

2026 FDA Food Code

Chapter 7: Poisonous or Toxic Materials

Labeling • Storage • Chemical Use • Sanitizers • Pesticides • Medicines • First Aid • Retail Display

Training note: This coursebook summarizes Chapter 7 of the 2026 FDA Food Code for instruction. Jurisdictional adoption and requirements may vary.

Mark Bakos and Associates

How to Use This Coursebook

Chapter 7 controls poisonous or toxic materials in food establishments so chemicals, pesticides, medicines, and personal-care items do not contaminate food or food-contact items or create a hazard to employees and consumers.

Learning Objectives

- Explain labeling requirements for original and working chemical containers.
- Describe where poisonous or toxic materials may be stored.
- Identify which chemicals may be present in a food establishment and how they must be used.
- Explain why chemical containers may never be reused for food or foodservice items.
- Describe requirements for sanitizers, produce-treatment chemicals, lubricants, pesticides, medicines, and first-aid supplies.
- Explain separation requirements for poisonous or toxic materials offered for retail sale.

Chapter 7 at a Glance

Part	Topic
7-1	Labeling and Identification
7-2	Operational Supplies and Applications
7-3	Stock and Retail Sale

1. Labeling and Identification

1 LABEL WORKING CONTAINERS



- Cleaners, sanitizers, and disinfectants that are removed from their original containers and placed in working containers must be clearly labeled.
- Use the common name of the material (e.g., sanitizer, cleaner, disinfectant).

Working containers must be clearly identified with the common name of the material.

Original Containers

Containers of poisonous or toxic materials and personal-care items must have a legible manufacturer's label.

Working Containers

When cleaners, sanitizers, disinfectants, or other poisonous/toxic materials are transferred from bulk supplies into working containers, each working container must be clearly and individually identified with the common name of the material.

Never leave an unlabeled spray bottle or working chemical container in a food establishment.

2. Safe Chemical Storage



Store poisonous or toxic materials separated from and not above food or protected food-contact items.

Poisonous or toxic materials must be stored so they cannot contaminate food, equipment, utensils, linens, or single-service/single-use articles.

- Separate chemicals by spacing or partitioning.

- Do not locate poisonous or toxic materials above food, equipment, utensils, linens, or single-service/single-use articles.
- Equipment and utensil cleaners and sanitizers may be stored in warewashing areas for convenience only when stored so contamination is prevented.

Simple rule: Chemicals belong separated from and generally below food and food-contact items.

3. Which Chemicals May Be Present?



Use only operationally necessary chemicals and follow the manufacturer's label directions.

Only poisonous or toxic materials required for operation and maintenance of the food establishment are generally allowed, such as chemicals needed for cleaning, sanitizing, and pest control. Packaged poisonous or toxic materials offered for retail sale are an exception.

Use Only as Directed

- Follow law and the Food Code.
- Follow the manufacturer's use directions on the label.
- For pesticides, the label must allow use in a food establishment.
- Follow certification conditions when certification is required.
- Follow additional conditions established by the regulatory authority.

- Apply chemicals so they do not create a hazard to employees or other persons.

4. Preventing Chemical Contamination During Application

Chemical use must prevent toxic residues from drip, drain, fog, splash, or spray from reaching food or protected food-contact items.

- Remove food and protected items from the application area, or
- Cover them with impermeable covers, or
- Use another appropriate preventive action.
- Clean and sanitize equipment and utensils after the chemical application when required.

5. Never Reuse a Chemical Container



A container that previously held a poisonous or toxic material must never be reused for food or foodservice items.

A container previously used for poisonous or toxic materials may not be used to store, transport, or dispense food, equipment, utensils, linens, or single-service/single-use articles.

Even if a chemical container looks clean, do not repurpose it for food or foodservice use.

6. Sanitizers and Other Food-Related Chemicals

Sanitizers

Chemical sanitizers, including on-site generated sanitizing solutions and other chemical antimicrobials applied to food-contact surfaces, must meet the applicable federal criteria for that use. Excessively strong sanitizer solutions can leave unsafe residues; use the product according to its approved label and the Chapter 4 concentration requirements.

Chemicals Used on Fruits and Vegetables

Chemicals used to wash or peel raw whole fruits and vegetables, or in their treatment, storage, and processing, must be approved or otherwise permitted for the intended use under the applicable federal requirements.

Boiler-Water Additives and Drying Agents

- Boiler-water additives must meet the applicable requirements of 21 CFR 173.310.
- Drying agents used with sanitization must contain components approved or recognized as safe for their intended use.
- When used with chemical sanitization, the applicable approval must cover use with chemical sanitizing solutions.

7. Lubricants

Lubricants used where incidental food contact is possible must meet the applicable food-contact requirements. This includes lubricants used on food-contact surfaces or on bearings/gears where lubricant could leak, drip, or be forced into food or onto food-contact surfaces.

Use food-equipment lubricants suitable for incidental food contact wherever lubricant could reach food.

8. Pesticide Safety

4 **PESTICIDE SAFETY**



- Keep pesticides in their original, labeled containers.
- Store pesticides below and separate from food, utensils, linens, and single-use articles.
- Use only EPA-registered pesticides and follow the label directions.
- Restricted-use pesticides may only be used by authorized and certified applicators.

Mark Dales and Associates

Pesticides must be properly labeled, stored safely, and used according to applicable requirements.

Restricted-Use Pesticides

Restricted-use pesticides must meet applicable federal requirements and may be applied only by a certified applicator or a person under the direct supervision of a certified applicator.

Rodent Bait Stations

Rodent bait must be contained in a covered, tamper-resistant bait station.

Tracking Powders

- Tracking-powder pesticides generally may not be used in a food establishment.
- A nontoxic tracking powder, such as talcum or flour, may be used only when it does not contaminate food or protected food-contact items.

9. Employee Medicines

5

MEDICINES & FIRST AID



- Employee medicines and first-aid supplies must be stored in a protected location and in a way that prevents contamination of food, equipment, utensils, linens, and single-use articles.
- Refrigerated medicines must be in a covered, leakproof, and identified container stored in a food refrigerator.

Employee medicines and first-aid supplies must be protected and stored to prevent contamination.

Except for medicines stored or displayed for retail sale, only medicines necessary for employee health are allowed in a food establishment.

- Employee medicines must be properly labeled.
- Store them where they cannot contaminate food, equipment, utensils, linens, or single-service/single-use articles.
- Refrigerated employee medicines, or medicines for children in a day-care center, may be stored in a food refrigerator only when they are packaged and kept inside a covered, leakproof container identified for medicine storage.
- Refrigerated medicines must be located so they are inaccessible to children.

Employee medicine can require refrigeration, but it must be protected, identified, and stored to prevent contamination.

10. First Aid and Personal-Care Items

First Aid Supplies

First-aid supplies for employee use must be properly labeled and stored in a kit or container located to prevent contamination of food and protected food-contact items.

Other Personal-Care Items

Except for the specific medicine and first-aid provisions, employees must store personal-care items in the designated employee-storage facilities required by Chapter 6.

11. Poisonous or Toxic Materials for Retail Sale

Poisonous or toxic materials displayed for retail sale must be positioned so they cannot contaminate food or protected food-contact items.

- Separate the poisonous or toxic materials by spacing or partitioning.
- Do not locate them above food, equipment, utensils, linens, or single-service/single-use articles.

12. What Changed in the 2026 Food Code?

Chapter 7 received a few targeted edits in the 2026 edition. The chapter heading was corrected, disinfectants were added to the working-container labeling language in § 7-102.11, and minor terminology/formatting corrections were made in §§ 7-201.11 and 7-202.12.

2026 emphasis: Working containers of disinfectants, like cleaners and sanitizers, must be clearly identified with the common name.

Chapter 7 Quick Review

Remember	Core Rule
Original containers	Keep a legible manufacturer's label.
Working containers	Clearly identify the common name.
Storage	Separate chemicals and do not store them above food or protected items.
Chemical use	Use only necessary chemicals and follow label directions.
Chemical containers	Never reuse them for food or foodservice items.
Pesticides	Follow pesticide rules; restricted-use pesticides require certified control.
Rodent bait	Covered, tamper-resistant bait station.
Medicines	Only necessary employee medicines; store to prevent contamination.
First aid	Label and protect in a kit/container.
Retail chemicals	Separate and never display above food/protected items.

Mark Bakos and Associates

End-of-Chapter Multiple-Choice Review

1. Original containers of poisonous or toxic materials must have:

- A. A handwritten price
- B. A legible manufacturer's label
- C. No label
- D. Only a color code

2. A spray bottle filled from a bulk sanitizer container must be labeled with:

- A. Employee name
- B. Common name of the material
- C. Date only
- D. Vendor phone number

3. The 2026 Code specifically added which term to the working-container rule?

- A. Soap
- B. Disinfectants
- C. Water
- D. Towels

4. Chemicals should generally be stored:

- A. Above food
- B. With clean utensils
- C. Separated from and not above food/protected items
- D. On prep tables

Mark Bakos and Associates

5. Cleaners and sanitizers may be stored in a warewashing area when:

- A. They are unlabeled
- B. Contamination is prevented
- C. They are above clean dishes
- D. They are mixed together

6. Which poisonous or toxic materials are generally allowed in the establishment?

- A. Any employee-owned chemical
- B. Those required for operation and maintenance
- C. Unlabeled pesticides
- D. Any chemical on sale nearby

7. Packaged poisonous or toxic materials offered for retail sale are:

- A. An exception to the operational-need restriction
- B. Always prohibited
- C. Required in kitchens
- D. Stored above food

8. Chemicals must be used according to:

- A. Employee preference
- B. Manufacturer label directions and applicable law
- C. Color only
- D. Price

9. During chemical application, food can be protected by:

- A. Leaving it uncovered
- B. Removing it or covering it with an impermeable cover
- C. Spraying around it
- D. Placing chemicals above it

10. After certain chemical applications, equipment and utensils must be:

- A. Painted
- B. Cleaned and sanitized
- C. Thrown away
- D. Stored wet

11. A container that previously held a toxic chemical may later hold food:

- A. If rinsed twice
- B. If sanitized
- C. Never
- D. If labeled food

Mark Bakos and Associates

12. Chemical sanitizers applied to food-contact surfaces must:

- A. Meet applicable approved criteria
- B. Be as strong as possible
- C. Be mixed by color
- D. Always be fragrance-free

13. Chemicals used to wash raw whole produce must be:

- A. Any household cleaner
- B. Approved/permitted for that intended use
- C. Dish soap
- D. A restricted-use pesticide

14. Boiler-water additives must meet requirements in:

- A. 21 CFR 173.310
- B. Employee handbook only
- C. Chapter 2 only
- D. Local menu code

15. A lubricant that might drip into food must be:

- A. Automotive grease
- B. Suitable under incidental-food-contact requirements
- C. Any machine oil
- D. Vegetable dye

16. A restricted-use pesticide may be applied by:

- A. Any server
- B. A certified applicator or person under direct supervision
- C. Any customer
- D. A delivery driver

17. Rodent bait must be placed in:

- A. An open dish
- B. A covered, tamper-resistant bait station
- C. A food container
- D. A hand sink

18. Tracking-powder pesticides in a food establishment are generally:

- A. Required
- B. Prohibited
- C. Stored over food
- D. Used on prep tables

19. A nontoxic tracking powder may be used only if it:

- A. Contaminates no food or protected items
- B. Is brightly colored
- C. Is mixed with pesticide
- D. Is placed in food

20. Employee medicines allowed in a food establishment are generally those:

- A. Necessary for employee health
- B. Brought by customers
- C. Sold by competitors
- D. Stored without labels

21. Employee medicines must be stored to prevent:

- A. Cooling
- B. Contamination of food and protected items

- C. Employee access
- D. Label reading

22. Refrigerated employee medicine in a food refrigerator must be inside:

- A. An open cup
- B. A covered, leakproof, identified medicine container
- C. A produce bin
- D. An ice bucket

23. Refrigerated medicine must be located so it is:

- A. Accessible to children
- B. Inaccessible to children
- C. Next to ready-to-eat food
- D. On the top of uncovered food

24. First-aid supplies must be:

- A. Unlabeled
- B. Labeled and stored to prevent contamination
- C. Stored with food
- D. Kept in a hand sink

Mark Bakos and Associates

25. Personal-care items are generally stored in:

- A. Food-prep areas
- B. Designated employee-storage facilities
- C. Ice machines
- D. Clean utensil drawers

26. Retail toxic materials must be separated from food by:

- A. Spacing or partitioning
- B. Mixing
- C. Stacking above food
- D. Removing labels

27. Retail poisonous or toxic materials may be displayed above food:

- A. Always
- B. Only if sealed
- C. No
- D. Only during closing

28. Which is a good example of a properly labeled working container?

- A. Unmarked blue liquid
- B. Spray bottle marked 'Sanitizer'
- C. Bottle marked 'Stuff'
- D. Bottle with no common name

29. The main goal of Chapter 7 is to prevent:

- A. Menu changes
- B. Chemical contamination and toxic hazards
- C. Food cooling
- D. Employee scheduling

30. Which practice is safest?

- A. Reuse an empty cleaner jug for sauce
- B. Store pesticide above plates
- C. Keep chemicals labeled, separated, and used according to directions
- D. Put medicine loose beside produce

Mark Bakos and Associates

Answer Key

1-10	11-20	21-30
1. B	11. C	21. B
2. B	12. A	22. B
3. B	13. B	23. B
4. C	14. A	24. B
5. B	15. B	25. B
6. B	16. B	26. A
7. A	17. B	27. C
8. B	18. B	28. B
9. B	19. A	29. B
10. B	20. A	30. C

Source and Training Use

Primary source: U.S. Food and Drug Administration, 2026 Food Code, Chapter 7 - Poisonous or Toxic Materials, pp. 145-150. This coursebook paraphrases and organizes Chapter 7 for student instruction. Consult the official Food Code and the applicable regulatory authority for exact regulatory language and jurisdiction-specific requirements.

Mark Bakos and Associates