Contact materials

All equipment, surfaces and materials which have direct contact with food
Main requirements for contact materials

When used according to their intended use, food contact materials should not:

• Release their constituents into food at levels harmful to human health
• Change food composition or organoleptic characteristics in an unacceptable way

What is Declaration of Compliance (DOC)?

• The food business operator must be aware of using only approved and suitable food contact materials

• To ensure this one must acquire Declaration of Compliance when purchasing materials, machines and utensils

• In EU, the DOC is mandatory for food contact plastics (including recycled plastics), active and intelligent materials, ceramics and regenerated cellulose film.

• [https://www.fsaie.ie/uploadedFiles/Food_Businesses/Food_Contact_Materials/DoC_example.pdf](https://www.fsaie.ie/uploadedFiles/Food_Businesses/Food_Contact_Materials/DoC_example.pdf)
What are hazards posed by contact materials?

- Migration of chemicals from food contact materials can occur. Toxic symptoms in humans are not always immediate. Accumulation of chemicals is gradual.

Examples:
- Bisphenol A or phthalates from plastics or surface materials can disturb human hormone function
- Heavy metals from ceramics, dyes or metal containers cumulate into human organs causing different symptoms
- Volatile substances from plastics, paper and carton can cause smell and taste defects into food and are also carcinogenic
High risk for migration

• Foods with high fat and/or moisture content
• Foods with long shelf life
• Foods exposed to heat in its packaging
When buying contact materials

• The food contact material must be sold as being suitable for the intended use.

• **The buyer** must be aware of the requirements that have been set for the contact materials

• **The seller** knows what purpose the material is to be used

• **The food business operator** is responsible for ensuring that the material is used correctly and in accordance with the instructions given
Traceability

• Traceability system should allow the producer to track the contact materials one step forwards and one step backwards