



## SAFE Thanksgiving Feast



Follow these guidelines for a safe family feast.

**Groceries:** Keep fresh produce separate from meats in your shopping cart and grocery bags. If not returning home within an hour, keep perishables in a cooler. Refrigerate items promptly, keeping foods in appropriate containers to prevent drips and leaks.

**Kitchen prep:** Wash your hands, work surfaces, and utensils with hot soapy water between each food prep step; never intermingle uncooked meats and ready to eat foods on the same surfaces.

**Cooking the feast:** Learn the *danger zone* of food temperatures: Foods kept at room temperature more than 2 hours, can reach between 40°F - 140° F where harmful bacteria grow rapidly (the *danger zone*). Keep cold foods cold (below 40°F) till serving time and keep hot foods hot (above 140°F).

**The turkey:** Buying a frozen turkey? Safely thaw in the refrigerator, allowing 24 hours for every 4 lbs. of bird. You can thaw it more quickly in a sink of COLD water that you change every 30 minutes. (COLD water prevents reaching the *danger zone*!) Purchase a fresh turkey 1-2 days before cooking. Fresh or frozen, keep it on a tray to catch leaking juices. Do not rinse your turkey before cooking!

**Temperature:** Invest in a food thermometer! This is the only reliable indicator that your food is cooked to a safe temperature. A cooked turkey should register a minimum of 165° F. **Stuffing** should also bake to 165° F, whether as a separate casserole (recommended safest), or inside the turkey. If inside, stuff *loosely* – ¾ cup per pound of turkey – immediately before roasting.

**Serving:** REPLACE empty platters – don't add fresh food to empty platters; several hands may have taken food from the dish, which has been at room temperature. Do not let food stand at room temperature for more than 2 hours.

Finally, store those yummy **leftovers** in small portions in shallow containers (to cool quickly); eat or freeze within 3 to 4 days – within 2 days for gravy.

More information about safe Thanksgiving preparations: <http://www.fightbac.org/winter/thanksgiving/talking-turkey/>

Authors: Galvan, D, Ravalin, D, Soule KE

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