

Food Flow

Food Flow

There are eight stages of food flow through your establishment:

1. Purchasing and receiving
2. Storage
3. Preparation (including defrosting)
4. Cooking
5. Cooling
6. Hot and cold holding
7. Reheating
8. Serving

1. Purchasing and receiving

- All food must come from approved sources
- Homemade or uninspected food is not allowed
- Inspect all incoming food for torn, damaged or stained boxes
- Inspect the condition of the delivery truck
- Check the temperature of incoming food. Refrigerated foods must be at 4°C (40°F) or less. Frozen food must be at -18°C (0°F) or less

2. Storage

- General
 - Practice FIFO (First In, First Out)
 - Store chemical products away from food products
 - When foods are repackaged, clearly label and date container
 - All food containers must be properly covered
- Refrigeration storage
 - All refrigeration units must have an accurate indicating thermometer which is readily visible
 - Temperatures must be maintained at 4°C (40°F) or less
 - Store all raw foods below cooked or ready to eat foods to prevent cross contamination
 - Avoid packing the refrigerator too full to allow proper air circulation

- Freezer storage
 - Must be maintained at -18°C (0°F) or less
- Dry storage
 - Keep food at least 15cm (6in) off the floor to facilitate cleaning and to easily identify rodent problem

3. Preparation

- Wash your hands before beginning preparation and in between tasks
- Prepare food in small batches and limit the time food is left in the Danger Zone (4°C to 60°C / 40°F to 140°F)
- Prevent cross contamination by cleaning and sanitizing utensils and work surfaces in between tasks or by using colour-coded cutting boards for different foods
- Prepare the food as close to serving time as possible

Thawing/defrosting

Food can be safely defrosted:

1. In the refrigerator
2. Under cold running water
3. In the microwave on the defrost cycle

Use the defrosted/thawed item within two days



4. Cooking

Product	Cook food to a minimum internal temperature of:			
	Cooking temperatures Temperatures to be reached for at least 15 seconds		Reheating temperatures Temperatures to be reached within two hours for at least 15 seconds	
Poultry – whole	82°C	180°F	74°C	165°F
Poultry – pieces	74°C	165°F	74°C	165°F
Poultry – ground	74°C	165°F	74°C	165°F
Mixture of food containing poultry, egg, meat, fish or other hazardous foods	74°C	165°F	74°C	165°F
Pork and pork products	71°C	160°F	71°C	160°F
Ground beef	71°C	160°F	71°C	160°F
Fish	70°C	158°F	70°C	158°F

Microwave cooking

- If the microwave does not have a rotating base, stop the cooking process and turn the food occasionally to prevent hot and cold spots
- Check internal temperature at 3 different sites
- Place thicker portions of food toward the exterior of the microwave dish
- Ensure the containers are microwave-safe



5. Cooling

Food should be cooled from 60°C (140°F) to 4°C (40°F) within four to six hours. It can take hours or even days for large quantities of food to cool to appropriate temperatures.

You can reduce cooling times by:

- Placing pots of food in an ice water bath
- Dividing large quantities of food into smaller containers that are approximately 10cm (4in) in depth
- Stirring frequently
- Slicing or dividing large cuts of meat into smaller pieces.
- Placing in the refrigerator and, once it cools to 4°C(40°F), cover the container

6. Hot and cold holding

Proper hot holding

- Maintain temperature of hazardous food above 60°C (140°F)
- Check internal temperature of the food using a metal stem probe thermometer every two hours
- Never cook or reheat food in hot holding equipment



Proper cold holding

- Keep food cold in refrigerated display units or on ice. The internal temperature of the food must be maintained at 4°C (40°F) or less.

7. Reheating

- Reheat cold hazardous food to original cooking temperature
- Reheat quickly on the stove, in the oven or in the microwave
- Never reheat slowly over several hours in hot holding units.

8. Serving

- Prevent cross-contamination by ensuring servers take appropriate personal hygiene measures (e.g. hand washing, no direct contact with food)
- Ensure serving utensils are clean and sanitized
- Do not stack plates when serving meals to customers
- Ensure service area is kept clean and regularly wipe down the menus

If transporting foods, ensure vehicles are clean and foods are held at proper hot or cold holding temperatures.

Review questions

1. When cooking ground beef hamburgers, cook them until

- a. The internal temperature of the food is 71°C/160°F
- b. The meat is grey or brown
- c. The juices run clear
- d. The internal temperature of the food is 60°C/140°F

2. HACCP

- a. Breaks down a recipe into steps
- b. Identifies critical control points
- c. Uses preventive measures at the most dangerous steps
- d. All of the above

3. A critical control point is:

- a. A point where a preventative measure can be applied
- b. A point where loss of control results in an unacceptable health risk
- c. A step which will prevent or eliminate a hazard to food
- d. All of the above

