Inventory Tips

Here are some inventory basics:
- Reduce overuse, theft, and the amount of money invested in storage and handling of inventory by keeping track of inventory; this also alerts management to slow-moving items
- Keep track of food that is wasted, returned, or used for employee meals
- Review the prices on the inventory guide and the product numbers every few months
- Peruse the storage areas frequently for items that are not used (removed from the menu, etc) and either use the items, when at all possible, or remove them from the area

Manual inventory
The following advice will help if you use a manual inventory system:
- Set up your inventory guide to match your main storage areas—dry food, refrigerator, freezer, etc
  - Design the spreadsheet so you can tally each food as it is counted in all kitchen locations (for example, you may find some ground beef in the freezer and some in the refrigerator thawing)
  - Leave some space on your inventory guide in case new items were ordered since the guide was last updated
- Have one person at the counter and another person recording the items; some people find it helpful to use a tape recorder and then later transcribe the counts from the tape
- Mark the rack or bin in some way once you have counted a section, so you can keep track of what you have done
- Take inventory early in the day or at the end of the day, when food preparation is completed and no more orders are expected
- Spot check the inventory several times if you have assigned new employees to take inventory, especially during their orientation

Item	Unit	Count	Cost	Extension	Product Number
Dry Goods Storeroom—Bakery and Dessert					
Cake Mix, Chocolate	5 # box	3 boxes	$9.99	$29.97	4876967

Perpetual inventory
Perpetual inventories make the balance on hand of any given item knowable at any time. They also make it easy to notice when something is missing from the supply that is not accounted for. Perpetual inventories were once only used for large organizations, because they take a good amount of time when completed manually. However, computer programs have made these inventories much easier to complete.

Follow these tips if you use a perpetual inventory system:
- Check inventory by using a manual method occasionally, when using a computer-generated perpetual inventory
- Make sure that every food item has a "bin card" attached to the storage rack or container (see example)