

Indenting

Indent is a document stating the requirements of goods with the quantity required along with its specification. It is sent to the store department, which in turn procures the items, and dispatches the same to the department on the day specified.

It is a formal communication between the kitchen and the stores department which leads to purchase.

The basic fundamental of a food operation is to turn a raw food item into an edible product by applying or extracting heat from it. The success of any food service operation is dependent on how the raw ingredients are procured, processed, cooked, and then served to the customer to generate profit. If there is a flaw in any one of the steps, it will affect the profit margin of any organization. Also, for volume catering establishments the principles of indenting would be based on the number of people an establishment is catering to. In volume cooking, one has to look at the menu in totality and only then can he/she write a detailed product list that needs to be prepared.

Major factors effecting Indenting

- 1) Yield of a product: The yield of a particular commodity has a huge impact on the indenting for volumes. All the recipes should be updated with the yields, as we need to indent for the net weight in a recipe and not for the usable weight. Similarly, when a product is ordered for a particular recipe, the cuts listed in the recipe must be strictly followed to adhere to the costs and quality. The cheapest item might prove to be expensive if the end yield of the product is low. Some suppliers now even sell pre-portioned meat so that the buyer gets an advantage and there is a consistency in the product quality and cost.
- 2) Type of event: The type of event for which the food is required also plays a major role in the indenting of food. A wedding function would have a huge range of menu catering to up to 1,000 people or sometimes even more. When the variety is more, the quantities consumed will be comparatively less as most of the guests would like to taste most of the varieties.

- 3) Regional influence: Regional food also plays an important role in deciding the indenting for a particular item. People from Bengal would love to eat seafood, while people from north India would prefer chicken. The type of dish (dry or gravy) also plays an important part in deciding the quantity to be produced.
- 4) Service style: The style of service, whether buffet or a la carte, also determines the indenting and portion size of a dish. It is easy to predict the quantities for a fixed portion size, but the challenge arises when food is laid out on a buffet for self-service. In many institutional caterings a buffet is controlled by the catering managers and strict portion control is exercised over expensive food items, but in hotels, the food on a buffet cannot be controlled.

Other factors

- 5) The number of persons to feed; the larger number of people the lesser the indent quantity becomes.
- 6) Number of items on the menu
- 7) Choice provided on the menu
- 8) Number of non-veg items on the menu and its vegetarian alternatives
- 9) Number of vegetarians
- 10) Beef, mutton, chicken eaters
- 11) Whether or not Indian bread is there or only rice is included
- 12) Choice of desserts provided
- 13) Selling price of the menu
- 14) Mise-en-place to be maintained
- 15) Par stock and closing stock

INDENT SHEET

PAX: _____

Date- _____

Menu

S.No	Ingredients	1	2	3	4	5	Total
I	Non-veg items like fish, chicken, mutton etc.	Qty for dish	Total of all the rows				
II	Dairy products like milk, curd, ghee, paneer, butter, cream, khoya and eggs.	no 1	no 2	no 3	no 4	no 5	
III							
IV	Perishables -vegetables and fruits						
V	Non-perishables (flour, lentil, rice, oil, spices- whole and powdered)						
VI	Any tinned products Misc. -Sugar, dry fruits etc.						

Practical difficulties /Limitations while indenting for volume feeding

- a) The perishability of produce Food, whether raw or cooked, is a perishable commodity and has a limited life. The caterer, therefore, has to ensure that he/she buys produce in correct quality and quantity in relation to estimated demand, and that it is correctly stored and processed.
- b) The unpredictability of the volume of business Sales instability is typical of most catering establishments. This causes basic problems with regard to the quantities of commodities to be purchased and prepared as well as to the staffing required.
- c) The unpredictability of the menu mix To add to the caterer's problems is the fact that in order to be competitive and to satisfy a particular market, it is often necessary to offer a wide choice of menu items to the customer.
- d) **The short cycle of catering operations** The speed at which catering operations take place, relative to many other industries, allows little time for many control tasks.
- e) **Departmentalization** Many catering establishments have several production and service departments, offering different products and operating under different policies. The coordination between such departments becomes a challenge in itself.
- f) **Uneven Yield** The yield of many ingredients varies considerably during preparation and production of food in different occasions.
- g) Non availability of some ingredients in the market, leads to pressure on other food items in the menu.
- h) It is very difficult to predict with 100% accuracy about the number of people, their likes and dislikes, eating habits, diet, etc.
- i) People eat in varied proportions.
- j) A large number of people have to be fed in a limited time
- k) Chef has to work within tight budgets and yet has to meet the high expectations of consumers.

Portion sizes of various items for different types of volume feeding

A proper forecasting of quantities needed in production and controlling portion size are two essentials of good quality food control. Portion size varies according to the type of meal, type of customer, cost of food, flavour and portion appearance. An individual doing

hard work eats more than another doing sedentary task. Giving liberal quantities of less costly foods and small one of expensive foods can be practiced.