

## Food storage

- Food needs to be protected from sun, rain, humidity and extreme temperatures.
- Covered and protected storage is preferable.
- If uncovered and unprotected storage cannot be avoided, make sure this is temporary (maximum 10 to 15 days)
- Always store food separately from chemicals (including pesticides, fertilisers, cement, and fuel), dangerous goods and drugs. This applies to when loading onto vehicles.
- If you are treating a warehouse that contains food against pests, make sure the chemical used is food-safe (consult your regional logistics support if you are unsure)
- Ensure the storage areas are cleaned daily, and that all cleanings are recorded (daily sweep, weekly clean and wipe-down, **monthly deep clean**)
- Food items should always be stored either on pallets or on tarpaulins if stacked, or on shelves/racks that do not touch the walls of the warehouse.
- Use a sampling spear for taking samples where necessary.
- Pay particular attention to infestation signs
- Immediately separate and quarantine infested stocks from the rest. Consult with local experts in the BRC, HNS, IFRC, World Food Programme, Food and Agriculture Organization, government or university agriculture departments and/or commercial fumigators. All infestations must be reported immediately to country manager and logistics team in UK.
- Expired food items must be quarantined and stored separately until they can be destroyed.
- Maintain a system to warn off pre-expired food supplies – when on their last six months of shelf life, food can be donated to local authorities or other parties. Keep a list of the three and six-month-pre-expired food on your stock records.
- Perishable stocks must be rotated following FEFO principles (see above definitions in Section 2.2) .
- Expired food must be disposed of immediately. Check with local health authorities to determine whether it can be used as animal feed or for the appropriate disposal method (incineration or burial). Be mindful that the destruction of food may sometimes cause strong cultural reactions.
- Pay particular attention to the reception process to confirm weight received: weigh five to ten per cent of the consignment and extrapolate weight of the full consignment to estimate total weight of the consignment against documented weight or use a truck weighbridge to compare the actual weight to the documented weight on the **GRN/delivery note/waybill**. Record any discrepancy on the GRN.
- Remember that the ICRC maintains regional QA testing teams who can support the testing of food items.
- Always record batch numbers and expiry dates of food items upon receipt and stock movement (at minimum on the bin card, preferably on stock card and stock report).