FOOD DEFINITIONS

Per the Ohio Department of Health food operation rules, all food operations throughout the state are placed into one of four risk classes. Risk is basically defined as the risk of the facility causing a foodborne illness outbreak. Following are the risk categories:

**RISK LEVEL 1:** Food operations within this level offer for sale the following food items (self-service drinks, prepackaged foods and beverages, prepackaged refrigerated or frozen (TCS) foods, baby food/formula).  
{Risk Scale: Lowest}

**RISK LEVEL 2:** Food operations within this level perform risk level one activities with the addition of the following (Handling or preparing non-time/temperature controlled for safety (TCS) foods, Holding or serving time/temperature controlled for safety foods (TCS) at the temperature which they were received, Heating individually packaged, commercially processed TCS foods for immediate service).  
{Risk Scale: Minimal}

**RISK LEVEL 3:** Food operations within this level perform numerous food preparation activities including the following (Handling or cutting raw meats, Cutting or slicing ready-to-eat meats and cheeses, Cooking or preparing TCS foods that are immediately served, hot or cold held or cooled, Reheating foods in individual portions only, Heating of food products from hermetically sealed packaging and holding it hot).  
{Risk Scale: High}

**RISK LEVEL 4:** Food operations within this level perform all food preparation activities with the addition of one or more of the following (Reheating of bulk quantities of leftover TCS foods more than once every 7 days, Serving high risk clientele, such as nursing homes, Catering)  
{Risk Scale: Highest}

- **Time/Temperature Controlled for Safety (TCS) Foods** are those which require time and temperature controls for proper preparation, storage and service.
- **Non-Time/Temperature Controlled for Safety (NTCS) Foods** are those that require little to no time and temperature controls for proper preparation, storage, and service and are usually in a ready-to-eat form.