

# Retail Food Establishments: Sushi Rice Guidelines

Regulation 61-25: Retail Food Establishments



[scdhec.gov/food](http://scdhec.gov/food)

Retail food establishments that prepare sushi rice must take specific measures to ensure the safety of those that consume it. Safety of sushi rice may be controlled by using one of the following methods: standard holding temperatures, time, or pH (acidification).

## 1) Temperature Control

- » Sushi rice may be held using one of the following temperature control methods:
  - 135°F or above.
  - 41°F or below; proper cooling criteria must be followed before cold holding. (3-501.14)

See [Proper Holding Temperatures](#) fact sheet for additional information.

## 2) Time as a Public Health Control (TPHC)

- » Written procedures must be prepared in advance for the production, method of time marking the rice, and disposal of unused product. (3-501.19)

See [Time as a Public Health Control](#) fact sheet for additional information.

## 3) Product Assessment (PA) & pH Monitoring

- » The target pH range used for the sushi rice must allow for variations in the characteristics of the rice, as well as variations in the acidity of the vinegar. Target range must ensure a pH of less than 4.2 is obtained to create an environment unfavorable to microorganism growth.
- » The pH must be measured within 30 minutes of adding vinegar. If sushi rice pH measures above the target pH range stated in your plan, corrective action must be taken. Within 30 minutes of the corrective action, the pH must be retested.
- » When using a pH meter or pH strips as the monitoring method, a PA must be submitted. The PA letter or laboratory report must be completed by a recognized process authority or an accredited commercial food laboratory. A new PA is required if the process is modified after approval by the Department. (1-201.10)(B)(93))
- » The PA must be submitted along with the standard operating procedure (SOP) plan for the sushi rice-making process and routine pH monitoring. A pH log template is included with this fact sheet.

## A) PA and pH monitoring by pH meter

- Submit SOP(s) for your pH meter calibration procedures, cleaning, and corrective actions.
- Follow manufacturer's instructions for calibration and maintenance of the pH meter; and maintain calibration and testing records.
- Using a temperature-compensating pH meter is a best practice, and is recommended by DHEC, because the accuracy of pH measurements is affected by the temperature if not compensated.

## B) PA and pH monitoring using pH strips

- Testing strips for pH must have a working range of 2.5 to 4.5 pH units.
- The target pH of the sushi rice must allow for the sensitivity of the pH strip. For example, if using a pH strip with a sensitivity of 0.2 pH units, the target pH must be 4.0 pH or less.

## 4) Submit a Plan to the Department for Review

- » To discuss implementing a sushi rice special process plan, contact the Variance Committee at [Food-Variations@dhec.sc.gov](mailto:Food-Variations@dhec.sc.gov) or 803-896-0640. (8-201.13-14)
- » Submit acidification of sushi rice plan(s) with any other required documents referenced in section 3 of this fact sheet, to the food variances email address listed above along with the [Request for a Special Process](#) form. A demonstration of your testing procedures may be requested during inspections.

## Monthly Sushi Rice pH Log

Keep the current copy of this log near the sushi rice preparation area. Check the acidity of sushi rice using a calibrated pH meter or pH test strip accurate to 0.2-0.3 pH units. Sushi rice must be tested on a **daily/weekly** basis. If the pH of the sushi rice is above \_\_\_\_\_ **pH**, record the corrective action in the last column.

Facility Name and Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Month: Jan / Feb / Mar / Apr / May / Jun / Jul / Aug / Sept / Oct / Nov / Dec

Day	pH of Rice	Corrective Action
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
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