

Thawing Food

Food should be thawed safely to minimize the time that it is in the temperature danger zone (41°F to 135°F) and to prevent cross-contamination. Thawing at room temperature on the counter is unsafe. At room temperature, thawed portions of potentially hazardous foods can support bacterial growth. There are four ways to safely thaw food.

Thaw in the Refrigerator

- Thaw in a refrigerator that maintains a temperature of 41°F or below.
- Place food in a pan to prevent dripping.
- Plan ahead! Large items can take a long time (days) to thaw.
- The safest method for thawing!



Thaw in the Microwave

- Thaw in a microwave only if the food is to be cooked immediately afterward.
- Works well for small amounts of food and single servings.



Thaw Under (Drinkable) Running Water

- Place the food in a clean, sanitized sink or pot that will allow the food product to be submerged.
- The water should constantly run, have a temperature of 70°F or less, and enough water velocity to agitate and float off loose particles in an overflow.
- The period of time under running water should not allow thawed portions of food to rise above 41°F.



Thaw as Part of the Cooking Process

- Always cook food to a safe internal temperature.
- Works well for small amounts of food.
- When thawing already cooked foods by this method, always reheat to 165°F.

