

Time/Temperature Control for Safety (TCS) Food

Regulation 61-25: Retail Food Establishments



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Five Key Risk Factors

repeatedly identified in
foodborne illness outbreaks:

1. Improper Holding Temps
2. Inadequate Cooking
3. Contaminated Equipment
4. Food from Unsafe Sources
5. Poor Personal Hygiene

1 and 2 are addressed on this sheet.

Regulation 61-25

Citation 1-201.10(B)(127)

TCS food requires time and temperature controls to limit the growth of pathogens or the formation of toxins.

See this citation for specific tables and lists of TCS and non-TCS food.

Examples of foods that are considered TCS

- Meat, poultry, fish (raw or heat-treated)
- Fruits and vegetables (heat-treated)
- Raw seed sprouts
- Cut melons
- Cut leafy greens
- Cut tomatoes*
- Garlic-in-oil mixtures*

* Unless modified as indicated in Regulation 61-25

A food item is determined to be a TCS food by considering five factors:

1. Acidity
2. Moisture content
3. Acidity and moisture interaction
4. Heat treatment
5. Packaging

In some foods, it is possible that neither the acidity nor the moisture content alone is low enough to protect the food; however, their interaction makes the food safe by creating an environment unfavorable to microorganism growth.



Leafy greens, tomatoes, and melons are protected from outside contaminants until they are cut. Cutting or tearing these foods alters their properties and encourages growth of harmful germs.



Just because a food is not defined as a TCS food does not guarantee that it will be safe from all hazards. Non-TCS food may contain biological, chemical, or physical food safety hazards.



Combination foods (those consisting of multiple TCS or non-TCS foods) present an additional challenge; these foods are assumed to be TCS foods unless the retail food establishment can prove otherwise.