

Wisconsin Food Code FACT SHEET

#10: Checking Food Product Temperatures

- Using a food thermometer to check product temperatures is the only sure way to know if your food has reached the proper temperature during different food preparation processes like cooking, cooling, and holding.
- Sanitize the thermometer each time before use to prevent cross contamination.
- Allow thermometer to return to ambient range before checking the next product.
- Proper placement of the thermometer is important – place it in thickest part of the food, away from bones and fat. Check food in the center of large pans or containers. Also check the top of food products that haven't been stirred or may have been overfilled.
- Record your results.
- Calibrate thermometers routinely using an approved method, and especially when they have been dropped.
- Use only metal, long-stemmed thermometers to check internal temperatures. They can be dial or digital. Do not use liquid-filled glass thermometers to probe products.
- Use a thermometer that has a thin probe tip when checking thin foods like hamburgers.
- Infrared non-contact thermometers only give surface temperatures. The surface reading may not reflect the internal temperature.
- Keep several thermometers available at all times in case of breakage, loss, damage, and for multiple uses.



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