Time/Temperature Control for Safety Food (TCS)

Formerly "Potentially Hazardous Food" (PHF)

Purpose

Explain the TCS concept in the TSFC.

Changes to the TSFC?

Originally, the FDA Food Code, Potentially Hazardous Foods (PHF) term has changed to TCS in 2013.

The 2019 TSFC adopted TCS foods to reflect the FDA Food Code guidance.

What is a TCS food?

"Time/temperature control for safety food" includes

An animal FOOD that is raw or heat-treated; a plant FOOD that is heat-treated or consists of raw seed sprouts, cut melons, cut leafy greens, cut tomatoes, or mixtures of cut tomatoes that are not modified in a way so that they are unable to support pathogenic microorganism growth or toxin formation; or garlic-in-oil mixtures that are not modified in a way so that they are unable to support pathogenic microorganism growth or toxin formation.

What is not a TCS food?

"Time/temperature control for safety food" does not include

An air-cooled hard-boiled EGG with shell intact, or an EGG with shell intact that is not hard-boiled but has been pasteurized to destroy all viable ***salmonellae****;*

A FOOD in an unopened HERMETICALLY SEALED CONTAINER *that is commercially processed to achieve and maintain commercial sterility under conditions of non-refrigerated storage and distribution;*

A FOOD that because of its pH (<4.6) or aw (<0.85) value, or interaction of aw and pH values, is designated as a non-TCS FOOD as noted in the 2013 FDA Food Code, Chapter 1 definition for ***"time/temperature control for safety food"****;*

A FOOD that is designated as Product Assessment Required (PA) as noted in the 2009 FDA Food Code, Chapter 1 definition for ***"time/temperature control for safety food"*** *and has undergone a Product Assessment showing that the growth or toxin formation of pathogenic microorganisms that are reasonably likely to occur in that FOOD is precluded due to—*

Intrinsic factors, including added or natural characteristics of the FOOD such as preservatives, antimicrobials, humectants, acidulants, or nutrients;

Extrinsic factors, including environmental or operational factors that affect the FOOD such as packaging, modified atmosphere such as ROP, shelf life and use, or temperature range of storage and use; or

A combination of intrinsic and extrinsic factors

TCS Food Decision Tree.

View tree in Appendix G, page 396 in the TSFC to determine if time or temperature is necessary.

What was amended from the 2014 TSFC?

Amends 3-403.11(C) to clarify the provision applies to all commercially processed time/temperature control for safety foods that are RTE [2013 FDA Food Code change].

Amends 3-501.110 to increase the maximum leftover retention time to 7 days and provide conditions for retaining non-TCS leftover foods.

Amends 3-502.11(D) to clarify the variance requirement only applies to TCS foods prepared under a reduced oxygen packaging (ROP) method [2013 FDA Food Code change].

Amends 9-502.14 to allow retention of non-TCS leftovers in a field/deployment setting.

Point of Contact?

Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center:
usn.hampton-roads.navmcpubhlthcenpors.list.nmcphc-prgpolicysup@mail.mil

For more information, resources and tools on food safety:

- Visit NMCPHC PPS-EH Food Sanitation and Safety
- Contact your local Military Treatment Facility's Preventive Medicine office.