

THANKSGIVING DAY FOOD SAFETY TIPS

Food safety starts from the purchase to the preparation, cooking and serving of the turkey and other traditional dishes. Here are some helpful tips to keep your Thanksgiving Day dinner safe, so you can enjoy the company of your family and guests.

Food Safety Tips When Shopping

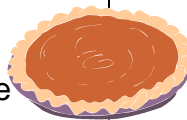
- Buy your turkey preferably 1-2 days before you cook it
- Pick up the turkey, dairy and eggs just before checking out
- Bag the frozen turkey or keep it separate from fresh produce
- Avoid buying fresh, stuffed turkeys



- *Submerge turkey in its original package in a pan of **cold water** enough to cover the turkey. Change the water every 30 minutes, and allow 30 minutes thawing for every pound. Cook the turkey immediately.*
- *Remove any packaging and keep turkey in a **microwave-safe** pan to catch any juices. Thaw in the **microwave oven**. Cook the turkey immediately.*

Storing the Turkey/Perishable Foods

- Store the turkey in the freezer if you bought it early in the month.
- Keep turkey in the refrigerator if cooking within 24-48 hours
- Keep the turkey in its package in a pan to keep any juices from getting into fresh produce or food
- Refrigerate store bought pumpkin pie



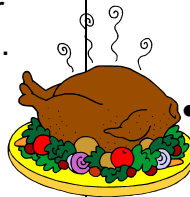
Note: Microwave ovens may vary. Be sure to check the manual for the minutes per pound and power level to use for defrosting

- Remove any giblets from the turkey cavity and cook separately

Preparing Food Safely

Thawing the Frozen Turkey Safely

- Wash your hands with soap and water before handling the turkey or any food.
- There are 3 ways to defrost a frozen turkey safely :
 - *Defrost turkey in the **refrigerator (40 °F)** approximately 24 hours for every 4-5 pounds of turkey*

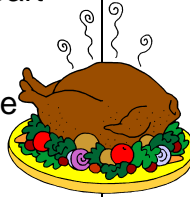


- Wash your hands with soap and water.
- Make sure working areas and surfaces, utensils and plates are also clean.
- Use separate cutting or chopping boards for meats and for fruits/vegetables. Avoid putting cooked food on cutting boards that have touched raw food.
- Avoid wiping your hands that have touched raw food with dish towels.
- Keep raw food away from vegetables and side dishes that will not be cooked.

Cooking Food Safely



- Stuffing the turkey is not recommended. Cook the stuffing separate.
- Use a food thermometer. You can't tell if the turkey is cooked simply by looking
- Check to make sure every part of the turkey reaches a minimum internal temperature of 165 °F, even if your turkey has a pop-up temperature indicator. Check the innermost part of the thigh and wing, and the thickest part of the breast.
- Let turkey stand for 20 minutes before carving to allow juices to set.
- Stuffing should also reach a minimum temperature of 165 °F.
- Any dish containing eggs should be cooked to reach an internal temperature of 160 °F.
- Use a separate clean spoon whenever tasting food from the pot. Do not use spoon for stirring to taste.



- Use clean serving spoons for each dish.
- Wash hands with soap and water before handling food or eating.
- Carve the turkey with a clean carving knife and fork.

Storing Left-overs Safely

- Store left-over food within two hours after serving, including pumpkin pie.
- Use several shallow storage containers to store left-over food.
- Store in the refrigerator if eating left-over food within 3 days. Label and date.
- Keep in the freezer for longer storage time. Label and date.

For Further Information

Food Domain Website

<http://fooddomain.msu.edu/>

Let's Talk Turkey

http://www.fsis.usda.gov/PDF/Lets_Talk_Turkey.pdf

Turkey: Alternate Routes to the Table

http://www.fsis.usda.gov/PDF/Turkey_Alt_Routes.pdf

Ask Karen

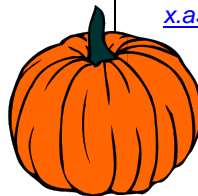
http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Food_Safety_Education/Ask_Karen/

Single Minimum Internal Temperature for Cooking Poultry

http://www.fsis.usda.gov/News_&_Events/NR_040506_01/index.asp

Serving Food Safely

- Keep cold foods cold and hot foods hot.
- Keep the pumpkin pie and any cold dessert in the refrigerator at 40 °F



By Lillian Occeña-Po, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Dept. of Food Science & Human Nutrition, Michigan State University 11/06



Michigan State University Extension programs and materials are open to all without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, or family status. MSU is an affirmative-action, equal-opportunity employer. Copyright 2006 by the Michigan State University Board of Trustees. Family and Consumer Sciences grants permission to use this publication for educational purposes only with credit given to MSU. This information is for educational purposes only. Reference to commercial products or trade names does not imply endorsement by MSU Extension or bias against those not mentioned.

