

Ripon Select Foods Ltd

Employee
Health & Safety Handbook

September 2007

Foreword

“Managing health & safety effectively is important for Ripon Select Foods for a number of reasons:

- 1. We owe it to our employees (and others who may be affected by what we do) to provide, as far as we are able, a workplace that is safe and which presents no risks to health or well-being.*
- 2. It makes good business sense. When health & safety matters are properly controlled the workplace is more efficient and our business will run more smoothly.*
- 3. There are many Laws in the U.K. that require us to manage health & safety effectively.*

Good standards of health and safety management are therefore a vital part of our running a successful business. The senior management team will drive improvement, but in order for us to be successful, everyone within the Company must contribute.

This Employee Health & Safety Handbook has been prepared for your benefit. In it you will find information about a number of health & safety issues. You will also find rules and advice that you must follow in order to ensure the health & safety of yourself, your work colleagues and anyone else who may be affected by what you do at work.

It is your responsibility to read this booklet and ensure that you understand it. By doing this, and following the rules and advice given you will be making a positive contribution to the continued success of RSF as a business.

If, after having read this booklet, you are unsure about anything in it you must ask your manager to explain it to you.

Any employee found to be persistently or wilfully disregarding company health & safety rules will be subject to disciplinary action.

Further information about specific health & safety issues will be provided to you through your training and through Company Management Standards and Safe Working Practices. Copies of these documents are available for you to look at and read.

Remember: health & safety is everyone’s business and everyone has a duty to contribute in ensuring the safety of themselves and others working with them.”

Sarah Cooper
Joint Managing Director
September 2007

Health, Safety & Welfare Policy

Ripon Select Foods' Commitment

Ripon Select Foods Ltd. recognises that effective management of health & safety is an important part of operating a successful business. The Company is committed to ensuring that its activities do not adversely affect the health or safety of its employees, contractors, visitors or its neighbours.

At RSF we will comply with all relevant UK law and, so far as is reasonably practicable, we will:

1. Follow recognised codes of practice and guidance, and develop our own standards for performance;
2. Eliminate hazards and reduce risks in the workplace;
3. Control the impact of the working environment and work activities on our employees;
4. Protect the health & safety of contractors, visitors and other third parties;
5. Provide appropriate information, instruction and training to enable employees and others to work safely;
6. Encourage positive contribution and participation by all employees;
7. Define clear responsibilities for employees at all levels to ensure that everyone is able to contribute effectively;
8. Actively monitor our health & safety performance and seek to make continuous improvement in our standards;
9. Regularly review our strategy so as to maintain continuous improvement;
10. Provide adequate resources to ensure that this Policy can be fully implemented.

It is only through the commitment and teamwork of all those who work for RSF that the health and safety of everyone can be assured on an ongoing basis. All employees are expected to assist the Company and its managers to meet its health and safety commitments and to contribute to the effective implementation of this Policy.

Employee Responsibilities

All of the rules set out in this booklet have been designed to help reduce the chances of accidents and injuries occurring to employees.

The Company also uses many other systems and procedures to ensure your health & safety. Such systems include:

- Risk assessments;
- Written safe working practices (SWPs) and instructions;
- Regular inspections of equipment and machinery;
- Training of employees in procedures and health & safety matters.

However, the efforts of the Company will be ineffective unless employees take responsibility for themselves and use the systems, working methods and protective equipment provided.

Therefore YOU MUST:

- Comply with the Health & Safety Policy;
- Follow health & safety rules at all times;
- Follow all SWPs at all times;
- Follow any training or instructions you have been given, including safe working practices;
- Wear correctly, any personal protective equipment required;
- Keep your work areas clean and tidy;
- Co-operate with managers and supervisors on matters of health & safety;
- Participate in health surveillance and other programmes where required;
- Act in a safe and responsible manner at all times;
- Report all accidents, incidents and cases of suspected work-related ill health to your supervisor or manager as quickly as possible;
- Report all hazards, near misses or concerns to your supervisor or manager as quickly as possible;
- Report anyone you see who is working in an unsafe manner;
- Inform your manager if you are pregnant or if you have any disability, medical condition or injury that may have implications for your health or safety at work.

You MUST NOT:

- Ignore any warning sign or instruction;
- Misuse or interfere with any items provided for the purposes of health & safety;
- Do anything which may put yourself or anyone else in danger.

Hazards and Risks

Hazards are the things which exist in the workplace that may cause harm to people. A hazard can be a physical thing (such as a pool of water on the floor which causes you to slip, or a sharp edge on a piece of equipment which cuts your finger), or it may exist as the result of the way in which someone is working (such as someone climbing up on machinery to clean it).

Hazards can lead to accidents or can result in employees suffering ill-health. For these reasons you must be able to spot the hazards which arise in your workplace.



Risk is the term used to express how likely it is that someone will be harmed by a hazard and how serious will be the injury or ill-health which they will suffer.

RSF uses risk assessment to help examine hazards and decide how they should be controlled.

The following pages contain information about some of the most common hazards which may arise in your workplace and some basic rules you must follow in order to help reduce the risk from each type of hazard.

All employees have an important role to play in spotting hazards and helping to reduce risks.

You MUST:

- report all hazards to your supervisor or manager;
- record hazards in the hazard log;
- cooperate with the Company when risk assessments are being carried out.

You MUST NOT:

- ignore hazards for someone else to deal with.

Potential Health Hazards

Noise

Noise arises out of some of the operations carried out on site including the use of machinery, banging and clattering of equipment as it is thrown or moved around and working with tools such as hammers or drills.

Exposure to high levels of noise over a period of time can cause hearing damage. If hearing damage does occur there is no cure and your quality of life may be affected.

The Company has carried out work to try and reduce noise levels in the workplace but some noisy areas still remain. These areas are designated as hearing protection zones and are marked by signs in the workplace. Hearing protection zones are also shown on "noise maps" on notice boards.

In order to protect your own and other people's hearing

You MUST:

- wear your hearing protection at all times when in a designated hearing protection zone;
- use any noise reduction equipment provided (including doors and enclosures);
- look after your hearing defenders and keep them clean.

You MUST NOT:

- allow anyone into a hearing protection area unless they are protected;
- interfere with or damage any noise protection or insulation equipment.



Dust and Fume

Dust can arise in the mill or factory as the result of using flour and other materials. All dusts can pose a potential health hazard in sufficient quantities.

Fume arises mainly during the carrying out of welding operations. Welding fume can cause ill-health effects.

Some tasks within the factory require the compulsory wearing of respiratory protection (masks) by employees.

In order to protect the health of yourself and others

You MUST:

- always wear a mask for designated tasks;
- wear the mask properly at all times;
- use any local exhaust ventilation or extraction equipment provided.

Manual Handling

Manual handling is the lifting, carrying, moving or supporting of a load using bodily force. Poor manual handling can lead to injuries such as sprains and strains (particularly to the lower back) or longer-term health problems (such as upper-limb disorders). Other injuries such as cuts, bruising and even fractures can occur during manual handling, though these are usually the result of people slipping or tripping whilst carrying articles.

Most injuries or ill-health problems arising from manual handling develop over a long period of time. It is often repeated stresses that cause a cumulative effect.

The following actions will increase the risk of injury and must be avoided or minimised:

- Bending or stooping to lift or put down an object;
- Twisting whilst handling;
- Stretching or reaching to lift or support an object;
- Static postures (i.e. working in the same fixed position for long periods).

There are many manual handling operations carried out on site. Some of these involve the lifting of quite heavy weights (e.g. 25kg bags of product), whilst others involve more frequent handling of smaller weights (e.g. palletising 5kg bags of product). Injuries resulting from manual handling are among the most common suffered by workers, it is therefore important that you recognise the potential handling risks which exist and the important need to follow simple rules for safe handling.

Risk assessments are carried out by the Company to identify those manual handling operations which have the potential to cause injury or ill-health. Various control measures have been introduced including the use of mechanical lifting devices, specified methods of working, job rotation, ergonomic improvements to work stations and employee training in safe handling.

However, you, as an employee have an important part to play in protecting yourself by planning your work, thinking about what you are doing and following the rules set out below.

You MUST:

- always use the safe lifting techniques demonstrated in your training and outlined below;
- use any mechanical aids or other devices provided, such as trolleys, when moving articles around;
- think carefully about what you are doing before you attempt to move an object;
- check that an object is within your capability before attempting to lift or move it;
- get help if you need it.

You MUST NOT

- attempt to lift anything which is beyond your capability.

Lifting Technique

Follow the guidelines set out below when lifting **any** object or item:

1. *Look at the load & think*

- whether you are capable of lifting it;
- how you are going to lift it;
- where you are going to move it to;
- whether there are any obstacles in your way;
- whether you will need any help.

2. *Position your feet*

- hip width apart;
- slightly angled to give stability;
- to allow you to get close to the load.

3. *Bend your knees*

- to get down to the load;
- keep your back straight;
- keep your head up.

4. *Test the load*

- check whether you can lift it safely;
- get a good, firm grip.

5. *Lift with your legs*



- keep your back straight;
- keep your head up;
- pull the load in close to your body;
- keep your elbows tucked in.

6. *Put the load down with care*

- avoid quick or quirky movements;
- bend your knees;
- keep your back straight.



Repetitive Handling

It is possible that people doing work that involves frequent or repetitive movement of the hands or arms, or that requires the adoption of awkward postures for long periods of time may suffer aches and pains, which can, in some cases, lead to longer term conditions.

Such conditions are often referred to as Work Related Upper Limb Disorders (WRULDs) or Musculo-skeletal Disorders (MSDs) and can cause pain in hands, wrists, arms, shoulders, neck, back or legs.

Symptoms usually start with minor aches and pains after periods of work, but may develop into symptoms such as pins and needles, numbness or cramps.

When carrying out frequent or repetitive handling tasks

You MUST:

- organise your workstation so you are as comfortable as possible;
- rest your arms during breaks and whenever you can;
- follow any job rotation properly;
- report any symptoms to your supervisor or manager as soon as you spot them.

Display Screen Equipment (DSE)

Regular and prolonged use of Display Screen Equipment (such as computers) has the potential to result in a range of health problems. Rapid working and the adoption of poor postures can lead to the development of musculo-skeletal disorders as described above. Looking at bright or flickering screens for long periods can lead to headaches, fatigue and eyestrain.

The Company has an obligation under the law to carry out assessments on people using DSE and their workstations, and then to take steps to protect employees from such problems. However, the most effective way to avoid the development of the problems outlined is for the users of such equipment to protect themselves.

If you regularly use display screen equipment

You MUST:

- ensure that you have adjusted your chair so that you can sit comfortably with your feet flat on the floor (or on a footrest) and your back supported by your chair;
- ensure that you arrange your desk and equipment so that you can sit and work comfortably without the need to twist or crane your neck – try out different arrangements;
- relax your arms and wrists, avoid excessive bending of your wrists;
- take regular, short breaks from working (e.g. stop typing and stretch or shake your wrists; or get out of your seat for a minute);
- avoid reflections or glare on your screen by re-positioning it or closing blinds on windows;
- adjust the brightness and contrast of the screen to a comfortable level, keep your screen clean;
- report any problems or concerns to your supervisor or manager.

Ill-Health Reporting and Investigation

Whenever any ill-health cases arise it is important that action is taken quickly to remedy the situation and return the employee to full health.

RSF operates a system for investigating and managing ill-health cases where these may have arisen because of work activities. This system relies upon the early reporting of symptoms by the employee and swift action on the part of supervisors and managers.

If you suffer any ill-health effect which you feel may be caused by your work, or which may be made worse by work

You MUST:

- inform your supervisor or manager immediately;
- provide the Company with the information necessary to help manage your condition;
- co-operate with the Company in its efforts to investigate the possible causes and to rehabilitate you.

You MUST NOT:

- ignore your symptoms and “struggle-on” without telling anyone.

These rules apply even to those ill-health conditions or injuries which may have occurred outside of work.

Alcohol, Drugs & Solvents

The consumption of alcohol, drugs or solvents can seriously affect a person's ability to function correctly and may therefore create serious health and safety risks, particularly where an employee is required to operate machinery or drive vehicles. Even some legally prescribed drugs can affect ability to concentrate, to reason or to work safely. Therefore

You MUST NOT:

- come into work under the influence of alcohol, drugs or solvents;
- bring alcohol, drugs or solvents onto the Company's premises;
- drive or operate machinery if you are affected by alcohol, drugs or solvents.

You MUST:

- inform your manager if you are taking any prescribed drugs that may affect your ability to work safely;
- ask your doctor or the Company Occupational Health Doctor for guidance if you are affected by alcohol or drugs.

Potential Safety Hazards

Housekeeping



Discarded rubbish and waste, spillages and badly organised work areas can lead to slips, trips, bumps and falls. A significant proportion of workplace accidents are caused by poor housekeeping, often because individuals can not be bothered to clear up materials that have fallen on the floor or to tidy up equipment. Injuries are often only slight such as bruising, but serious injuries such as broken bones and severe strains can result from slips and trips.

Fortunately, the problems associated with poor housekeeping can easily be remedied with your help.

You MUST:

- keep your own work area tidy at all times;
- clean up any waste or spillages you make immediately;
- warn others of spillages (e.g. verbally or by using a warning cone) until they have been cleared;
- put all waste materials and other rubbish straight in the bins provided;
- keep walkways and passageways clear at all times;
- store materials in their designated locations.

You MUST NOT:

- leave any equipment or articles where they may cause an obstruction;
- leave waste or spillages unattended for others to trip or slip on;
- deliberately throw or drop anything onto the workplace floor.

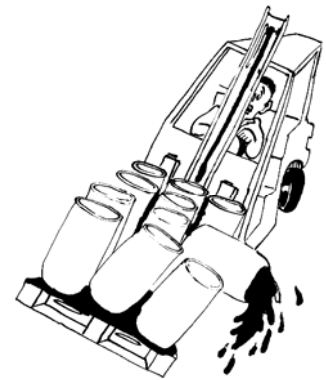
Fork Lift Trucks and Vehicles

Fork lift trucks, HGVs and other vehicles can present a hazard when they are operating near to pedestrians. These vehicles can cause serious injuries or even death as the result of collisions, overturning or toppling loads.

At RSF training is provided to employees who are required to operate trucks or other mobile equipment. Drivers are also medically assessed to ensure they are fit to drive.

You MUST:

- use pedestrian walkways in areas where vehicles may be operating;
- keep your eyes and ears open and be aware of vehicles operating on site;
- wear hi-visibility clothing in designated areas;
- report any dangerous driving to your supervisor or manager;
- drive vehicles with care and follow your training at all times;
- observe the site speed limit at all times;
- inspect any vehicle or truck before you use it to ensure it is working properly.



You MUST NOT:

- drive or operate any vehicle unless you have been trained and authorised to do so by the Company;
- walk or drive immediately behind vehicles;
- exceed the safe working load (SWL) for any forklift truck.

Electricity

There are two main hazards presented by electricity and the use of electrical equipment:

- electrocution;
- fire.

Both of these can be fatal.

There are many items of electrical equipment used throughout the site. The Company will seek to ensure that such equipment is kept safe through regular maintenance, testing and inspection, but you must help to look after yourself.

You MUST:

- inspect any electrical equipment, plugs and cables for signs of damage before you use them;
- report any fault or defect at once.

You MUST NOT:

- use damaged or faulty electrical equipment;
- use any portable appliance which has not been tested and approved;
- overload plug sockets;
- use extension leads unless their use has been approved;
- attempt to connect electrical appliances to the supply without a proper plug;
- use your own electrical equipment unless its use has been approved by the Company;
- handle plugs and electrical equipment with wet hands.



Machinery

There are many different types of machinery in use at RSF. Some of it has moving parts which can cause serious injuries by entanglement, drawing-in, cutting or puncture.

Machinery is kept safe by regular maintenance, inspections and by the use of safety devices such as guards and emergency stops.

During normal operation of machinery there should be little need for employees to come into close contact with the moving or dangerous parts of a machine. However, operations such as maintenance and cleaning often require people to work close to or on the dangerous parts. In these circumstances it is essential to follow the safe methods of working that have been laid down.

You MUST:

- ensure you know how to stop the machine in an emergency;
- lock-off or otherwise isolate a machine from its power source before undertaking any cleaning, maintenance or other work on it (unless the safe system of work or job procedure says otherwise).

You MUST NOT:

- operate, clean or otherwise work on any machine unless you have been trained to do so;
- attempt to adjust, maintain, modify or repair any machine unless you have been trained and authorised to do so;

- tamper with guards or other safety devices;
- operate any machine with faulty or missing guards.

Hazardous Substances

A number of hazardous substances are used on site at RSF. These include:

- processing materials e.g. flour & spices;
- cleaning chemicals e.g. sanitisers & detergents;
- engineering materials e.g. degreasers & oils;
- laboratory chemicals e.g. for testing & analysis;
- office materials e.g. computer cleaning fluids.

Hazardous substances can be recognised by black hazard warning symbols in an orange square on their label. Substances may be classed as:

- Toxic - will poison you;
- Harmful - less poisonous but will make you unwell;
- Corrosive - will cause burns to eyes and skin;
- Irritant - will cause irritation to eyes and skin;
- Highly flammable - will set on fire easily.

The warning symbols are the same for both harmful and irritant substances.

It is important that you recognise the symbols for such hazards and know what they mean.

Operations that involve the use of hazardous substances will have been assessed by the Company and safe systems of work or other instructions will tell you how to use them and what protective equipment you must wear. These assessments are known as CoSHH Assessments and are available for you to look at. They examine the substances being used and the way in which they are being handled and so allow suitable precautions to be identified.

Health & safety data sheets are also available for all hazardous substances used on site. These are produced by substance suppliers and provide information on substance hazards and precautions for use.

The general rules shown below will help to ensure your safety when using any hazardous substance.

You MUST:

- always read the label before using any substance;
- avoid eye and skin contact - wear the protective clothing described in the safe system of work;
- always wash your hands after using any hazardous substance;
- only decant substances into clean, labelled containers;
- always replace the lid or cap after use;
- clean up any spillages immediately;
- always dispose of empty containers through the proper system;
- know what action to take in the event of an accident involving any substance.

You MUST NOT:

- eat, drink or smoke whilst handling any hazardous substance;
- mix any substances together unless trained and instructed to do so;
- store hazardous substances in direct sunlight or near to sources of heat - always return them to the proper storage area;
- use any hazardous substance unless you have the correct protective equipment and have been properly trained or instructed in its use.



Use of Steps and Ladders

Ladders and steps are used in many areas to access equipment and materials, or in order to carry out work such as cleaning and maintenance. Falls from ladders and steps can cause serious injuries, as can the dropping of tools and equipment from height.

Ladders must only be used if they are the best means of access for the job (i.e. for light, short-duration work).

When using steps or ladders

You **MUST**:

- ensure they carry a current test sticker or tag to show they have been checked;
- visually inspect them to ensure they are in good condition;
- ensure they are properly erected on firm, level ground;
- secure ladders by tying at the top or supporting it at the bottom;
- ensure that your footwear is sound and suitable;
- make sure that you can not drop anything onto anyone below.

You **MUST NOT**:

- use any ladder or steps that do not have the current test sticker attached;
- use any damaged or defective ladder or steps;
- use ladders when handling heavy or awkward loads or materials;
- stretch, lean at an angle or overreach when on the ladder or steps.

Fire

One of the greatest dangers to property and life is fire. Accordingly, the Company has installed systems and procedures to mitigate against the effects of fire. These include:

- fire and smoke detection equipment;
- fire alarm systems;
- fire fighting equipment;
- emergency evacuation plans.

However, the best way to protect people from the effects of fire is to ensure that fires cannot start in the first place.

There are many flammable substances and combustible materials (such as paper and cardboard packaging) held on site. It is important to ensure that fires do not start near these materials.

In an emergency situation it is essential that everyone knows what to do and follows the procedures which have been established. Failure by an individual to follow these procedures could put other people's lives at risk.



In order to reduce the risk of fire and minimise the effects of fire if it does occur

You **MUST**:

- observe the no smoking rules on site;
- dispose of cigarettes and other smoking materials properly in the bins or ashtrays provided;
- ensure that flammable and combustible materials are properly used, stored and disposed of;
- keep escape routes and emergency exits clear of obstructions;
- ensure that you are familiar with the fire alarm, emergency evacuation procedure and where your emergency exits and assembly point are;
- ensure you are familiar with any specific local procedures;
- follow any instructions given to you by designated responsible personnel in an emergency.

You MUST NOT:

- smoke anywhere on the premises except in the designated areas;
- throw cigarette ends or other smoking materials into waste bins;
- use any source of heat, sparks or naked flame unless you have been given permission and have a permit to use it;
- block any emergency exit route or door;
- re-enter a building until instructed to do so by the person in charge.

Emergency Evacuation Procedure

On hearing the fire alarm you MUST:

- stop work and, if possible, switch off any machinery or equipment being used;
- proceed immediately, in an orderly manner, to the nearest fire exit and make your way to your assembly point;
- close all doors and fire doors behind you;
- give your name to your roll call coordinator at the assembly point;
- report any information you have on the emergency to your supervisor or the person in charge.

You MUST NOT:

- attempt to locate the source of the emergency yourself;
- re-enter the building until instructed to do so by the person in charge of the incident.

Remember also that disabled employees, visitors or contractors may require assistance to get out of the building in an emergency.

Visitors & Contractors

People who visit our site must be protected in the same way that employees are protected. They may also be introducing hazards of their own to the site due to the nature of the work they are doing and so RSF employees may need to be protected from the visitors.



All visitors and contractors are expected to observe site rules and behave in a safe and responsible manner. They must:

- observe all health & safety rules;
- wear hi-visibility clothing in designated areas;
- sign in and wear a badge at all times.

If you are responsible for a visitor or contractor on site

You **MUST**:

- ensure that they comply with all rules;
- ensure they have the correct clothing and equipment;
- make them aware of the emergency evacuation procedures;
- accompany them at all times or ensure that they have received the necessary training and authorisation to allow them to work unsupervised.

You **MUST NOT**:

- allow them to continue if they are working unsafely;
- allow them to leave site unless they have left their work area safe and signed out.

If you see any visitor or contractor failing to observe all site rules

You **MUST**:

- inform them that their behaviour is unacceptable;
- report them to the RSF employee responsible for them.

Permit to Work

RSF uses a permit to work system to control certain non-routine, hazardous activities. These permits are designed to identify the hazards and risks associated with the work, and to specify the precautions that must be taken when carrying out the work. It is essential that work carried out under permit conditions is properly controlled. Only personnel who have been specifically trained and authorised are allowed to issue permits to work.

If you are working under a permit to work

You **MUST**:

- sign the permit before starting work;
- follow the requirements of the permit at all times;
- sign the clearance and hand the permit back when work is complete;.

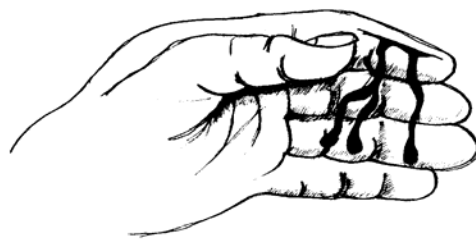
You **MUST NOT**:

- carry out any work other than that specified;
- continue work after the permit has expired;
- write or issue a permit unless you are trained and authorised to do so.

Accident & Near Miss Reporting

Despite all our best efforts, accidents (and near-misses) do happen. When they do it is important to ensure that they are properly investigated so that action can be taken to prevent them from happening again.

RSF operates a system for reporting and investigating all accidents, incidents and near-misses. The aim of these investigations is not to apportion blame, but to find out why the accident occurred and take action.



If you have an accident at work(no matter how trivial it may seem)

You **MUST**:

- get medical attention from a First Aider;
- inform your supervisor as soon as possible and before the end of your shift;
- ensure that the accident is recorded in the accident book;
- co-operate with management in the investigation of accidents.

You **MUST** also:

- inform your supervisor if you suffer an accident or injury outside of work that may affect your ability to do your job safely;
- report any “near miss” incidents so that they can be properly investigated.

Safety Reps & Safety Committees

RSF operates a Safety Committee which meets regularly to discuss health & safety issues. Employee safety representatives have been selected and appointed to act on behalf of the workforce in discussions and representations. The names and locations of these Safety Reps are displayed on notice boards.

Safety Reps and the Safety Committee are an important part of our efforts to improve safety standards, however, they must not be seen as a means to bypass normal channels of communication.

If you have a concern about any health & safety issue then you must raise it with your immediate supervisor. If you do not receive a satisfactory response to your concern then you should raise the issue with your Safety Rep. Do not “save up” issues of concern and then present them to the Safety Rep just in time for the Safety Committee meeting.