

Cooling and Cold-Holding Checklists

Use these checklists to ensure food is cooled and maintained at proper temperatures

REFRIGERATION UNITS

Make sure:

- Door gaskets are in good condition
- All doors close tightly (including self-closing doors)
- All food is stored in a way that allows for adequate air circulation
- Incoming cold air is not blocked by pans, plastics, etc.
- Food is not covered while cooling

ICE BATH COLD HOLD

Make sure:

- All food is completely submerged in the ice
- A large container is used to make sure ice water keeps all sides of food cold
- Ice is replaced as needed

COLD-TOP

Make sure:

- Food is stored in metal containers
- Food containers are covered with metal lids or an ice blanket
- Food is stored at or below the fill line in the cold containers/inserts
- Foods stored in cold tops and reach-ins is 41 °F or colder
- Lid is closed during slower service times

OTHER COLD-HOLD TIPS

- Place cold-top foods in the freezer 15 minutes before placing them on top of cold prep cooler
- Cool foods in ice baths before putting them in refrigeration units; cooling hot foods in refrigerators can be hard on refrigerator units

CHECKING TEMPS

Make sure to:

- Calibrate thermometers every day
- Check food temperatures at least every 3 hours
- Check food temperatures every hour during the cooling process
- Regularly check equipment temperatures
- Teach all food workers how to check and record food temperatures and have them share in the responsibility

MAINTENANCE

Make sure to:

- Calibrate thermometers every day
- Keep condenser coils, fans, and motors clean and free of debris
- Conduct maintenance on condensers at least once every month



COOLING means **reducing** food temperatures to 41 °F. **COLD HOLDING** means **keeping** food at 41 °F or below.