



Be Safe with “Planned-Over” Foods

Refrigerate Foods Safely

Be sure to include food safety in your plans for preparing food for several meals.

Whether you plan to refrigerate for a short time or freeze portions for longer storage, food safety is important!



FSIS-USDA. Cooking for Groups Image Library.



The “DO” List:

- ✓ Keep refrigerator temperature 40° F or lower.
- ✓ Separate and refrigerate “planned-over” portions before you serve the rest of the dish after the first cooking.
- ✓ Refrigerate all foods in small quantities to cool quickly.
- ✓ Cool hot food slightly on a rack before refrigerating, for about 20 to 30 minutes only.
- ✓ Refrigerate in shallow containers no deeper than 2” to 3”, to allow food to cool quickly before bacteria can multiply well.
- ✓ Cover food to protect it from contamination.
- ✓ Use refrigerated “planned-overs” within 2 to 3 days; otherwise freeze.
- ✓ Thaw frozen “planned-overs” in the refrigerator.

Don't

- ✗ Cool in deep pots or containers.
- ✗ Cool large roasts without slicing down.
- ✗ Allow perishable food to sit at room temperature more than 2 hours total, including preparation, cooling or serving.
- ✗ Cover food too tightly until it is completely cooled.



Freezing “Planned-Over” Foods Correctly

- ✓ Keep your freezer at 0°F.
- ✓ Use a thermometer to check the inside freezer temperature.
- ✓ Cool warm or hot foods in the refrigerator before freezing.
- ✓ Use *freezer*-designated wrap, bags and containers.
- ✓ Allow headspace for expansion when needed.
- ✓ Use small, flatter packages that will freeze and thaw faster.
- ✓ Remove as much air as possible from packages.
- ✓ Place in freezer so cold air can circulate around packages.
 - Then stack and arrange closer together to save space.
- ✓ Label and date foods.



Common Foods That Don't Freeze Well

- Raw vegetables high in water content: lettuce, cucumbers, celery, cabbage, radishes, etc.
- Mayonnaise, sour cream, milks and most cream.
- Potato and pasta salads; cooked pastas.
- Gravies and thickened sauces; milk sauces.
- Custards and cream puddings; meringues.
- Fried foods and crumb toppings may become soggy.
- Cooked eggs; potato pieces.
- Gelatin.

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