

Requirements for the Preparation and Serving of Donairs, Shawarmas and Similar Products

Gyros, donairs and shawarmas are food items that have been chopped, flaked, ground or minced and then restructured for cooking on a vertical style broiler. As a result of this type of preparation, pathogens may be introduced throughout all areas of the meat. In addition, the unique, slow, extended cooking process on the vertical broiler may further contribute to the potential microbial hazards of the product. This guideline identifies the procedures required to ensure the food is safe and properly handled.

DEFINITIONS

Ground Meats – are meats reduced in size by methods of chopping, flaking, grinding, or mincing and then restructured.

Gyro – is a cone of seasoned, restructured, ground raw meat.

Shawarma – is a sandwich usually composed of shaved lamb, chicken, or turkey.

Donair – is a sandwich made up primarily of cooked, sliced gyro meat wrapped in pita bread.

PROCEDURES

1. All meat must be inspected and obtained from approved sources.
2. If the meat cone is to be frozen, it must be frozen immediately after preparation and remain frozen until required.
3. Frozen meat cones must be removed from the freezer, mounted on the spit and placed directly on the rotating vertical broiler.
4. Once the exterior of the meat cone is cooked, this outside layer of meat (approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ inch or 0.85 centimeters) may be sliced off using a clean, sanitized knife.
5. The cone must be cooked continuously, even when slicing. **A food handler must not turn off the vertical broiler to slow down the cooking of the cone.**
6. Portions of meat sliced from the partially cooked cone must receive a second cooking step prior to serving. For all types of meats, the temperature of the sliced portion must be further heated to ensure the meat reaches a temperature of 74°C (165°F). Secondary cooking steps can include the use of ovens, grills, broilers, microwaves and any other method approved by your local Health Region.

7. The food establishment operator must have a suitable thermometer for confirming / measuring the effectiveness of the secondary cooking step. For thinly sliced portions of food this means either an infrared thermometer or a probe thermometer with a thin sensor.
8. Following the secondary cooking step the sliced meat must be either:
 - a. used immediately to prepare the donairs or shawarmas, or
 - b. stored in a hot holding unit at 60°C (140°F) or greater, or
 - c. cooled quickly to 4°C (40°F) or less for storage.
9. At the end of a day, partially cooked cones **CANNOT** be kept intact for future use. Food handlers may:
 - a. continue the cooking and slicing process on the vertical broiler until the entire cone has been sliced. To ensure that a temperature of 74°C (165°F) has been reached, a secondary cooking step, as mentioned above, is required during this process. Cool and store the sliced meat in a cooler or freezer; OR
 - b. fully cook the remaining cone to an internal temperature of 74°C (165°F) on the vertical broiler or by what ever means is available (oven, broiler, grill, microwave) and check the internal temperature of the cone using a suitable thermometer. Slice the cooked product before cooling and then store in a cooler or freezer; OR
 - c. discard all remaining partially cooked meat.

For more information, please contact your nearest Environmental Public Health office.

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