

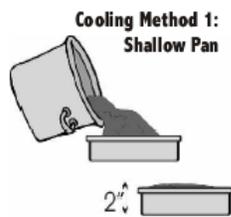
PROPER COOLING OF FOODS

Cooked leftovers that were not served to customers may be cooled to be served again. Because bacteria can grow quickly in cooling food, cooling is often the riskiest step in food preparation. It is important to cool food through the “danger zone” (135°F – 41°F) as fast as possible to keep bacteria from growing. Proper cooling is critical-- certain bacteria can make poisons that are not destroyed by reheating temperatures.

THERE ARE THREE APPROVED COOLING METHODS IN WASHINGTON:

SHALLOW PAN METHOD

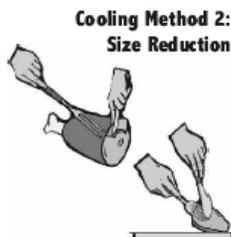
Divide large containers of food into several shallow pans to cool. This method works well for foods like refried beans, rice, potatoes, casseroles, ground meat, meatloaf, and chili. Here are the steps for the shallow pan method.



1. Put hot food into shallow pans. Make sure the food is not more than two inches thick or deep.
2. Put the pans in the refrigerator on the top shelf where nothing can drip into them.
3. Let air move around the pans – do not stack or cover the pans.
4. Cover the pans after the food is 41°F or colder.

SIZE REDUCTION METHOD

Large, whole food like turkey or ham may be cut into slices to be cooled. This method may not be used for meat that is ground or restructured such as meatloaf or gyro meat. Here are the steps for the size reduction method.



1. Cut the cooked meat into pieces no more than four inches thick. Be sure to wear gloves if you handle the food.
2. Spread the slices out on a tray so they are not touching each other.
3. Put the pans in the refrigerator on the top shelf where nothing can drip into them.
4. Let air move around the pans – do not stack or cover the pans.
5. Cover the pans after the food is 41°F or colder.

TIME AND TEMPERATURE MONITORING METHOD

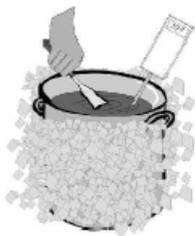
Food may also be cooled using a two-step process as long as you monitor the temperature of the food and make sure it cools down in a certain amount of time.

- Step 1: Food must cool from 135°F to 70°F in two hours
 Step 2: Food must finish cooling to 41°F within a total of six hours

An example of the two-step method is called an ice bath. An ice bath works well for soups, sauces, and gravy. Here are the steps for an ice bath.

1. Close the drain in the sink. Put the pot of hot food in the sink.
2. Fill the sink with ice up to the level of the food in the pot. Add cold water to the ice.
3. Stir the food often. Make sure it cools down to 70°F within two hours.
4. Add more ice as the ice melts.

**Cooling Method 3:
Time and Temperature
Monitored**



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