



The Everclean Report

A Cook's Best Friend

Special Interest Articles:

Food Thermometers

Thermometer Calibration

RTE over raw

Millions of people get sick from dangerous bacteria in food every year. Food is safely protected when it is properly stored, cooked, cooled, reheated, held, etc.

Food thermometers help keep food safe, avoid overcooking, and allow a safe and flavorful meal. Many people assume that they know when food is finished cooking just by "eye-balling it." The only reliable way to ensure food has been cooked to a safe temperature is to measure it. According to the USDA 1 out of every 4 hamburgers turn brown in the middle before reaching a safe internal temperature.

How to use a Food Thermometer

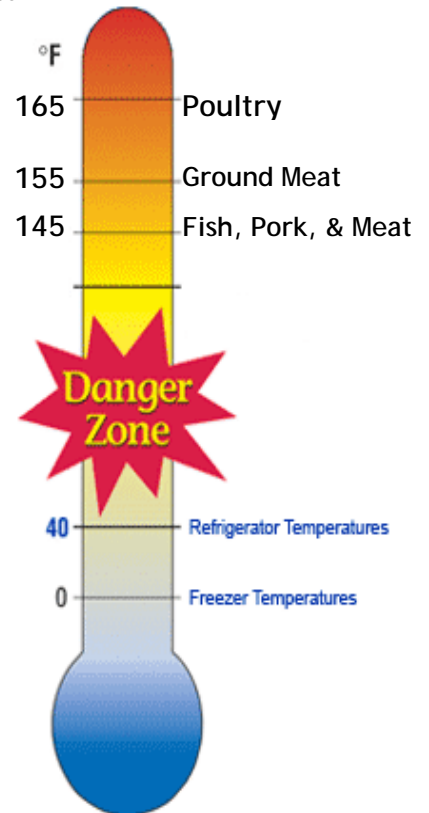
1. Begin with a calibrated food thermometer.
2. Clean & sanitize your thermometer before and after each use.
3. Check the internal temperature toward the end of cooking time, but before the food is expected to be done.
4. The thermometer should be placed in the thickest part of the food and should not touch bone, fat, or gristle.
5. Check the temperature in several places to make sure the food is evenly heated.
6. Insert thermometer sideways into thin hamburger patties.
7. Compare your temperature readings to the recommended Safe Minimum Internal Temperatures.

Verifying Thermometer Calibration

A food thermometer can be checked for accuracy using either the ice-water method or the boiling-water method. The ice-water method is explained below:

- Fill a large glass with ice.
- Add clean, cold tap water to the top of the ice and stir well.
- Immerse the food thermometer stem a minimum of 2 inches into the mixture (make sure not to touch the sides or the bottom of the glass).
- Wait a minimum of 30 seconds or longer until the temperature reads 32°F (+/- 2°F).
- If the thermometer you are using is not achieving the proper temperature then repeat the previous steps.
- Even if the food thermometer cannot be calibrated, this method will verify that the thermometer is accurate.
- If you have a thermometer that can be manually calibrated, adjust the nut to achieve a temperature reading of 32°F (+/- 2°F).

Using a thermometer that is not properly calibrated can give false readings and cause food to be undercooked.



The Raw Facts

Storing raw animal foods above Ready-To-Eat (defined as food that has been cooked and/or washed and is edible for consumption) increases the potential for food to be contaminated. A recent study done by the FDA found that 46.9% of the total violations were from raw foods being stored over RTE foods. In 2007, Everclean cataloged 31.7% of the critical violations as being associated with the potential contamination of raw and RTE foods. Here is how to store RTE and raw foods: RTE food goes on the top, followed by fish (145°F, cooking temperature) & pork (145°F), whole muscle meat (145°F), ground meat (155°F), and poultry on the bottom (165°F). Ensuring that food is kept in this order will avoid cross contamination and keep food safe.

Any comments or questions should be directed to info@evercleanservices.com.

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