

# Turkey Talk

A Food Preparation and Safety Guide



FN/Food Safety/2007-01pr

By Darlene Christensen, USU Extension Agent

# Food Safety

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- Perishable foods, such as poultry, should not be out of the refrigerator more than 2 hours. Do NOT leave perishable foods out all day for “grazing”. Incidents of food borne illness increase during the Holiday season. Remember that young children, the elderly, and pregnant women are the most at-risk for food borne illness.
- Wash hands, utensils, sink and anything else that has been in contact with the raw turkey with soap and warm water.
- You can also sanitize utensils, sink, countertops, etc. with a chlorine bleach solution of 2 Tbsp per gallon of water.

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For more information on food preparation and food safety, contact your local Utah State University Extension office.

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# Thawing

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So, you have this frozen turkey, now what do you do with it?

There are a few ways to safely thaw your turkey. Make sure to take enough time to completely thaw it.

## **Thawing time in the refrigerator (40°F or below)**

Approximately 24 hours per 5 pounds (whole turkey).

After thawing keep turkey refrigerated only for 1-2 days.

## **Thawing Time in Cold Water**

Approximately 30 minutes per pound (whole turkey). Change water every 30 minutes to maintain cold temperature. Cook immediately.

## **Thawing in the Microwave**

Microwave thawing is safe if the turkey is not too large for the oven.

Check the manufacturer's instructions for the size turkey that will fit into your oven, the minutes per pound, and the power level for thawing.

Cook immediately after thawing.

# Roasting

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Now it's time to roast the turkey.

1. Preheat oven temperature to no lower than 325°F.
2. Place turkey breast-side up on a rack in shallow roasting pan.
3. If you choose to stuff your turkey, fill the cavity loosely.  
Cook the turkey immediately.
4. Use the following chart for the time to cook your turkey.  
The times are for thawed turkey in an oven at 325°F.  
The times are approximate.

<b>Pounds</b>	<b>Unstuffed</b>	<b>Stuffed</b>
8 - 12 lbs	2 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> - 3 hrs	3 - 3 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> hrs
12 - 14 lbs	3 - 3 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> hrs	4 - 4 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> hrs
14 - 18 lbs	3 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> - 4 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> hrs	4 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> - 4 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> hrs
18 - 20 lbs	4 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> - 4 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> hrs	4 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> - 4 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> hrs
20 - 24 lbs	4 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> - 5 hrs	4 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> - 5 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> hrs

5. Test the thickest part of the thigh with a meat thermometer to see that it reaches a minimum of 165°F. If you do not have a meat thermometer, make sure that the pop-up thermometer on the turkey has popped up.