu mei production



*Remark: A critical control point (CCP) is a step at which control can be applied and is essential to prevent or eliminate a food safety hazard or reduce it to an acceptable level.*

*Siu mei* is an example of ready-to-eat food that can be eaten without further cooking. If not handled properly, it may be contaminated by foodborne pathogens and “superbugs”. As there is no or insufficient heat treatment to kill the bacteria that may be present, a high level of personal, environmental and food hygiene is critical during *siu mei* production. Food handlers should follow the “Five Keys to Food Safety” to reduce the risk of both “superbugs” and foodborne diseases.



In addition to this set of guidelines, food handlers should go through the “**Ready-to-eat Food: General Hygiene Advice for Food Businesses**” of the CFS. Please scan the QR code for more information.