Safe method:

# Prove it – cooking

**Sometimes you might want to use a probe to prove that your safe methods for cooking, 'bake off' products, reheating and hot holding are safe.**

| Safe method | What to do | How to do it |
|---|---|---|
| Cooking, bake off and reheating | The 'Cooking safely – rotisserie chicken and ham', 'Bake off products, reheating and hot holding' and 'Cooking safely – bacon, sausages and eggs' safe methods tell you how to check that food is thoroughly cooked/reheated. If you do a different check then you will need to prove that it is safe.<br><br>You only need to do this once. The food should be safe to eat if it has reached a high enough temperature for a long enough time. | To check the food has reached a high enough temperature, check it with a clean, disinfected probe. Insert the probe so that the tip is in the centre of the food (or the thickest part).<br><br>Examples of safe time/temperature combinations include:<br><br>80°C for at least 6 seconds<br>75°C for at least 30 seconds<br><br>(In Scotland, there is a legal requirement for reheated foods to reach at least 82°C.) |
| Hot holding | The 'Bake off products, reheating and hot holding' safe method tells you how to hot hold safely. It is a legal requirement that hot food must be kept above 63°C. | To check that food in hot holding is above 63°C, use a clean probe. Insert the probe so the tip is in the centre of the food (or the thickest part). |

## Checking your probe

It is essential to know that your probe is working properly, to be able to rely on its readings. So you should check it regularly. The manufacturer's instructions should include details of how often a probe needs to be checked and how to check it.

A simple way to check a digital probe used for checking hot food is to put it in boiling water:

- The readings in boiling water should be between 99°C and 101°C.

If the reading is outside this range, you should replace your probe or return it to the manufacturer to be calibrated.

## Cleaning your probe

It is very important to keep your probe properly clean. Make sure you always clean your probe with hot water and detergent after you have used it.

## Prove it – records

If you decide to use a probe to prove that your cooking, bake off, reheating or hot holding methods are safe, you can write the details below. You only need to do this as a one-off check.

| Type of food | Equipment used | Setting | Time | Probe reading |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |