

County of Santa Clara

Department of Environmental Health

Consumer Protection Division

1555 Berger Drive, Suite 300, San Jose, CA 95112-2716

Phone (408) 918-3400 www.ehinfo.org



OFFICIAL INSPECTION REPORT

Facility FA0202187 - LA ESQUINA		Site Address 551 N SANTA CRUZ AV, LOS GATOS, CA 95030		Inspection Date 06/11/2025		Placard Color & Score YELLOW 54		
Program PR0303845 - FOOD PREP / FOOD SVC OP 0-5 EMPLOYEES RC 3 - FP11			Owner Name BENJAMIN ROMERO MARTIN		Inspection Time 09:30 - 11:00			
Inspected By PRINCESS LAGANA		Inspection Type ROUTINE INSPECTION		Consent By JESUS FLORES				FSC Jesus Flores 06/23/2025

RISK FACTORS AND INTERVENTIONS		IN	OUT		COS/SA	N/O	N/A	PBI
			Major	Minor				
K01	Demonstration of knowledge; food safety certification			X				
K02	Communicable disease; reporting/restriction/exclusion	X						S
K03	No discharge from eyes, nose, mouth	X						
K04	Proper eating, tasting, drinking, tobacco use	X						
K05	Hands clean, properly washed; gloves used properly			X	X			N
K06	Adequate handwash facilities supplied, accessible		X					N
K07	Proper hot and cold holding temperatures	X						
K08	Time as a public health control; procedures & records					X		
K09	Proper cooling methods	X						
K10	Proper cooking time & temperatures					X		
K11	Proper reheating procedures for hot holding	X						S
K12	Returned and reservice of food	X						
K13	Food in good condition, safe, unadulterated		X		X			
K14	Food contact surfaces clean, sanitized	X						N
K15	Food obtained from approved source	X						
K16	Compliance with shell stock tags, condition, display						X	
K17	Compliance with Gulf Oyster Regulations						X	
K18	Compliance with variance/ROP/HACCP Plan						X	
K19	Consumer advisory for raw or undercooked foods			X				N
K20	Licensed health care facilities/schools: prohibited foods not being offered						X	
K21	Hot and cold water available	X						
K22	Sewage and wastewater properly disposed	X						
K23	No rodents, insects, birds, or animals			X				

GOOD RETAIL PRACTICES		OUT	COS
K24	Person in charge present and performing duties		
K25	Proper personal cleanliness and hair restraints		
K26	Approved thawing methods used; frozen food		
K27	Food separated and protected	X	
K28	Fruits and vegetables washed		
K29	Toxic substances properly identified, stored, used	X	
K30	Food storage: food storage containers identified	X	
K31	Consumer self service does prevent contamination		
K32	Food properly labeled and honestly presented	X	
K33	Nonfood contact surfaces clean		
K34	Warewash facilities: installed/maintained; test strips	X	
K35	Equipment, utensils: Approved, in good repair, adequate capacity	X	
K36	Equipment, utensils, linens: Proper storage and use		
K37	Vending machines		
K38	Adequate ventilation/lighting; designated areas, use	X	
K39	Thermometers provided, accurate		
K40	Wiping cloths: properly used, stored	X	
K41	Plumbing approved, installed, in good repair; proper backflow devices		
K42	Garbage & refuse properly disposed; facilities maintained		
K43	Toilet facilities: properly constructed, supplied, cleaned		
K44	Premises clean, in good repair; Personal/chemical storage; Adequate vermin-proofing		
K45	Floor, walls, ceilings: built, maintained, clean	X	
K46	No unapproved private home/living/sleeping quarters		
K47	Signs posted; last inspection report available		

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K48	Plan review	
K49	Permits available	
K58	Placard properly displayed/posted	

Comments and Observations

Major Violations

K06 - 8 Points - Inadequate handwash facilities: supplied or accessible; 113953, 113953.1, 113953.2, 114067(f)

Inspector Observations: *REPEAT VIOLATION*

1. The only hand sink at the front prep area did not have single use towels in dispenser.

2. The only hand sink at the back prep area did not have single use towels in dispenser.

[CA]: Dispensers at hand sink stations must remain supplied with hand soap and single use towels at all times to facilitate proper hand washing.

[COS]: Staff placed single use towels in dispensers.

Follow-up By
06/13/2025

K13 - 8 Points - Food not in good condition/unsafe/adulterated; 113967, 113976, 113980, 113988, 113990, 114035, 114041, 114254(c), 114254.3

Inspector Observations: At the back storage area, a dead fly was found in bulk sugar container.

[CA]: Food is adulterated if it bears or contains any poisonous or deleterious substance that may render it impure or injurious to health and shall be discarded immediately.

[COS]: Staff voluntarily discarded sugar.

Follow-up By
06/13/2025

Minor Violations

K01 - 3 Points - Inadequate demonstration of knowledge; food manager certification

Inspector Observations: Missing and expired food handler certificates.

[CA]: Each food handler shall maintain a valid food handler card for the duration of his or her employment as food handler. A valid food handler card shall be provided within 30 days of after the date of hire

K05 - 3 Points - Hands not clean/improperly washed/gloves not used properly; 113952, 113953.3, 113953.4, 113961, 113968, 113973 (b-f)

Inspector Observations: *REPEAT VIOLATION*

Manager cleaned front hand sink with gloves on then washed hands with gloves on.

[CA]: Employees shall properly wash hands when changing gloves, when changing tasks, prior to handling food, utensils or equipment, after touching body parts, and when contamination occurs or as required. Employees shall use designated hand sink, soap and disposable paper towels to wash hands.

[COS]: Specialist instructed Manager to remove gloves then properly wash hands prior to donning on new gloves.

K19 - 3 Points - Non-compliance with consumer advisory for raw or undercooked foods; 114012, 114093

Inspector Observations: *REPEAT VIOLATION*

The facility offers undercooked eggs on their menu and no consumer advisory is present.

[CA]: Provide a consumer advisory disclosure and reminder for all food items that can be ordered raw or undercooked.

K23 - 3 Points - Observed rodents, insects, birds, or animals; 114259.1, 114259.4, 114259.5

Inspector Observations: *REPEAT VIOLATION*

3 cockroaches on glue trap at the back prep area observed. No other activities found after thorough inspection of facility.

[CA]: Eliminate evidence of cockroach in a safe, effective and legal manner. Ensure food and food contact surfaces are protected from possible contamination at all times. Continue to follow pest control service recommendations and monitor for vermin activity. Seal all cracks, crevices, and gaps under any exterior doors to prevent entry and harborage of vermin.

K27 - 2 Points - Food not separated and unprotected; 113984(a-d,f), 113986, 114060, 114067(a,d,e,j), 114069(a,b), 114077, 114089.1(c), 114143(c)

Inspector Observations: *REPEAT VIOLATION*

Raw items such as raw shell eggs and raw meat stored on shelf above ready to eat food in walk in cooler.

[CA]: Properly store raw shell eggs beneath and raw meat items separate from ready to eat food

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K29 - 2 Points - Toxic substances improperly identified, stored, used; 114254, 114254.1, 114254.2

Inspector Observations: A can of Raid pest repellent was stored at the back prep area.

[CA]: Raid pest control is for household use only. Commercial establishments are not approved to use household pest control methods. Discontinue storage/use of unapproved pest repellents.

K30 - 2 Points - Food storage containers are not identified; 114047, 114049, 114051, 114053, 114055, 114067(h), 114069 (b)

Inspector Observations: *REPEAT VIOLATION*

Several food items (sugar, flour, salt, nachos, etc) are stored without lid or protection from contamination.

[CA]: Ensure unpackaged food is protected from contamination (overhead and general) during preparation, storage or display by use of lids, labeled containers, display cases, plastic wrap or dispensers.

K32 - 2 Points - Food improperly labeled & not honestly presented: 114087, 114089, 114089.1(a, b), 114090, 114093.1

Inspector Observations: Food container of white powder food product missing label with common food name.

[CA]: Ensure containers of food items that cannot be easily identified are labeled with the common name.

K34 - 2 Points - Warewashing facilities: not installed or maintained; no test strips; 114067(f,g), 114099, 114099.3, 114099.5, 114101(a), 114101.1, 114101.2, 114103, 114107, 114125

Inspector Observations: Missing testing equipment for Chlorine sanitizer.

[CA]: Testing equipment and materials (for ex: test strip) shall be provided to adequately measure the applicable sanitization method used during manual or mechanical warewashing.

K35 - 2 Points - Equipment, utensils - Unapproved, unclean, not in good repair, inadequate capacity; 114130, 114130.1, 114130.2, 114130.3, 114130.4, 114130.5, 114132, 114133, 114137, 114139, 114153, 114155, 114163, 114165, 114167, 114169, 114175, 114177, 114180, 114182

Inspector Observations: *REPEAT VIOLATION*

Per Manager, front prep line cooler is not cold holding Potentially Hazardous Food at 41F or below. Ice bath is setup on the prep top of the unit as a temporary option. Ambient temp measure at 55F.

[CA]: All cooling units shall be able to cold hold PHFs at 41F or below.

Follow-up By
06/13/2025

K38 - 2 Points - Inadequate ventilation and lighting in designated area; 114149, 114149.1, 114149.2, 114149.3, 114252, 114252.1

Inspector Observations: Employee restroom does not have adequate lighting.

[CA]: Provide adequate lighting at employee restroom.

K40 - 2 Points - Wiping cloths: improperly used and stored; 114135, 114185.1 114185.3(d,e)

Inspector Observations: Soiled wet wiping cloths stored on work surfaces without being placed back into their sanitizer buckets in between uses.

[CA]: Wiping cloths used for sanitizing work surfaces must be stored inside their sanitizer buckets containing at least 100ppm chlorine or 200ppm Quat sanitizer when not actively being used.

K45 - 2 Points - Floor, walls, ceilings: not built, not maintained, not clean; 114143(d), 114266, 114268, 114268.1, 114271, 114272

Inspector Observations: *REPEAT VIOLATION*

1. Accumulation of grease and debris on floors at front cook line.

[CA]: Clean noted area. Maintain floors clean.

2. Hole on floor observed near chest freezer.

[CA]: Repair hole. Maintain floors in good condition.

Performance-Based Inspection Questions

Needs Improvement - Consumer advisory for raw or undercooked foods.

Needs Improvement - Adequate handwash facilities: supplied or accessible.

Needs Improvement - Hands clean/properly washed/gloves used properly.

Needs Improvement - Food contact surfaces clean, sanitized.

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Measured Observations

Item	Location	Measurement	Comments
water	hand sink at front prep	100.00 Fahrenheit	
birria	steam table	163.00 Fahrenheit	
menudo	walk in cooler	80.00 Fahrenheit	active cooling began 1 hour prior to measurement
birria	walk in cooler	40.00 Fahrenheit	
water	3 comp sink	120.00 Fahrenheit	
frijoles	walk in cooler	39.00 Fahrenheit	
chicken	steam table	159.00 Fahrenheit	
carnitas	stove top	180.00 Fahrenheit	final reheating temp

Overall Comments:

A follow up inspection will be conducted by 06/13/2025 to verify compliance. The first follow up inspection is free of charge, any and all subsequent follow up inspections shall be charged at the approved hourly rate of \$298/hr, minimum of one hour.

Note:

-a public notice of application for ownership change is posted at the front door by Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control . Per Manager, there is no change of ownership with food retail.

-food safety manager certificate is expiring on 06/23/2025.

When required to determine compliance, a single reinspection will be conducted without additional charge. If subsequent reinspections are required, an hourly fee (minimum one hour) at the current rate approved by the Board of Supervisors will be assessed for each and every reinspection until the necessary changes or corrections are made. Unless otherwise noted by the inspector, all violations are to be corrected no later than **6/25/2025**. Any major change in menu or any change in ownership must have prior approval by this Department. This may require structural and/or equipment changes or remodeling to accommodate new operations.

Legend:

[CA]	Corrective Action
[COS]	Corrected on Site
[N]	Needs Improvement
[NA]	Not Applicable
[NO]	Not Observed
[PBI]	Performance-based Inspection
[PHF]	Potentially Hazardous Food
[PIC]	Person in Charge
[PPM]	Part per Million
[S]	Satisfactory
[SA]	Suitable Alternative
[TPHC]	Time as a Public Health Control



Received By: Jesus Flores
Manager

Signed On: June 11, 2025