

# Food Code Fact Sheet #4

What you should know about the new Code

[http://www.oregon.gov/ODA/FSD/reg\\_fc\\_index.shtml](http://www.oregon.gov/ODA/FSD/reg_fc_index.shtml)

## FOOD CODE, OAR 603-25-0030, CHAPTER 3-502.12 (D)

(D) Except as specified under ¶ (C) of this section, a FOOD ESTABLISHMENT that PACKAGES FOOD using a cook-chill or sous vide process shall:

(1) Implement a HACCP PLAN that contains the information as specified under ¶ 8-201.14(D);

(2) Ensure the FOOD is: (see the Food Code for complete rule) and

(3) Maintain the records required to confirm that cooling and cold holding refrigeration time/temperature parameters are required as part of the HACCP PLAN and: (see the Food Code for complete rule)

## PUBLIC HEALTH REASONS:

Both processes depend on time/temperature alone as the only barrier to pathogenic growth. Therefore, monitoring critical limits including those established for cooking to destroy vegetative cells, cooling to prevent outgrowth of spores/toxin production, and maintaining cold storage temperatures to inhibit growth and/or toxin production of any surviving pathogens is essential. Since there are no other controlling factors for *C. botulinum* and *L. monocytogenes* in a cook-chill or sous vide packaging system, temperature control must be continuously monitored electronically and visually examined twice daily to verify that refrigeration temperatures are adequate.

## Cook/Chill and Sous Vide Requires HACCP

**Cook/Chill** is a process where hot foods are sealed in plastic bags and quickly chilled. This is most commonly done in an ice/water bath, but there are other options. The process of cooking drives off oxygen and leaves a reduced oxygen level in the food, even though the plastic bag may be sealed with a large amount of air at the top of the package. This process is commonly used for large batches of soups and sauces.

**Sous Vide** [soo VEED] is a French phrase meaning "under vacuum," and this method of food preparation is gaining in popularity among chefs. With this method, fresh, raw ingredients or partially cooked ingredients are vacuum-sealed in an impermeable plastic bag. The bag is then cooked at relatively low temperatures in a water bath.

This type of packaging may also be referred to as Reduced Oxygen Packaging (ROP). Because the food is packaged in a reduced oxygen atmosphere, the main concern is the growth of and toxin formation by *Clostridium botulinum* and the growth of *Listeria monocytogenes*. Both of these organisms can grow in re-

frigeration temperatures, so product cannot be stored between 38°F-41°F for more than three days.

**To use either of these processes a Hazard Analysis of Critical Control Points (HACCP) plan must be submitted to the Food Safety Division and approved prior to starting the process.**



**Pork shoulder packaged and waiting to be cooked.**

You can find more information on what to include in your HACCP plan in Chapter 8-201.14 (D) of the Food Code.

Food packaged using cook chill or sous vide processing methods cannot be distributed outside the food establishment doing the packaging.