

Food Safety Fact Sheet

Cooking Foods

INTRODUCTION

Cooking is a critical control point, or a point at which reaching proper internal temperatures can help ensure that a food is safe to eat. Cooks must know the proper temperatures for cooking food, monitor internal cooking temperatures, and record cooking temperatures.

HERE ARE THE FACTS

The appropriate temperature for cooking foods is based on temperatures that will kill bacteria associated with that specific food. That is why, for example, poultry products have a higher cooking temperature than beef. It is important to know the temperature requirements for menu items used in your school nutrition program.

APPLICATION

Cook foods to the appropriate internal temperature.

- 135 °F for 15 seconds
 - ◊ Fresh, frozen, or canned fruits and vegetables cooked for hot holding
 - ◊ Ready-to-eat food that has been commercially processed
- 145 °F for 15 seconds
 - ◊ Beef, pork, and seafood
- 155 °F for 15 seconds
 - ◊ Ground products containing beef, pork, or fish
 - ◊ Fish nuggets or sticks
 - ◊ Cubed or Salisbury steaks
 - ◊ Eggs cooked for hot holding
- 165 °F for 15 seconds
 - ◊ Poultry
 - ◊ Stuffed beef, pork, or seafood
 - ◊ Pasta stuffed with beef, eggs, pork, or seafood such as lasagna or manicotti

Monitor cooking temperatures.

- Check food temperatures with clean, sanitized, and calibrated thermometer.
- Avoid inserting the thermometer into pockets of fat or near bones when taking internal temperatures.
- Take at least two internal temperatures from each batch of food.





Cooking Foods cont.

- Insert thermometer into the thickest part of the food, which usually is in the center.
- Record the temperature and the time the temperature was checked.

Take corrective action if appropriate temperatures are not met, which usually means that cooking is continued until the temperature at the thickest part of the food is appropriate.

Remember, follow state or local health department requirements.

References

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