

Acceptable Thermometer Types and Usage Guidance

Applies to: Pantries ◦ Store Donations ◦ Meal Preparation

Type Thermometer	Hanging	Stem or Probe (digital or dial)	Infrared Food
Example Images			
Location Used	Freezers, Refrigerators, Ambient Dry Storage	Direct food contact, Fresh Alliance cold product temping	Surface temp of food (eg. Food in hot table, cooking or cooling soups) & Fresh Alliance/store donations of packaged cold food
Unacceptable Uses	If plastic – ovens. No direct food contact	Air temp in cold or dry storage areas	Air temp checks in cold storage or ambient; measuring food behind glass or plastic. Not good for measuring internal cooking temps of solid items (meat).
Temperature Range for Use	Refrigerator 0°F – 50°F Freezer -20°F – 20 °F Dry Storage 20°F – 120°F <i>(Often both Fahrenheit and Celsius scales will be displayed)</i>	Meal prep 30°F – 190°F Fresh Alliance -20°F – 60°F	Meal prep 30°F - 190°F Packaged
Operation Instructions	Hang unobstructed in temperature controlled space. Read the temperature when first opening the freezer and refrigerator, and without holding the thermometer. When reading a dial display, the narrow end of the arrow indicator will hover over the unit temp. You may round down to the nearest degree unit (e.g. -	Wash and sanitize stem without submerging dial before each use. Pierce food item with probe 1–3 inches only into the densest part of the item. Once dial is no longer moving (should take less than 1 minute), read number closest to the narrow end of the arrow to the nearest degree (scale	Point the thermometer at the food to be measured, holding it away from the food by the manufacturer’s recommended distance. Pull the trigger, and the temp will be displayed on the screen. Mix food immediately prior to taking temp. Clean handle when finished to prevent cross-contamination, and lens for accurate readings.

	8°F). Column display thermometers are filled with an alcohol based dye. The top of the red or blue color indicates the temp. Read to nearest whole degree, rounding down. Scale is every 2 degrees. You may want to twist the thermometer to better read the indicator column.	may be every two, round to nearest marking). There are 2 ways to measure a sealed, ready to eat item: the sandwich method and a destructive sample. The destructive sample can be carefully placed back in the bin/milk crate and tested again when returning to the pantry, so only one item is destroyed. (Link to video procedure)	Note: This tool is best used to measure cook surface temps, and food that has finished cooking and is well mixed. Any shiny surface will decrease emissivity and give a false result.
Calibration instructions	Cannot be calibrated; Replace as needed.	1. Make a fresh water ice bath. 2. Put the thermometer stem or probe into the ice water. Make sure the sensing area is under water. DO NOT let the probe touch the container. Wait 30 seconds or until the indicator stops. 3. Adjust the thermometer so it reads 32°F (0°C). Hold the calibration nut with a wrench or other tool. Rotate the thermometer head until it reads 32°F (0°C).	Refer to user manual or compare to a freshly calibrated probe thermometer.
References & Resources	Portals page (temp logs, posters, video instructions)	Fresh Alliance Manual	Recall Procedures & Food Safety

OFB Portals Location

https://ofbportals.oregonfoodbank.org/home/partner_support/partner_support/logspostingsandsuch/documents

Revision History

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