



If you analyze this chart, you can see which food items are more vulnerable to microorganisms and which are not. The numbers to key in on are 4.6 to 7.5. By keeping close watch on food that falls in the 5 and 6 categories, you can go a long way to keeping your food safe.

Many fruits and vegetables have a high pH in their uncooked state, and may seem quite safe from quick microorganism growth. But caution needs to be exercised, since the pH of these foods can fall after being cooked and microorganisms can now grow quickly. For example, raw potatoes can be held at room temperature when raw. But if cooking, serving and possibly reserving later, they need to be held at 135° or above and cooled and refrigerated following all the rules of cooling and reheating.