

How to?

20) Reduce Acrylamide

Why is this important?

Acrylamide is a chemical substance formed by a reaction between amino acids and sugars. It typically occurs when foods with high starch content such as potatoes, root vegetables and bread, are cooked at high temperatures (over 120°C) in a process of frying, roasting or baking. It is a natural by-product of the cooking process it is caused by something called the Maillard reaction. Laboratory tests show that there is a very strong possibility that significant amounts of acrylamide in the diet can cause cancer in humans.

To meet legislative requirements on the application of control and mitigation measures to reduce the presence of acrylamide in food, a risk assessment has been conducted (see main HACCP document for full details) and necessary steps to reduce or mitigate acrylamide formation have been taken.

Products prepared/used/sold which have been linked to high acrylamide levels include:

- French fries and chips (cooked from frozen, bought in chilled prepared and fresh and prepared from raw skin on potato)
- Potato crisps and snack products (purchased prepared and packed)
- Breakfast cereals, (purchased prepared and packed)
- Toasted bread and similar products
- Cakes, cookies, biscuits and similar items (purchased prepared and packed)



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What to do:

Food Item

Measures to be taken

Coffee

- Only coffee beans with lower acrylamide levels, for example Arabica beans are sourced and used.

Fried and roasted potato products

- Frozen chips and some roast potatoes are purchased manufacturer's instructions (where supplied) will be followed with regards to storage, shelf life and cooking
- Baby roast potatoes are made from good quality, undamaged fresh potatoes, which are steamed before frying higher temperatures
- The oils and fats used are vegetable based to reduce the likelihood of acrylamide forming and crisp food quickly at lower temperatures
- Oil temperature for frying is set to no more than 175°C
- Chip baskets are only part filled to help foods cook evenly and reduce acrylamide formation
- Frying fats and oils are changed regularly and skimmed to remove fines and crumbs
- Chips and potato products are cooked to a golden yellow colour as opposed to brown

Bread and bakery wares

- Baking bread and sweet or savoury bakery products cook to a golden yellow, or lighter colour, using the lowest oven temperature possible for the food.
- Not over-toasting or selling burnt toast, toasted sandwiches and other similar products.

Crisps and other fried or baked snack products

- All products purchased packed from reputable sources, manufactured by companies meeting Acrylamide guidelines