



Food Safety Preparing, Cooking & Storing

Safety and Environmental Management System

SEMS 4-10

It is imperative to know what safe food methods to use when performing the steps in the “flow of food” process. These are the time periods when harmful bacteria are most likely to grow and the threat of foodborne illness could become a reality.

NOTE: Use disposable gloves during all stages of this process. Use them, change them often and wash hands after each use and before using another pair.

Why is it necessary to handle food properly?

To prevent the growth of harmful bacteria caused by:

Contamination: anything harmful in food, especially those rich in proteins such as meats, that can cause a foodborne illness; bacteria or other microorganisms in food naturally, hair, metal bits, shavings, glass or dirt that carry these microorganisms. Some of these can be seen, but some can't such as the microorganisms.

Bacteria can get there a variety of ways:

- At the growth stage
- During the processing stage
- During the packing or delivery stage

Proper cooking temperatures will kill these microorganisms.

Cross-contamination: harmful bacteria that “cross” over from one food source into another. It can occur by:

- Improper food handling: not cleaning and sanitizing a cutting board after use and before using again
- Improper hygiene: food handler not washing hands between food handling tasks

What are the ways to handle food properly to prevent contamination and cross-contamination?

- Control the amount of time food spends in the food temperature danger zone
- Do not take food out of storage until it is ready for use
- Work in small “batches” of food, not large quantities that sit out waiting to be prepped
- Always use clean utensils and cutting surfaces. Always clean and sanitize after each use.
- Use proper thawing techniques:
 - Refrigeration: on the bottom shelf so it will not drip on other foods
 - Potable (drinking) water at 70 degrees F or less and for no more than 2 hours
 - Cooking: for hamburger patties, foods designed for that purpose

Only thaw food items using these methods. Do not leave food sitting out to thaw. Items will thaw unevenly. The outside will thaw first, and then bacteria growth begins when it reaches the food temperature zone while the inside is still thawing.



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Remember to use the “first in-first out” method of selecting food items to use

What are the proper cooking temperatures of foods?

These listed temperatures are the minimum to use.

The foods should be checked constantly for the proper temperature. Always clean and sanitize the thermometer after each use.

Final Cook-to-Temperature Charts

FINAL POULTRY TEMPERATURE: 165°

Oven temperatures may vary. Use a thermometer to ensure that poultry is fully cooked to 165 degrees. Insert thermometer into thickest part of the meat.

FINAL PORK TEMPERATURE: 150°

To prevent overcooking and dryness, stop cooking 5 degrees below target temperature (145°) and rest meat 5-10 minutes.

FINAL BEEF TEMPERATURES

Rare:	Very red, warm center	125°
Medium:	Pink, warm center	130°
Well:	Pink, very warm center	145°+

Ground Beef: 160°

Temperatures listed are final target temperatures. To prevent overcooking and dryness, stop cooking 5 degrees below target temperature and rest meat 5-10 minutes. Beef doneness is a personal preference; adjust accordingly.

FINAL IRRADIATED GROUND BEEF TEMPERATURES

Medium:	Pink, warm center	130°
Well:	Pink, very warm center	145°+

To keep irradiated ground beef safe, keep it separate from other raw meat and poultry. Use this temperature chart as a doneness guide for irradiated ground beef—or simply cook it the way you like it. Beef doneness is a personal preference; adjust accordingly. If using regular ground beef, you'll still need to cook to 160 degrees.

FINAL LAMB TEMPERATURES

Medium:	Pink, warm center	130°
Well:	Pink, very warm center	145°+

Temperatures listed are final target temperatures. To prevent overcooking and dryness, stop cooking 5 degrees below target temperature and rest meat 5-10 minutes. Lamb doneness is a personal preference; adjust accordingly.

FINAL SEAFOOD TEMPERATURE: 145°

To prevent overcooking and dryness for fish or seafood, stop cooking at 130° and rest seafood 2 minutes. The temperature will continue to rise as the seafood rests.

Some seafood requires a higher temp; see individual recipes.



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What are proper methods to use to serve food safely?

Never touch food or food contact surfaces with the hands, even with disposable gloves.

Place serving utensils with the handle pointing out of the food container toward the person to be served.

Check temperature of holding line to make sure it is at the safe holding temperature: 140 Degrees F

Stir food continually to insure all the food in the pan remains at 140 degrees F or higher.

Always use an ice scoop for ice, never touch ice with hands, and never use a glass

Provide new plates for each return trip to the food line

How are foods to be cooled after serving and how should they be reused?

From hot holding, food should be cooled within 2 hours to 40 degrees F or less by using these methods:

Breakdown thick foods (chili, beans) into shallow pans of 2" or less and refrigerate

Liquid products (soups) should be placed into pans of 3" inches or less

Thick meats (roasts, hams) should be cut and placed into shallow pans

Place in a ice bath

Stir or agitate frequently

Use stainless steel containers, they transfer heat better than plastic

Always check temperature, cover, date and place in cooler on top shelves

Reheat used food items to 165 degrees F quickly to kill potentially harmful bacteria. Never reuse more than once.

Never mix raw food with prepared food; it could contaminate the prepared food.

REMEMBER the purpose for these rules is to prevent foodborne illness by:

Keeping food out of the food danger zone (40-140 degrees F) as much as possible

Preventing food from becoming contaminated.