

THE DAILY FRYER

from Dover District Council Environmental Health



SAFE USE OF DEEP FAT FRYERS

Fat fryers present a number of hazards in kitchens including fire, burns from hot oil, fumes from boiling cleaning chemicals, eye injuries from splashes and slips from oil spillages.

The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 places a duty on employers to ensure, so far as is reasonably practical, the health, safety and welfare of their employees. Employers must ensure that fryers are well maintained, staff are trained and are provided with suitable protective equipment and a suitable and sufficient risk assessment has been carried out.

Fryers can have an automated filtering system, a semi-automated system or they may involve the operator to carry out the filtering manually. Manual oil filtering has been responsible for some

very serious accidents, for example, where oil which has not been cooled sufficiently, has been drained into an empty plastic container and the base has given way.

The Health and Safety Executive has provided advice for employers regarding this process. This includes remembering to turn the power supply off at the wall before cleaning and allowing the oil to cool to 40°C before emptying it and draining it into a suitable large container which is heat resistant, with carrying handles, and a lid/cover.

Further information can be found at www.dover.gov.uk/food and in the HSE Catering Information Sheet No 17 - Safety During Emptying and Cleaning of Fryers: www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/cais17.pdf

ACRYLAMIDES

Acrylamide is a chemical substance formed when starchy foods, such as potatoes and bread, are cooked at high temperatures (above 120°C).

Acrylamide is not deliberately added to foods – it is a natural by-product, formed during high temperature cooking, when water, sugar and amino acids combine to create a food's characteristic flavour, texture, colour and smell. Long cooking times and higher temperatures form more acrylamide than short cooking times and lower temperatures.

The problem is that lab tests show that acrylamide in the diet causes cancer in animals. Scientists agree that acrylamide in food has the potential to cause cancer in humans as well. Regulation (EU) 2017/2158 has come into force requiring food businesses to put in place simple practical steps to manage acrylamides.

Small, local businesses are required to evidence within their food safety management system, the controls they have considered to reduce acrylamide to levels that are as low as reasonably achievable in their food. Example controls to review include:

- Using a low sugar potato variety, suitable for frying and an oil that allows for a quicker fry/lower temperature.

- Storing raw potatoes in a cool, dark place but not at temperatures colder than 6°C - keeping raw potatoes in the fridge can lead to the formation of more free sugars in the potatoes.
- Checking for and disposing of bruised, damaged and diseased potatoes.
- If you use a preservative using one that is designed to help reduce acrylamide levels.
- Soak raw potatoes in cold water for at least thirty minutes, in warm water for a shorter soak or blanch ahead of frying.
- Reducing the cooking temperature – a small temperature reduction can make a big difference on the levels of acrylamide.
- Aim to achieve a light golden colour to your cooked food rather than a darker yellow/brown.
- Do not overfill a frying basket
- Filtering the oil regularly to remove debris.

Manufacturers and larger businesses e.g. national chains, will be required to demonstrate additional monitoring and controls. For more information to help you comply with this requirement visit www.dover.gov.uk/food.