





Food Safety Conversation No8: Defrosting

Key Learning	What You Need To Know	
<p>If food is not thoroughly defrosted before cooking, heat will be used to thaw the food rather than cook it. There is a danger that a core temperature of +75°C, which is required to kill any harmful bacteria present, will not be achieved</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Freezing food does not kill harmful bacteria but it will prevent growth. As the food begins to warm during thawing, bacteria begin to multiply slowly <input type="checkbox"/> All food must be completely defrosted prior to cooking or reheating, unless the manufacturer's instructions indicate the food is to be cooked from frozen. <input type="checkbox"/> Factors affecting defrosting times: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Defrosting times are faster if food is frozen and then defrosted in smaller portions. ▪ Loose wrapping, which traps an insulating layer of air, increases thawing time. ▪ Foil wrap can reduce heat radiation and slows thawing time. ▪ Tight packaging, such as vacuum packaging or food wrap, has little effect on thawing times. ▪ Food will thaw more quickly at ambient temperature. The main disadvantage is that, at higher temperatures, bacteria can multiply more freely and may reach unacceptable levels. <input type="checkbox"/> It is recommended that all foods are defrosted slowly in a refrigerator (between 0°C and +5°C), ensuring all raw foods are placed at the bottom of the refrigerator, separated from ready to eat foods to avoid cross contamination <input type="checkbox"/> Place defrosting raw food items in a container or receptacle to ensure meltwater does not cross contaminate other foods <input type="checkbox"/> Only defrost foods in a microwave if recommended by the manufacturers instructions using the defrost setting only. Ensure the food is spread evenly on the turntable and stir frequently. <input type="checkbox"/> Defrosting food at room temperature is permissible if it is defrosted in a controlled environment which is free from sources of contamination. Do not use running cold water to speed up the process. <input type="checkbox"/> Cook and / or serve any defrosted within its remaining shelf life <input type="checkbox"/> Do not re-freeze any defrosted foods 	  
		

HACCP Stages	Colleague Validation	More Information
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- Preparation
- Cooling & Re-heating
- Food Service & Display

1. What are the dangers of not thoroughly defrosting food before cooking it?
2. What factors can affect the time in which foods are defrosted?
3. How would you safely defrost food in a refrigerator?
4. How would you ensure food is properly defrosted in a microwave?
5. Can you re-freeze defrosted food?

More information can be found within the **Good Hygiene Practice Guide No: 8 Defrosting** and the HSE website