

Intact Steak Decision-Tree for Food Establishments and Regulators



U.S. FOOD & DRUG
ADMINISTRATION

Per the 2022 FDA Food Code, subparagraph 3-401.11(C)(2) "A raw or undercooked WHOLE-MUSCLE, INTACT BEEF steak may be served or offered for sale in a READY-TO-EAT form" if it is INTACT and seared. This is because pathogens should only be present on the surface. The following decision-tree may be used to determine if a steak is INTACT. A steak is INTACT if it has not undergone COMMINATION, MECHANICAL TENDERIZATION, vacuum tumbling with solutions, or reconstruction, cubing or pounding. If a steak is non-INTACT, pathogens may be on the inside. Therefore, a non-INTACT steak should be cooked to 155°F for 17 seconds or equivalent per 3-401.11(A)(2).

Use this as a guide in determining whether your steak is intact or non-intact.

