

## Prepare and mix spice and herb blends

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### Overview

This standard is about selecting, preparing and blending a variety of spices and herbs to produce spice mixes ready for cooking, for example:

- dry spice mixes
- paste e.g. Thai green curry

Spices might include cumin and ginger while herbs could be fresh basil or coriander. The standard covers the preparation methods used to make spice and herb blends as well as cooking techniques where applicable.

This standard focuses on the technical knowledge and skills required to prepare and mix spice and herb blends; however it should be assessed in the wider context of safe and hygienic working practices. It is recommended that the following NOS, selected as appropriate to the job role and organisation, are referenced in conjunction with the technical skills and knowledge for the standard:

- Maintain basic food safety in catering
- Maintain food safety in a kitchen environment
- Provide basic advice on allergens to customers
- Minimise the risk of allergens to customers

When you have completed this standard you will be able to demonstrate your understanding of and your ability to:

- Prepare and mix spice and herb blends

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### Performance criteria

You must be able to:

1. Select the type and quantity of ingredients needed for the spice mix / herb blend
2. Check the ingredients to make sure they meet quality standards
3. Choose and use tools and equipment correctly to prepare and mix spice and herb blends
4. Combine the ingredients according to spice mix or herb blend requirements
5. Process the spice mix / herb blends to meet requirements
6. Ensure the spice mix / herb blend has the correct flavour, colour, aroma, consistency and quantity
7. Ensure the spice mix / herb blend is at the correct temperature for holding and serving
8. Store any cooked or uncooked spice mix / herb blends not for immediate use in a way which preserves the flavour, colour, aroma and consistency in line with food safety regulations

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### Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

1. How to select the correct type, quality and quantity of ingredients to meet spice mix / herb blend requirements
2. What quality points to look for in spice mix ingredients
3. Why and to whom you should report any problems with the spices, herbs or other ingredients
4. What the correct tools and equipment are and the reasons for using them when carrying out the required preparation and cooking methods
5. How to carry out each of the preparation methods according to spice mix / herb blend requirements
6. The correct temperatures for cooking/toasting spices
7. How to identify when individual spices and spice mixes have the correct colour, flavour, consistency and quantity
8. How to finish and store spice mixes / herb blends
9. How to minimise and correct common faults in spice mixes / herb blends
10. How to balance the flavour, texture, colour, consistency and quality of the final spice mix / herb blend
11. What quality points relate to spice mixes / herb blends
12. The correct temperatures and conditions for holding and storing spice mixes / herb blends
13. How to store spice mixes / herb blends

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**Scope/range**

**1. Ingredients**

- 1.1 fresh spices and herbs
- 1.2 dried spices and herbs
- 1.3 vegetables

**2. Preparation methods**

- 2.1 cleaning and trimming
- 2.2 weighing/measuring
- 2.3 chopping
- 2.4 crushing
- 2.5 pounding
- 2.6 grinding
- 2.7 mixing

**3. Equipment**

- 3.1 spice grinding machine
- 3.2 pestle and mortar
- 3.3 knives

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