

PRODUCT TEMPERATURE CHECK PROCEDURES

FROZEN FOOD

Always temp frozen food first, as it takes longer for a thermometer to reach 0°F.

1. Take one sample temperature
 - a. Sandwich thermometer between two pieces of meat
 - b. Get the probe as close to the product as possible.
 - c. If you are using a temperature gauge gun simply aim and point it within a few inches of the product to get an accurate temperature. If you are not sure try a second time.
2. Leave the thermometer in the sample while you load non-perishable items
3. Return and record the sample temperature in your retail temperature log. This is what will then be entered in MealConnect

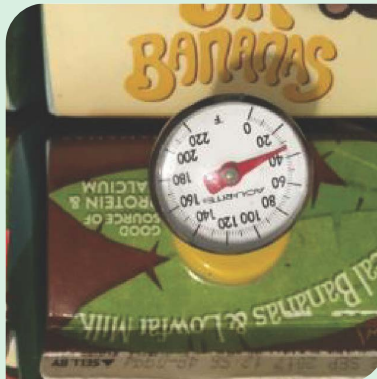
REFRIGERATED FOOD

Verify the temperature of the product in the cooler before leaving. Below are three possible methods to obtain an accurate temperature reading.



FOLD OVER METHOD

1. Place the thermometer in the middle of the bagged product and fold
2. Wait 20 seconds
3. Record temperature



SANDWICH METHOD

1. Place thermometer between products (sandwiched)
2. Wait 20 seconds
3. Record temperature



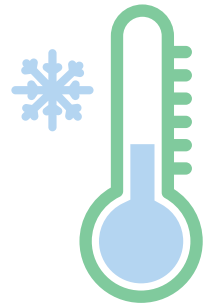
Destructive Method

- (Least Recommended)
1. Choose an item soft enough to insert the thermometer w/o damaging the probe, and look for already damaged product
 2. Insert thermometer probe
 3. Wait 20 seconds
 4. Record temperature



ADDITIONAL TIPS FOR TAKING TEMPERATURES:

- Read the external temperature of the refrigerator or freezer before entering.
- If the temp is above 38° or 0° respectively, the door may have been open recently, which could affect product temps.
- Take the temperature of products away from the door - closest to the refrigerator unit. If one product fails try another. (Do not reject all product if one fails)



REJECTING PRODUCT AT THE STORE:

- Do not accept product outside of safe temperature range
- Reject all cooler product above 41°
- Leave any unfrozen product (above 0°) to continue freezing until next pickup
- Reject any food previously served on an unattended buffet line or self-service buffet
- Reject any foods that have been cooked and reheated by the donor
- If product is continually out of temperature upon pick-up, contact the Network Standards and Capacity Team

TRANSPORTATION:

Tip - the colder it is when you pick it up, the colder it will be when it gets to your agency

- Use either active (refrigerated truck) or passive (freezer blanket, coolers, etc.) refrigeration when transporting food from store to delivery point.
- Schedule transport time for the coolest part of the day (in summer)
- Product under passive refrigeration climbs 4°-8° per hour on average
- Product must be received at your facility within safe temperature ranges
- Frozen product between 0° and 32°F
- Product can climb in temperature and remain safe as long as it does not exceed 32°F
- Cooler products must remain below 41° at all times



WHEN AT THE AGENCY

1. Get products in the cooler and freezer (quickly and safely)
2. Temp products using the same methods as shown above - allowing time for accurate readings
3. Discard any frozen product received above 32°
4. Discard any refrigerated product received above 41°
5. Record product temperatures in the Food Temp Log and then into MealConnect



FOOD SAFETY HANDLING PER FEEDING AMERICA GUIDELINES

COLLECTION OF FOODS AT THE DONORS:

Keeping foods out of the temperature danger zone, the temperature range between 41°F–135°F, will prevent temperature abuse. Holding, transporting and distributing foods in the temperature zone allows harmful bacteria to grow and cause the food to become unsafe. Temperature abuse of foods, having foods out of the cooler or freezer too long, can cause them to become unsafe in short periods of time. It is very important that you have the correct tools to ensure food is kept cold during pick-up and transportation, which include:

- an accurate, calibrated thermometer;
- refrigerated truck

OR

- an accurate, calibrated thermometer;
- sufficient thermal blankets to cover all of the cold foods;
- or coolers with ice packs

Food that is not at a safe temperature can be an indication that it may not be safe to eat, so it is essential that you have an accurate thermometer with you when making pick-ups allowing you to take and record the refrigerated food temperatures.

Record the product temperature taken, so you have records for your Food Bank/Agency. If you are not sure about the safety of a food item, then it should not be accepted at pick up. Food previously served on an unattended buffet line or self-service are not acceptable for donation. (This is due to exposure to the general public while it is available on the buffet line.) Foods that have been cooked and reheated by the donor are not acceptable for donation.

SAFE TRANSPORTATION OF FOODS TO AGENCY FROM DONORS:

When transporting foods from your donors, and when distributing to your clients, the food needs to be kept at 41° F or below. Temperatures of refrigerated foods must be taken when the food reaches the Food Bank/Agency and recorded on the Receiving Form.

**Thank you for helping keep our
food insecure neighbors healthy!**

