

## **Product Testing FAQ**

It is important to test your food product to make sure it will be safe to eat once purchased by your customers. To demonstrate your product is safe and a non-potentially hazardous food, you must have it tested by a food laboratory and obtain test results that meet code definition as a non-potentially hazardous food. [The University of Idaho Food Technology Center or Analytical Laboratories Inc](#) are great resources for product testing.

### **Foods Eligible for Approval with Laboratory Testing**

- The following items may be considered potentially hazardous and require refrigeration depending on the recipe. Icings, frosting, and glazes with added water or containing potentially hazardous ingredients (such as cream cheese, milk, butter, etc.).
- Moist quick breads, muffins, cakes and cupcakes, cookies, and bars with fruit or vegetable ingredients that have a natural pH above 4.6 such as banana, pumpkin, and zucchini.

Testing acidity and water activity provide information about the potential for bacteria to grow in food. The more acidic the food (low pH) and the less water available in the food (low water activity), the less likely the food will promote bacterial growth. Under federal and state regulations, foods can be stored at room temperature if the water activity is less than or equal to .85 or pH is less than or equal to 4.6. If your product exceeds these limits, it's considered potentially hazardous and not allowed under cottage food laws.

### **Follow-Up**

Based on the eligibility information above, if your food item is considered non-potentially hazardous, keep a copy of your laboratory results with you any time you are selling your product in-person. If you need assistance in reading the results, please email a PDF copy of your results to: [FoodProtection@dhw.idaho.gov](mailto:FoodProtection@dhw.idaho.gov)