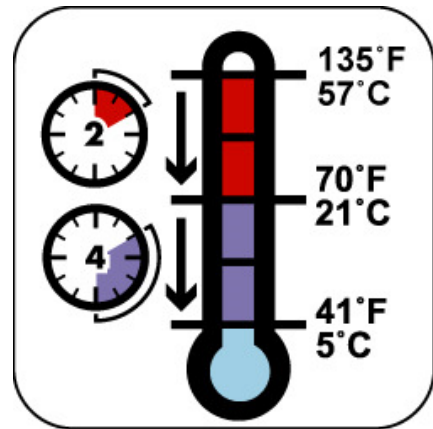# Cooling Foods

Bacteria can grow in foods that cool too slowly. Cooking or reheating does not kill all bacteria in food. Rapid cooling helps make food safer to eat by reducing the amount of bacteria that can grow.

Within the first 2 hours, food must drop from 135°F to 70°F

Use these methods to reduce food temperature to 70°F.
Check food temperature with a clean probe thermometer.

Shallow pans
- Slice meats such as roasts or ham
- Separate food into shallow containers (2-4 inches deep)
- Stir food often

Ice water bath
- Fill large container or clean sink with ice water
- Place container of food into ice bath
- Stir food often

Cooling paddles
- Fill paddle with tap water and freeze
- Stir food with paddle

Ice in the recipe
- Reduce original amount of water or liquid in the recipe
- Add ice to the food at the final preparation step

Within the next 4 hours, food must drop from 70°F to 41°F

Once food reaches 70°F, refrigerate to reduce food to 41°F or less.
Check food temperature with clean probe thermometer.

Refrigerate
- Cover and refrigerate food
- Continue to stir food until it reaches 41°F or less