



## Step 8 - Thawing

### Summary

**It is essential to ensure that food is fully defrosted before cooking, unless product instructions state that it can be cooked from frozen.**

### What could happen?

**Food is not defrosted fully before cooking.**

**This means that when cooking, food does not reach safe temperatures.**

### Procedure

- Food must be defrosted in accordance with manufacturer's labelling instructions.
- Frozen food is usually required to be thawed before use as an ingredient or before cooking. This process should ideally be carried out under refrigeration or in a rapid thaw cabinet and not at ambient room temperature.
- Alternatives are possible under the following circumstances:
  - Use of a microwave oven defrost facility - for food which is to be fully cooked or reheated immediately, as part of the same process.
  - Cold, running water - for small items to be cooked or eaten immediately e.g. prawns (only to be carried out in exceptional circumstances).
  - Cool, ambient temperatures not exceeding 25 degrees - for large pieces of meat or poultry.
  - Note that high-risk, ready-to-eat food should never be permitted to thaw outside refrigeration.
- Food allergen info must be retained or identified on a allergen label.
- The temperature of raw thawed food must be checked using a temperature probe to ensure it has reached a core temperature of at least 1°C.
- Thaw high-risk food in a container separate from raw food.
- Never refreeze food which has been thawed.
- Thawed high-risk food above 8°C for more than two hours must be discarded.

## **Step 8 - Thawing HACCP Summary**

### **Hazard**

- Contamination with pathogens and food allergens.
- Multiplication of pathogens.

### **Checks & Records**

- Visual observation.
- Hourly monitoring of temperature of food thawing at ambient temperature.
- Check labels of foods.

### **Controls**

- Thaw high-risk food in the refrigerator/cold room separately from raw food.
- Thaw frozen poultry/meat/fish in deep trays in the refrigerator/cold room.
- Food is labelled to include food allergen info and is covered and protected.
- Allow sufficient time to thaw before service.
- Once thawed, do not leave at room temperature.
- Do not refreeze food once defrosted.

### **Corrective action**

- Report to Head Chef.
- Review of systems and training.
- Discard any high-risk food exceeding 8°C for 2 hours or at 15°C for more than 30 minutes.
- Review systems and training.
- Discard any thawed food which is not used within 24 hours.
- Discard out-of-date food.

### **Critical limits**

- No food to be left above 8°C for longer than 2 hours.
- Food thawing at ambient is not to be above 15°C for longer than 30 minutes.