

COOL FOODS QUICKLY AND SAFELY

- Cooling hot foods requires a two-stage process and takes a maximum of six hours:
 - **Stage 1:** 135°F to 70°F within the first 2 hours
 - **Stage 2:** 70°F to 41°F within the next 4 hours
- Ready-to-eat foods prepared from room temperature ingredients must be cooled to 41°F within 4 hours or use pre-chilled ingredients.

Rapid Cooling Methods

- **Shallow Metal Pans**
 - Place product into pans in a single layer or with a depth of 2-4”.
 - Leave the pan uncovered until the product reaches 41°F.
 - Refrigerate the product immediately.
 - DO NOT stack hot pans: allow room for air flow.
- **Ice Baths**
 - Fill a clean sink or large pan with ice and cold water.
 - Place the hot product in a metal container and place it inside the ice bath – make sure the ice bath is at the same level as the product!
 - Stir the product every 10 minutes – use an ice paddle for stirring to reduce the cooling time.
 - Replace the ice and water, if needed.
 - When the product reaches 41°F, cover the container, label and date the product, and place it in the refrigerator.
- **Small Portions**
 - Divide into smaller, shallow metal pans.
 - Product should be 2” deep for thicker products and 4” deep for thinner products.
 - Cut or slice portions of meat no larger than 4” and place them in a single layer.
 - Place into refrigeration and stir occasionally.
- **Other Helpful Hints:**
 - Metal containers help products cool much faster than plastic containers.
 - When cooling in a refrigerator, always use the top shelf.
 - Never cool products below 135°F at room temperature – place it in a refrigerator/freezer or an ice bath.
 - Don't forget to label and date the product as soon as it is cooled to 41°F.
 - Always use a clean thermometer to monitor the product temperature as it cools.
 - Use cooling logs to record proper cooling temperatures.

