Noncontinuous Cooking

PREAPPROVED PROCESS REQUIRED

Requirements

Noncontinuous cooking means partially cooking raw animal food, properly cooling it, and then finishing the cooking process later.

Follow these steps for safe noncontinuous cooking:

1. Heat food for 60 minutes or less.
2. Cool food properly (135°F to 70°F within 2 hours and completely cooled to 41°F or below within 6 hours).
3. Store food cold (41° F or below) or frozen.
4. Cook food completely. Food must meet temperature/time requirements:
    - 165°F for 15 seconds – poultry; wild animals, stuffed fish, meat, pasta or poultry; stuffing containing fish, meat or poultry
    - 155°F for 15 seconds – chopped or ground meat, fish and game animals; ratitae; injected or tenderized meats; eggs for hot holding
    - 145°F for 15 seconds – fish; whole muscle meat; game animals; eggs for immediate service
5. Serve immediately, hot hold, properly cool, or use time as public health control.

Written procedures

Noncontinuous cooking does not effectively destroy disease-causing bacteria during the initial heat treatment and extends the amount of time the food is in the temperature danger zone.

Effective written procedures ensure that noncontinuous cooking is done in a manner that controls risks and ensures consistent monitoring.

Written procedures, preapproved by the regulatory authority, must be maintained in the establishment and be available for review by the inspector.

Written procedures must describe:

- How the requirements (steps 1 – 5) for noncontinuous cooking are monitored and documented.
- Corrective actions if the requirements (steps 1 -5) for noncontinuous cooking are not met.
- How food that has been partially cooked will be marked or otherwise identified.
- How food that has been partially cooked will be separated from ready-to-eat foods to prevent cross-contamination.

Frequently asked questions

When is noncontinuous cooking used?

Noncontinuous cooking is sometimes used for:

- Mass production of chicken breasts or steaks for banquets
- Grill-marking chicken wings for large scale catering operations
- Partially cooked hamburger patties held for final preparation and service during peak periods

How can I get help in developing noncontinuous cooking procedures?

Food establishments are encouraged to work with their inspectors to develop procedures that will comply with noncontinuous cooking requirements.

Can I serve food that has undergone noncontinuous cooking in an undercooked or raw state or with a consumer advisory?

No. Animal food cooked using a noncontinuous process may not be served undercooked or in a raw state, even upon consumer request or with an adequate consumer advisory.

Food cooked by a noncontinuous cooking process must reach the minimum final cook temperatures and times specified in the Minnesota food code. The final cook temperature and time is critically important to ensure control of disease-causing bacteria that may survive and multiply during the initial heating and cooling steps.

Resources

Minnesota Department of Health Food Business Safety (www.health.state.mn.us/foodbizsafety)

Minnesota Department of Health
Food, Pools, and Lodging Services
PO Box 64975
St. Paul, MN 55164-0975
651-201-4500
health.foodlodging@state.mn.us
www.health.state.mn.us

Minnesota Department of Agriculture
Food and Feed Safety Division
625 Robert Street N
St. Paul, MN 55155-2538
651-201-6027
MDA.FFSD.Info@state.mn.us
www.mda.state.mn.us

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