**Sushi Records**

The addition of vinegar to rice produces an acidic environment discouraging the growth of food poisoning bacteria.  To prevent the growth of bacteria, the pH of the rice needs to be maintained at 4.6 or lower.  pH levels higher than this provide a better environment for the bacteria to grow.  It is important that the pH of rice is tested regularly with a pH meter or strips.  Results of these tests should be recorded in a pH log.  If the pH of the rice is too high, it is important to either decrease the pH if you are able to do so or discard the product if it has been above 5°C for more than 4 hours.

The acidity of the rice also assists in protecting the other ingredients in the sushi products from bacterial growth.

### Temperature control

Even with the acidified rice, sushi is still considered a potentially hazardous food.  This is due to the other ingredients that are used in sushi including raw and cooked seafood and chicken.  As such, it is important to ensure that all sushi is maintained under temperature or time control.

Ideally all sushi should be maintained at 5°C or below.  If sushi is to be stored or displayed at temperatures between 5°C and 60°C a documented time control system should be in place to ensure the ‘4 hour/2 hour’ rule is being effectively applied.  This rule states:

* any potentially hazardous food out of temperature control for a total of less than 2 hours, must be refrigerated or used immediately
* any potentially hazardous food out of temperature control for a total of longer than 2 hours but less than 4 hours, must be used immediately
* any potentially hazardous food out of temperature control for a total of 4 hours or more must be discarded.

Due to the acidification of rice, some sushi can be stored outside of temperature control above 5°C.  The NSW Food Authority conducted a study modelling food poisoning bacteria with the potential to impact the safety of unrefrigerated sushi.  The study concluded that sushi should never be stored or displayed at temperatures above 25°C for longer than 4 hours.