

### SALSA Requirement:

**1.13.1** “Transport used for the distribution of products to the customer shall be fit for purpose and capable of maintaining the integrity and safety of the product. All transport should be inspected before loading, and records kept for each despatch.”

**1.13.2** “Where third party hauliers/distributors and storage facilities are contracted, there shall be a documented agreement in place to ensure the integrity and safety of product is not compromised during storage and/or distribution to the customer.”

**1.13.3** “Where products are distributed via couriers or the postal service, the business shall ensure products are adequately and appropriately packaged to ensure their integrity and safety is not compromised during distribution to the customer.”

### Why?

Control over distribution is important to maintain the safety and integrity of your products. Poorly transported products can lead to customer complaints and even customer illness.

#### Tools

- ☞ Reputable transport company/contractor
- ☞ ‘Chill’ or ‘Frozen’ vehicles for temperature-sensitive foods
- ☞ An Agreement dated and signed by both parties for third party distribution/storage
- ☞ Appropriate product outer packaging
- ☞ Record for vehicle checks before loading.

#### Tips

- ☞ Include your Distributor on your Approved Supplier list.
- ☞ Keep it simple: think what your product needs *eg* robust outer box, tamper-evident packaging, clearly labelled - ‘This Way Up’, ‘Do Not Double-Stack’ *etc*
- ☞ If possible, use a certificated contractor *eg* to the BRC Standard for Storage & Distribution
- ☞ Specify the temperature range for your goods during delivery (check any legal limits)
- ☞ Consider that the company delivering your products will meet your customers; a good first impression and professional behaviour is important too.
- ☞ For ‘refrigerated’ or ‘frozen’ transport, consider using data loggers; a record of temperature control could be useful where disputes arise.
- ☞ Remember, the company delivering your products will meet your customers; a good first impression and professional behaviour is important too.

### What do I need to do?

- Ensure your products are kept in the correct conditions during distribution. Your vehicles or transport company/contractor vehicles should be suitable to achieve this.

- Keep records. All vehicles – your own or third party – transporting your product should be clean and free from strong odours which could taint your products. Show this by recording your check of vehicles before loading. Consider how to prevent contamination between different product types transported in the same vehicles *e.g.* raw foods and cooked foods.
- Have an Agreement in place with your chosen distributor. An ‘Agreement’ is a simple legal document or letter stating how your product needs to be treated during storage and/or transport.
- Breakdown procedures for all vehicles – your own or third party – need to be in place. A third party distributor must notify you promptly if your product is affected by a breakdown so include this in your Agreement with them.
- If you are using a certificated transport company/contractor, always keep a copy of their current certificate on file (check the expiry date). If your contractor isn’t certificated, your Agreement is an important part of your Due Diligence.
- For ‘refrigerated’ or ‘frozen’ transport, consider using data loggers; a record of temperature control could be useful where disputes arise.
- Consider that the company delivering your products will meet your customers; a good first impression and professional behaviour is important too.
- Storage off site by third party companies is also covered by this SALSA Requirement.
- Where you are using couriers or the postal service for distribution, you need to ensure the packaging you use is appropriate to keep products safe on delivery.
  - If you are sending temperature-sensitive items you need to show that the product remains within the appropriate temperature range for the duration of the delivery.
  - For example, you might use thermally-insulated boxes with ice packs for short journeys.
  - If your packaging does not keep the product within the safe temperature range, you will need to review the packaging/ice packs or use a courier who uses temperature controlled vehicles.

### Example

- On the following page is an example of a Distribution Agreement.
- You will need to decide what to include in your own Agreement to meet your company and your product needs.

### Where else can I find help?

- **Tools & Tips** for 1.3.2 Cleaning Schedules – for vehicle cleaning procedures; 1.4.1 – Minimising contamination; 1.4.3 – Allergen Control; 1.5.2 Environmental Monitoring – for temperature-controlled vehicles; 1.5.3 – Equipment Failure – for Breakdown controls; 1.5.4 Calibration – for temperature sensors in vehicles; 1.11.1 Maintenance – of vehicles.
- **SALSA Guidance Notes** for Section 1.3 Cleaning, 1.4 Contamination/Cross-Contamination Prevention; 1.5 Process, Environment & Equipment Control.

**Example**

Distribution Agreement

With reference to our Agreement with 'X Food Company' we confirm that:

1. Refrigerated or temperature-controlled transport shall be capable of maintaining product temperatures within the agreed specification under maximum load while the product is on the vehicle.
2. Documented procedures shall be in place to ensure temperature requirements are met and either data loggers will be available or a system shall be in place to regularly validate the refrigeration equipment is in operation.
3. Procedures are in place in the event of vehicle breakdown to ensure product safety, legality and quality. You will be notified of any vehicle breakdowns within 1 hour.
4. Detailed records of vehicle maintenance are being kept.
5. All vehicles shall be kept clean internally and externally, and will be suitable for the intended use of food transportation. Records of cleaning will be kept.
6. Vehicles shall be pre-chilled, as required for chilled or frozen deliveries, and will be able to deliver product at the correct and specified temperatures.
7. We are responsible for the security of your products during transportation and have procedures in place to ensure this.
8. Procedures are in place to ensure cross-contamination (eg tainting) from other foods or previously transported material does not occur.
9. Drivers will be appropriately dressed, trained and will act courteously to your staff and customers.
10. We will abide by your customers' booking-in times and if, for any reason, are unable to meet your or their deadlines, we will inform you as quickly as possible.
11. This Agreement will continue until both parties agree to changes.

Signed on behalf of \_\_\_\_\_

Company name \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
PRINT NAME

\_\_\_\_\_  
Position in Company

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date