**Conference for Food Protection**

**2016 Issue Form**

**Issue: 2016 III-022**

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| **Council Recommendation:** | Accepted as  Submitted |  | Accepted as Amended |  | No Action |  |
| **Delegate Action:** | Accepted |  | Rejected |  |  |  |

*All information above the line is for conference use only.*

**Issue History:**

This is a brand new Issue.

**Title:**

Slow Continuous Cooking of Raw Animal Foods

**Issue you would like the Conference to consider:**

The 2013 FDA Food Code identifies final cooking temperatures for many foods and provides for minimum oven temperature in the case of roasts. However, the problem of slow come up time is not addressed adequately in the code. Temperature controlled for safety (TCS) foods can be allowed to linger at temperatures that allow the proliferation of pathogenic microorganisms and production of heat stable toxins under the existing provisions in the Food Code.

Slow come up times for continuously cooked foods present two specific hazards. First, pathogens that produce heat stable toxins can be allowed to multiply and produce toxins before lethality is reached. The second hazard is that all lethality processes such as those found in USDA Appendix A make assumptions about the number of pathogens present in the food at the beginning of the cooking process. Slow come up times can allow pathogens to replicate to levels where the lethality treatment is not effective.

Slow cooking TCS foods is often seen by food establishment operators as a culinary process providing an enhanced product. The code should restrict the time TCS foods are allowed to dwell in the danger zone. Raw animal and plant foods allowed to linger in the danger zone for extended periods are more likely to produce toxins from Staphylococcus aureus, Clostridium perfringens, and Salmonella. Limiting the amount of time raw animal foods and plant foods can take to stay between the temperatures of 50oF to 130oF will reduce the ability of pathogens to proliferate.

**Public Health Significance:**

The Food Code Section 3-401.11 provides for minimum final internal product temperatures for raw animal foods, respectively, cooked for hot holding. Section 3-401.11(B) adds requirements for whole meat roast including beef, corned beef, lamb, pork, and cured pork roast such as ham to be placed in a preheated oven at no less than 250o F. The minimum existing oven temperature of 250oF is applied to ensure an adequate lethality treatment to these foods.

However, in many establishments meat products are prepared by processes using slow and very slow come up times. In these cases there exists the potential for outgrowth of pathogens that produce heat stable toxins such as Staphylococcus aureus, Clos. Also, other pathogens may reproduce to a concentration above the ability of the lethality treatment to control.

**Recommended Solution: The Conference recommends...:**

a letter be sent to the FDA requesting the 2013 Food Code be modified as follows (language to be added is underlined):

3-401.11 Raw Animal Foods

(A) Except as specified under (B) and in (C) and (D) of this section, raw animal FOODS such as EGGS, FISH, MEAT, POULTRY, and FOODS containing these raw animal FOODS, shall be cooked to heat all parts of the FOOD to a temperature and for a time that complies with one of the following methods based on the FOOD thats being cooked:

(1) 63oC (145oF) or above for 15 seconds within 4 hours for : P

(a) Raw Eggs that are broken and prepared in response to a CONSUMER'S order and for immediate service, P and

(b) Except as specified under Subparagraphs (A)(2) and (A)(3) and (B) and in (C) of this section, FISH and MEAT including GAME ANIMALS commercially raised for FOOD as specified under Subparagraph 3-201.17(A) (1) and GAME ANIMALS under a voluntary inspection program as specified under Subparagraph 3-201.17(A)(2);P

(2) 68oC (155oF) for 15 seconds within 4 hours or the temperature specified in the following chart that corresponds to the holding tine for RATITES, MECHANICALLY TENDERIZED, and INJECTED MEATS; the following if they are COMMINUTED: FISH, MEAT, GAME ANIMALS commercially raised for FOOD as specified under Subparagraph 3-201.17(A)(1), and GAME ANIMALS under a voluntary inspection program as specified under Subparagraph 3-201.17(A)(2); and raw EGGS that are not prepared as specified under Subparagraph (A)(1)(a) of this section:.P

(3) 74oC (165oF) or above for 15 seconds within 4 hours for POULTRY, BALUTS, WILD GAME, as specified under Subparagraphs 3-201.17(A)(3) and (4), stuffed FISH, stuffed MEAT, stuffed pasta, stuffed POULTRY, stuffed RATITES, or stuffing containing FISH, MEAT, POULTRY, or RATITIES.P

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It is the policy of the Conference for Food Protection to not accept Issues that would endorse a brand name or a commercial proprietary process.