



Thermometers Calibration and Appropriate Uses

Food thermometers are the only accurate method for determining if a food product is stored at or cooked to a safe temperature. Color is not a reliable indicator.

-Make sure thermometers are clean and sanitary before and after each use.

-When cooking, take the temperature in the center of the food after the needle has been still for 15 seconds and in several places.

-A food thermometer should also be used to ensure that cooked food is held at safe temperatures until served.

-Cook all potentially hazardous foods at approved temperatures for the required duration. Discard samples and food products after 2 hours out of refrigeration and use an accurate thermometer.

-Cold foods should be held at 41°F or below. Hot food should be kept hot at 135°F or above.

-If only measuring the temperature of ready-to-eat food, the probe or stem only needs to be cleaned between uses.

Check the accuracy of all food thermometers:

- At least once a day
- Every time it is dropped
- After being exposed to extreme temperatures

Activity

Demonstrate the proper way to measure the temperature of different food products.

1. Deli meats wrap around the thermometer
2. Head of lettuce thermometer inserted into center
3. Leafy greens
4. Milk
5. Frozen peas



Calibrating a Thermometer

Ice Point Method:
best if measuring cold foods

1. Fill an insulated cup with crushed ice and water. Allow the mixture to stabilize to 32°F, which usually takes about five minutes.
2. Insert the thermometer into the center of the cup (not touching the sides or bottom).
3. If the thermometer indicator does not measure 32°F, adjust the thermometer to read 32°F.

Boiling Point Method:
best if measuring hot foods

1. Heat distilled water to a rolling boil in a container.
2. Insert the thermometer into the center of the container (not touching the sides or bottom).
3. If the thermometer indicator does not measure 212°F, adjust the thermometer to read 212°F.