NC STATE EXTENSION

Food Policy

Cooking Temperatures

To ensure pathogens are killed during the cooking process, it is recommended to check temperature with a thermometer, as color and texture are not an indicators of safe cook temperatures. Measure temperatures at the thickest spot, avoiding bone, fat or gristle. Stir liquid based foods such as soups or stews before checking temperature. Record keeping while preparing food for an Extension event can be helpful in keeping food safe.

Recommended Cooking Temperatures

Food	Temperature and Holding Time
Roast beef	130°F for 112 min., 145°F for 4 min.
Canned foods (soup, vegetables, etc.)	135°F for 15 seconds
Ham, fully cooked	135°F for 15 seconds
Ham, uncooked (fresh or smoked)	145°F for 15 seconds
Beef, pork, veal and lamb (chops, steaks)	145°F for 15 seconds
Fish (include mollusks and shellfish)	145°F for 15 seconds
Eggs for immediate service	145°F for 15 seconds
Eggs not for immediate service	158°F instantaneous, 155°F for 17 seconds
Comminuted meat (ex. ground beef, chicken nuggets)	158°F instantaneous, 155°F for 17 seconds
Stuffed pasta or casseroles	165°F instantaneous
Leftovers	165°F instantaneous
Poultry (ground, parts, whole, stuffing)	165°F instantaneous
Wild game animals	165°F instantaneous

Record Keeping

Consider creating and using simple forms to keeping records for the following activities:
- **Cooking:** Temperatures taken during cooking
- **Hot or cold holding:** Check and record temperatures every hour while holding or serving

Food	Temperature	Time	Notes
Chicken leg	165°F	3:30 p.m.	Finished cooking
	152°F	4:45 p.m.	
	137°F	6 p.m.	Dinner served
	95°F	7:30 p.m.	Event over; leftover chicken wrapped, labeled and refrigerated

safe plates