

SAFELIVERY - Safer food delivery and distribution service during and after the COVID-19 pandemic

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Popularity of food delivery and takeaway has significantly increased during COVID-19 pandemic due to consumers' concerns about virus exposure risks and difficulties in access to food due to stop of economic activities. On the other hand, even before the pandemic crisis the food delivery sector was expected to show an annual growth rate of 8.2% by 2024 (Statista Market Report 2020). However, the sector is inefficiently regulated in terms of food safety issues, and several risks are associated with human factors and equipment during food delivery. The focus of the SAFELIVERY project is to develop innovative food delivery services and protocols suited to reduce the risk of food surfaces and packaging contamination by biological agents during preparation and delivery of "Ready-To-Eat foods". This goal will be achieved by providing enhanced HACCP protocols to manage/control risks related to potential human factors and delivery conditions which are not currently considered. Such protocols will be developed also on the basis of information collected through surveys and interviews with consumers and food handlers on current practices in food delivery, and microbiological analyses of samples collected at various critical points, e.g. food packaging, delivery boxes and vehicles. Also, a prototype of antitampering boxes with electronic locks, which are closed once food has been put inside and can be opened only by customers who receive a key code on their smartphone, will be developed and tested with stakeholders, i.e. restaurateurs, deliverers and consumers. SAFELIVERY project is funded by EIT Food, the innovation community on Food of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), a body of the EU, under Horizon2020, the EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation. As part of the EIT's Crisis Response Initiative, it contributes to the European Union's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.