



Acidified (Sushi) Rice

Benefits:

1. Acidified rice is easier to work with when at room temperature.
2. Acidified rice can be prepared less often and used for longer period than rice that is not acidified.
3. Properly acidified rice can be maintained without temperature control.

Safety Concerns:

1. *Bacillus cereus* and associated toxins are a concern with cooked rice products; therefore the pH of the finished sushi rice must be 4.2 or below.
2. *Clostridium botulinum* is a concern; therefore the pH of the finished sushi rice must be below 4.6.
3. Cross-contamination concerns with handling/preparing/serving raw sushi with cooked sushi.

Things to Know:

1. If the rice is acidified for the purposes of flavor enhancement and not preservation, and it is cooled in accordance with §3-501.14 and maintained at 41°F or below for no longer than 7 days, then neither a HACCP Plan or variance are required.
2. Establishments that prepare sushi rice for immediate consumption may use Time as a Public Health Control to hold the rice at room temperature during preparation and service and must comply with §3-501.19.
3. A HACCP plan and variance are required if not using Time as a Public Health Control and rendering rice shelf stable through acidification by means of a food additive (vinegar).
4. Once a time/temperature control for safety (TCS) food item is added to the non-TCS acidified rice (e.g. raw salmon), the food item is now considered a TCS food and must be held under refrigeration.
5. Separate validation studies are required for white rice, brown rice, and other types of rice since the penetrability of the vinegar varies for the different types of rice.

Be advised of the following:

1. Raw fish used in the production of sushi is required to comply with §3-402.11 Parasite Destruction and §3-603.11 Consumer Advisory.

HACCP/Variance Program

602.506.6824

esplanreview@mail.maricopa.gov

esd.maricopa.gov

2013 FDA Code Reference:

3-502.11 (C) Variance Requirement

3-402.11 Parasite Destruction

3-501.19 Time as a Public health Control

3-504.14 Cooling

3-603.11 Consumer Advisory



Establishments seeking approval for a variance for sushi rice shall submit the following to the Department for review:

1. Complete application : <https://www.maricopa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/5805/HACCPVariance-Application-PDF>
2. Application Fees
3. Detailed food preparation process
4. pH results from qualified independent laboratory
5. Complete Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) Plan

For guidance please refer to:

<https://www.maricopa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/29747/HACCPVariance-Guidance-PDF>

<https://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceRegulation/HACCP/ucm2006801.htm>

5. Standard operating procedures for the following: employee health, staff training, calibration of thermometers and pH meters, and cleaning and sanitizing
6. Sample log sheets (e.g. thermometer and pH meter calibration, staff training, etc.)
7. Equipment needed for process; please note that Department requires at least 2 pH meters and spare batteries be maintained onsite and staff will be asked to demonstrate 2-point calibration of the pH meter prior to approval of variance
8. Provide details on how person in charge will oversee process
9. Provide statements for the following: completed logs will be kept for 180 days, acidified rice will be discarded within 24 hours
10. If operating in a shared kitchen, provide details on how food process will be protected

Please note that if any of the above are not provided or if not complete, then the review process will be delayed.



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