Food is safely cooked when it reaches a high enough internal temperature to kill the harmful bacteria that cause foodborne illness. Use a food thermometer to measure the internal temperature of cooked foods. Refrigerate foods quickly because cold temperatures slow the growth of harmful bacteria. Illness-causing microbes grow rapidly between 70°F and 125°F.

"Danger Zone" 41°F - 135°F

Cook, refrigerate, and hold all food to these minimum internal temperatures as measured with a food thermometer. When taking temperatures of hot- or cold-holding foods and foods in refrigeration, be sure to note them on log sheets or delivery invoices.

Minimum Internal Temperature

- Poultry, Stuffing, Casseroles, Reheating: 165°F
- Egg Dishes and Ground Meat: 155°F
- Beef, Pork, Lamb, Veal Roasts, Steaks, Chops: 145°F
- Hot foods holding, Plant-based foods: 135°F
- Holding/Refrigeration: 41°F
- Frozen food/Freezer: 0°F

FOODS MOST LIKELY TO BECOME UNSAFE TO EAT (TCS):

- Milk & Dairy Products
- Meat (beef, pork, lamb)
- Tofu, other soy protein, and synthetic ingredients.
- Sliced melons, cut tomatoes and cut leafy greens
- Untreated garlic and oil mixtures
- Poultry
- Shellfish & crustaceans
- Heat-treated plant food (cooked rice, beans, and vegetables)
- Raw shell eggs (not pastuerized & treated for Salmonella)
- Sprouts and sprout seeds

For more information, visit http://clevelandhealth.org/network/environment/food_safety.php
Food must be cooled using a 2 step process:

1. Cool from 135°F to 70°F within two (2) hours using aggressive cooling methods
2. Cool from 70° to 41° within four (4) hours

Food must be reheated to 165°F within two hours for hot-holding.

**REHEATING**

- **REDUCE FOOD SIZE**
  - Separating food into smaller containers (4 inches deep or less), and covering them loosely, is a good way to allow the heat to escape and cool food portions evenly.

- **BLAST CHILL**
  - Blast chillers are one example of an appliance dedicated to cooling food fast. There are a variety of settings depending on the size of portions, in addition to being able to cool large amounts of food fast.

- **ICE WATER BATH**
  - Surround food containers with ice water to allow fast cooling. For efficient cooling, the ice water should be as high as, or slightly below, the level of food in the container. Do not submerge food containers under water. Make sure water cannot enter the containers while cooling.

- **STIR**
  - Periodically stirring loose or liquid foods (i.e. soup) can help even out cooling.

- **ICE PADDLES OR ICE CUBES**
  - Using ice paddles or even adding ice cubes as an ingredient can help cool foods evenly and quickly.

For more information, visit [http://clevelandhealth.org/network/environment/food_safety.php](http://clevelandhealth.org/network/environment/food_safety.php)