

Inside the Cooler

To protect food while it is kept cold, remember that:

- Foods that require little to no further preparation are stored on the top shelf. These foods are considered ready-to-eat and may be easily contaminated.
- Food temperatures must be at 41°F or below. The refrigerator temperature should be 40°F or colder.
- Meats are stored according to their cooking temperatures. Meats stored at the bottom are cooked to the highest temperature.
- Foods that are held for more than 24 hours require labels and use by dates.

Ready-to-Eat Foods
and Prepared Foods

Commercially Processed
Food and Whole Fruits
and Vegetables

Whole Cuts of Raw Beef,
Pork, Fish and Raw Eggs

Raw Ground Meat
and Ground Fish

Raw Whole and
Ground Poultry



- Label the food with the date it must be used by.
- There must be a thermometer and it must be visible.
- All foods must be in packages or covered containers and labeled.
- All inside surfaces, shelves, doors and gaskets must be clean since they are food-contact surfaces.
- Don't over fill the refrigerator or block air vents. Refrigerators need air circulation to keep consistent temperatures from top to bottom.
- Store foods in smaller portions to keep the foods thoroughly cold.