

NATIONAL OUTBREAK REPORTING SYSTEM
“FOOD” & “FACTORS” TABS

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Introduction

This training guide provides a brief overview of how to complete the Food and Factors tabs of a NORS foodborne disease outbreak report. You should have already completed the training for the General sections of NORS. For instructions on reporting non-foodborne outbreaks, refer to other training materials. Note: for detailed explanation of NORS reporting questions and answer options, refer to the NORS Guidance Document.

Tab: Food

- After selecting “Food” as the primary mode of transmission on the “Gen-Pt1” tab, the “Food” tab will appear. Click on it.
- If the food is unknown, check the box “*Food Vehicle Undetermined.*” **Note: do not check this box if the food vehicle is known.**
- If the food vehicle is known, then enter a number into the box “*Total # of cases exposed to implicated food*”.
- Next, enter all information about the food vehicle by clicking on the button “*Add New Food Item*”.

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Food Factors

Food vehicle undetermined

Total # of cases exposed to implicated food

[Add New Food Item](#)

Food Name
Ingredients
Number of cases exposed to implicated food
Contaminated Ingredient Name

Name of Food

- The first box asks for “*Name of Food*”. You can enter the name of the food by selecting from the list provided. If the name of the food is not on the list, you can add a new food.
- To select from the list provided, there are a few functions available to help you locate the name of the food:
 - 1) You can scroll through the list, and then select the food; or
 - 2) You can type the name of the main food component in the box and then click the “*Find*” button. For example, by typing in the word, “chicken,” and then clicking the “*Find*” button, all the foods that contain the word, “chicken” appear – for example, “chicken-fried steak,” “chicken, roasted,” “chicken, casserole,” “soup, chicken noodle,” etc.

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Food Salm. Factors School

Food vehicle undetermined

Total # of cases exposed to implicated food 5

Name of Food [Find](#) [Other...](#)

- lasagna, chicken
- chicken-fried steak
- grilled chicken salad
- chicken, kellaguin
- chicken, teriyaki
- Cheesy Chicken and Rice Frozen Meal
- chicken alfredo
- kabobs, chicken
- chicken, roasted
- chicken, sweet and sour
- liver, chicken
- veal w/ chicken and mushrooms

- To return to the complete list after using the “Find” button, delete the search keyword and click on the “Find” button again.
- If the name of the food you want to enter is not available in the pick list, you can add a new food. **However, before you add a new food, double-check the pick list as it is fairly exhaustive.** For example, do not enter “Pastrami” since “Deli Meat, Pastrami” is already listed.
- To add a new food, click on “Other”, and then type in the new food in the “Name of Food” box. For example, we will add a new food called “Arepa” to the pick list. To save this new food, click on “Ok”. Before saving, you also have the option of cancelling the addition of a new food by clicking “Cancel”. Once a new food item is added it cannot be deleted from the pick list.

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Food Salm. Factors School

Food vehicle undetermined

Total # of cases exposed to implicated food 5

Name of Food	Ingredient(s)	Selected Ingredient
Arepa		

OK/Cancel

Ingredients/Contaminated Ingredients

- Next, in the “*Ingredients*” box, select the ingredients of the food item. If you are making more than one selection, hold the Ctrl button while selecting the ingredients. For example, if the implicated food was seafood pasta, the ingredients might be mussels, scallops, shrimp, and pasta.
- Once all the ingredients have been selected, click on the right arrow button to the right of the “*Ingredients*” box to populate the “*Selected Ingredients*” box.
- Next, in the “*Selected Ingredients*” box, select any ingredients that were contaminated and then click on the right arrow button to the right of the “*Selected Ingredients*” box to populate the “*Contaminated Ingredients*” box.

- To unselect ingredients from the “*Selected Ingredients*” box or the “*Contaminated Ingredients*” box, highlight the ingredient and then click on the left arrow button.

Reason(s) Suspected

- Next, in the “*Reason Suspected*” box, indicate why the implicated food was suspected by selecting from the pick list. Multiple selections are permitted. If you are making more than one selection, hold the Ctrl button while selecting the reasons. For our example, we suspected seafood pasta because of compelling supportive information; therefore, the third option (“Compelling supportive information”) is selected.
- Refer to the NORS Guidance Document for more detailed explanations of pick list options.

	seafood gumbo seafood newberg seafood pasta seafood salad		
Ingredient(s)	alfalfa sprouts alligator american cheese	--> --<	Selected Ingredients mussels scallops shrimp
			Contaminated Ingredients mussels
Number of cases exposed to implicated food	<input type="text"/>		
Reason(s) Suspected	1-Statistical evidence from epidemiological investigation 2-Laboratory evidence (e.g., identification of agent in food) 3-Compelling supportive information		

Method of Processing

- Next, in the “*Method of Processing*” box, indicate the method of processing for the implicated food by selecting from the pick list. Multiple selections are permitted for this question. If you are making more than one selection, hold the Ctrl button while selecting the methods.
- “*Method of Processing*” is intended to capture any modifications to the implicated food before food preparation. For our example, the method of processing for the seafood pasta was unknown, so we will choose #11 “None or Unknown”.
- Again, refer to the NORS Guidance Document for more detailed explanations of pick list options.

Method of Preparation

- Next, in the “*Method of Preparation*” box, indicate the method of preparation for the implicated food by selecting from the pick list.
- “*Method of Preparation*” is intended to capture any modifications to the implicated food during food preparation. That is, how was the implicated food handled before it was served?
- Choose only one method of preparation from the pick list; multiple selections are **NOT** permitted for this question. For our example, the seafood pasta was cooked and hot held before service, so we will choose #5 “Cook and hot hold prior to service”.
- Refer to the NORS Guidance Document for more detailed explanations of pick list options.

Level of Preparation

- Next, in the “*Level of Preparation*” box, indicate the level of preparation for the implicated food by selecting from the pick list. Multiple selections are **NOT** permitted for this question.

Method of Processing	8 - Canned 9 - Acid treatment 10 - Pressure treated 11 - None or Unknown
Method of Preparation	3 - Ready to eat food - Manual preparation, No cook step. 4 - Cook and Serve Foods: Immediate service. 5 - Cook and hot hold prior to service. 6 - Advance preparation: Cook, cool, serve.
Level of Preparation	1 - Foods eaten raw with minimal or no processing. 2 - Foods eaten raw with some processing. 3 - Foods eaten heat processed.

- Refer to the NORS Guidance Document for more detailed explanations of pick list options.

Contaminated Food Imported to US?

- Next, indicate if the implicated food was imported into the United States. Check “No” if the contaminated food was not imported. Check “Yes, Unknown country” if the contaminated food was imported but the name of the country is unknown. If the contaminated food was imported, and the name of the country is known, then select the name of country from the pick list.

Was product both produced under domestic regulatory oversight and sold?

- Next answer the following question, “Was product *both* produced under domestic regulatory oversight *and* sold?” by selecting one of the appropriate options – “Yes”, “No”, or “Unknown”.

Contaminated food imported to US?	Yes, Country <input type="text"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, Unknown country
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Was product both produced under domestic regulatory oversight and sold?	<input type="button" value="Yes"/>
<input type="button" value="Save Changes"/> <input type="button" value="Cancel Changes"/>	

After entering all the relevant information regarding the food vehicle, click on the “*Save Changes*” button at the bottom of the page, which will populate the Food table with the information just entered.

Once saved to the Food table, you can edit and delete that food vehicle by clicking on the respective buttons in the table.

To add an additional food vehicle, click “*Add New Food Item*” and follow the previous steps.

This is the end of the “Food” tab. Make sure to click on the “*Save Changes*” button at the bottom of the screen.

Tab: Factors

- Click on the “Factors” tab.

Contributing Factors

- Consult the NORS Guidance Document for more detailed definitions, explanations, and examples of each contributing factor.
- After consideration of all epidemiological, laboratory, and environmental assessment information available, if the contributing factors for this outbreak could not be determined then check the box at the top of the contributing factors section “*Contributing Factors Unknown*”. If this box is checked, then the remainder of the contributing factors section should be left completely blank.
- However, if contributing factors are known, then select all factors that are causally associated with the outbreak. Multiple selections are permitted for this section. If you are making more than one selection, hold the Ctrl button while selecting the factors.
- Contributing factors are classified into three categories: Contamination, Proliferation/Amplification, and Survival factors. For our seafood pasta example:
 - Bare-handed contact with the food was determined to be a contributing factor, so we will select “C10-Bare-hand contact by a food handler/worker/preparer who is suspected to be infectious”.
 - There were no proliferation/amplification factors involved, so we will select “P-N/A-Proliferation/Amplification Factors-Not Applicable”.
 - There were no proliferation/amplification factors involved, so we will select “S-N/A-Survival Factors-Not Applicable”.

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Food Factors

As a reporting site administrator your changes will be saved and the status set to Active

Contributing Factors

Contributing Factors Unknown

Contributing factors led to outbreak not violations. Include only what is causally associated with the outbreak.

Contamination Factor

C10- Bare-hand contact by a food handler/worker/preparer who is suspected to be infectious

C11-Glove-hand contact by a food handler/worker/preparer who is suspected to be infectious

C12-Other mode of contamination (excluding cross-contamination) by a food handler/worker/preparer who is suspected to be infectious

C13- Foods contaminated by non-food handler/worker/preparer who is suspected to be infectious

Proliferation/Amplification Factor (bacterial outbreaks only)

P10-Inadequate modified atmosphere packaging

P11-Inadequate processing (acidification, water activity, fermentation)

P12-Other situations that promoted or allowed microbial growth or toxic production

P-N/A- Proliferation/Amplification Factors-Not Applicable

Survival Factor

S3-Insufficient time and/or temperature control during freezing

S4-Insufficient or improper use of chemical processes designed for pathogen destruction

S5-Other process failures that permit pathogen survival

S-N/A-Survival Factors-Not Applicable

Location Where Food Was Prepared

- After the contributing factors section, indicate the “*Location Where Food Was Prepared*” by selecting from the pick list. Select any and all the preparation locations that apply; multiple selections are permitted for this question. If you are making more than one selection, hold the Ctrl button while selecting the locations.
- If there is any additional information regarding the location where food was prepared (e.g., explanation of why multiple settings were selected or important characteristics of the setting(s) selected), add that information in the “*Remarks*” box located directly below the pick list.
- Note: If school is selected as a location where food was prepared, then a supplemental tab called “School” will appear in the tab selection row so that additional information may be collected regarding the school.
- For our example, the seafood pasta was prepared at a sit-down restaurant so the selection “Restaurant – Sit-down dining” was highlighted.
- Refer to the NORS Guidance Document for more detailed explanations of pick list options.

Location of Exposure or Where Food Was Eaten

- Next, indicate the “*Location of Exposure or Where Food Was Eaten*” by selecting from the pick list. Select any and all the exposure locations that apply; multiple selections are permitted for this question. If you are making more than one selection, hold the Ctrl button while selecting the locations.
- If there is any additional information regarding the location where food was eaten (e.g., explanation of why multiple settings were selected or important characteristics of the setting(s) selected), add that information in the “*Remarks*” box located directly below the pick list.
- Note: If school is selected as a location where food was prepared, then a supplemental tab called “School” will appear in the tab selection row so that additional information may be collected regarding the school.

- For our example, the implicated food was eaten at a private home and at a school, so both selections are highlighted.
- Refer to the NORS Guidance Document for more detailed explanations of pick list options.

Location Where Food Was Prepared

(Select all that apply)

Restaurant - "Fast-food"(drive up service or pay at counter)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Restaurant - Sit-down dining	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Restaurant - other or unknown type	<input type="checkbox"/>
Private Home	<input type="checkbox"/>

Remarks:

Location of Exposure or Where Food Was Eaten

(Select all that apply)

Restaurant - "Fast-food"(drive up service or pay at counter)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Restaurant - Sit-down dining	<input type="checkbox"/>
Restaurant - other or unknown type	<input type="checkbox"/>
Private Home	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Remarks:

Confirmed or Suspected Point of Contamination

- Indicate if the confirmed or suspected point of contamination occurred “Before preparation” or at “Preparation.” If the confirmed or suspected point of contamination occurred “Before preparation,” then indicate if it occurred at “Pre-Harvest,” “Processing,” or “Unknown.” For our example, the point of contamination occurred during preparation.
- Next, indicate the reason why the confirmed or suspected point of contamination was selected. Select any and all the reasons that apply; multiple selections are permitted for this question. If you are making more than one selection, hold the Ctrl button while selecting the reasons. For our example, the reason suspected was “Environmental Evidence”.
- Refer to the NORS Guidance Document for more detailed explanations of answer options.

Was Foodworker Implicated as the Source of Contamination?

- Indicate if a food worker was implicated as the source of contamination by selecting “Yes” or “No.”
- If “Yes,” indicate the type of evidence that implicated the foodworker. Multiple selections are **NOT** permitted for this question. For our example, a foodworker was implicated as the source of contamination due to laboratory evidence that the foodworker was culture-positive for Shigella.
- Refer to the NORS Guidance Document for more detailed explanations of answer options.

The confirmed or suspected point of contamination (check one)

Preparation ▼

If "Before preparation"

Pre-Harvest
Processing
Unknown

Reason suspected:(check all that apply)

Environmental Evidence
 Epidemiologic evidence
 Lab evidence
 Prior experience makes this a likely source

Was foodworker implicated as the source of contamination? Yes ▼

If Yes, please select only one of the following

Laboratory and epidemiologic evidence
Epidemiologic evidence
Laboratory evidence
prior experience make this a likely source

This is the end of the “Factors” tab. Click on the “Save Changes” button at the bottom of the screen.