



# Overcoming Challenges - Cooling

Food establishment management and staff often encounter many challenges with regards to rapidly cooling food through the temperature danger zone to a final temperature of 41°F or less.

3-501.14, 3-501.15 of the 2013 FDA Food Code states that time/temperature control for safety food shall be rapidly cooled to 41°F or less to prevent the growth of harmful bacteria

## Common Challenges

There are many challenges associated with cooling food, but three main root causes can be directly correlated to controlling this hazard:

### **Staff Behavior**

- Availability of properly calibrated thermometers
- Failure to monitor temperatures and report problems
- Relying on refrigerator air temperature rather than internal food temperatures
- Using large containers that do not promote quick cooling of food items

### **Refrigeration Equipment**

- Trusting that the equipment will always work properly
- Lack of regular maintenance
- Placing recently prepared (warmer) product into smaller refrigeration equipment
- Lack of space or alternative cooling equipment (ice baths, chilling wands, etc.)

### **Management Behavior**

- Staff not being informed of any pertinent information when shift changes occur
- Lack of accountability by staff to follow up on tasks
- Employees not trained to properly use thermometers
- Management does not make time to monitor employees in kitchen

## Overcoming Challenges

There are effective options to consider when overcoming cooling challenges.

- Create Policies**
- Train Staff**
- Verify Policies are Working**

