

Poultry Ponderings?

The US Department of Agriculture Meat and Poultry Hotline number is:
1-800-535-4555.

Their internet address is:
www.usa.gov/fsis

Turkey Basics: Handling Cooked Dinners

EATING WITHIN 2 HOURS?

- ◆ Keep food HOT.
- ◆ Harmful bacteria multiply fastest between 40°F and 140°F.
- ◆ Use a meat thermometer.
- ◆ Keep stuffing and side dishes hot.

EATING MUCH LATER?

- ◆ Remove all stuffing from the turkey cavity immediately and refrigerate.
- ◆ Cut turkey off the bone and refrigerate. Slice breast meat; legs and wings may be left whole.
- ◆ Refrigerate potatoes, gravy and vegetables in shallow containers.

REHEATING?

- ◆ Reheat to 165°F.
- ◆ Bring gravy to a rolling boil.
- ◆ Reheating a whole turkey is not recommended.

LEFTOVERS

- ◆ It IS safe to freeze leftover turkey and trimmings.

STORAGE

<u>Turkey Item</u>	<u>Refrigerator</u>	<u>Freezer</u>
Fresh whole turkey	1 to 2 days	12 mo
Fresh turkey parts	1 to 2 days	9 mo
Ground turkey, giblets	1 to 2 days	3 to 4 mo
Cooked turkey	3 to 4 days	4 mo
Cooked turkey dishes	3 to 4 days	4 to 6 mo
Turkey broth, gravy	1 to 2 days	2 - 3 mo
Lunch meat	sealed pkg opened pkg	2 - 8 wks 3 - 5 days

Turkey Basics: Sanitation

- ◆ Foodborne organisms (salmonella, campylobacter, and staphylococcus) may be found in or on turkeys.
- ◆ Thorough cooking to 165°F will kill most bacteria.
- ◆ Cooling at 40°F or below will prevent most bacteria from multiplying, but will not kill bacteria.
- ◆ Always wash hands thoroughly before and during preparation.
- ◆ If utensils are used during the preparation of the turkey, wash thoroughly before using with ready-to-eat (uncooked) foods.
- ◆ Store wiping cloths in a bleach water solution (1 cap full bleach for each gallon of water), to sanitize counters and work surfaces when wiping.

For more food safety information, contact:



City of Overland Park
Community Services Division
8500 Antioch
Overland Park, KS 66212
913/895-6270



Talking Turkey... From Farm To Table

What is Turkey?

Turkey is a large, widely domesticated North American bird with white plumage and a bare head and neck. The name turkey was originally applied to an African bird now known as the guinea fowl, which was believed to have originated in Turkey. When the Europeans came upon the American turkey, they thought it was the same bird as the African guinea fowl, and so gave it the name turkey, although the two species are quite distant.

How Are Turkeys Raised?

Turkeys are fed a diet of mainly corn and soybean meal along with a supplement of vitamins and minerals. They grow to full maturity in about 16 to 19 weeks, depending on the desired market weight.

Are All Turkeys Inspected?

All turkeys found in retail stores are either inspected by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) or by state systems which have standards equivalent to the federal government. Each turkey and its internal organs are inspected for evidence of disease. The "Inspected for wholesomeness by the U.S. Department of Agriculture" seal ensures that it is wholesome, properly labeled, and not adulterated.

What is the Nutrient Content of Turkey?

Turkey provides a significant amount of protein as well as other nutrients. Fat, saturated fat and cholesterol are also present, with most of the fat being in the skin. A three ounce serving of baked turkey breast with skin has 160 calories, 6 grams of fat, 65 milligrams of cholesterol and 24 grams of protein; without skin, 120 calories, 1 gram of fat, 55 milligrams of cholesterol and 26 grams of protein.

How Much Turkey is Consumed in the United States?

Per Capita Consumption of Turkey: In 1995, 14.1 pounds.

Turkey Basics: Safe Defrosting

Turkeys must be kept at a safe temperature during the thawing process. While frozen, a turkey is safe indefinitely. However, as soon as it begins to defrost, bacteria which may be present will multiply rapidly when the food is in "the danger zone" between 40°F and 140°F.

There are three safe ways to defrost turkeys: in the refrigerator, in cold water and in the microwave.

REFRIGERATOR THAWING

Plan ahead: allow approximately 24 hours for each 5 pounds.

Foods defrosted in a refrigerator can be refrozen without cooking, but there may be some loss of quality.

Refrigerator Thawing Times - Whole Turkey	
8 to 12 pounds.....	1 to 2 days
12 to 16 pounds.....	2 to 3 days
16 to 20 pounds.....	3 to 4 days
20 to 24 pounds.....	4 to 5 days

COLD WATER THAWING

- ◆ Allow about 30 minutes per pound.
- ◆ Make sure turkey is in a leak-proof package or bag.
- ◆ Immerse turkey in cold tap water.
- ◆ Check water temperature frequently to be sure it stays cold.
- ◆ Change water every 30 minutes until the turkey is thawed
- ◆ Cook turkey immediately when thawed.

MICROWAVE THAWING

Follow the microwave oven manufacturer's instruction when defrosting a turkey. Plan to cook it immediately after thawing because some areas of the turkey may become warm and begin to cook during microwaving. Holding partially cooked food is not recommended because any bacteria present wouldn't have been destroyed. After cooking, meat from a turkey thawed in the microwave can be refrozen.

Turkey Basics: Safe Cooking

ROASTING INSTRUCTIONS FOR SAFETY AND DONENESS

- ◆ Set the oven temperature no lower than 325°F. Pre-heating is not necessary.
- ◆ Be sure the turkey is completely thawed. Cooking times are based on completely thawed birds.
- ◆ Place turkey breast-side up on a flat wire rack in a shallow roasting pan 2 to 2½ inches deep.
- ◆ If a meat thermometer is not available, cook stuffing in a casserole.
- ◆ The temperature must reach **180°F** in the thigh of a whole turkey, stuffing should reach **165°F**, and cook a turkey breast to **170°F**.
- ◆ Juices should be clear.
- ◆ Let the bird stand 20 minutes before removing stuffing or carving.

APPROXIMATE COOKING TIMES

	Unstuffed	Stuffed
8 to 12 lbs.	2¾ to 3 hrs	3 to 3½ hrs
12 to 14 lbs.	3 to 3¾ hrs	3½ to 4 hrs
14 to 18 lbs.	3¾ to 4¼ hrs	4 to 4¼ hrs
18 to 20 lbs.	4¼ to 4½ hrs	4¼ to 4¾ hrs
20 to 24 lbs.	4½ to 5 hours	4¾ to 5¼ hrs