

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
November 17, 2017

For Further Information Call:
Deborah Weeks (530) 889-7350

Safe Holiday Turkey Preparation

Preparing and cooking a turkey is happening in many kitchens this Holiday Season. Often people fret over the tastiest seasonings for the bird and keeping the turkey meat moist. Being mindful of food safety practices is just as important. Having your guest go home with food poisoning will not win you a popularity contest. Follow these food safety rules to ensure that it's your house everyone wants to visit again next year.

Thawing

- Use one of three methods to thaw your turkey. The refrigerator, cold water, or microwave. For further details on using these methods, click on the Let's Talk Turkey link below.
- **Keep the turkey in its original wrapper while thawing!** Place the turkey in a large pan to catch any juices that may leak through the wrapper. This will keep other foods and clean surfaces from becoming contaminated by the raw turkey and its juices.
- **Do not rinse your turkey!** Raw turkey juices can splash as far as 3 feet and contaminate nearby surfaces. The only time you should rinse a turkey is when it has been brined.
- **Remember!** Always wash hands, utensils, the sink, and anything else that comes in contact with raw turkey and its juices with soap and water.

Preparing and Cooking

- **Do not roast your turkey at a temperature lower than 325°F!** Lower oven temperatures may allow for bacteria to grow on the turkey, causing foodborne illness.
- **Turkey is not safe to eat until it reaches a temperature of 165°F!** Use a food thermometer to check the temperature in the innermost part of the thigh and wing, and the thickest part of the breast.

Storing Left Overs

- Throw out any turkey that has been left out at room temperature for more than 2 hours.
- Eat leftover turkey within 3 to 4 days of being cooked or store in freezer.

Following these food safety rules can prevent foodborne illness and keep the memories of your holiday meal centered on time spent together rather than time being sick. For more tips and suggestions on how to safely prepare your holiday turkey, go to [Let's Talk Turkey-fsis](#).

Children and adults participating in the Let's Eat Healthy! Program are learning about food safety and healthy eating habits. For more nutrition or program information, please call (530) 889-7350, or visit our website at <http://ucanr.edu/sites/letseathealthy>. "Like" us on Facebook for additional tips and updates at UC CalFresh Nutrition Education Program, Placer/Nevada Counties.



This material was produced by the University of California CalFresh Nutrition Education Program with funding from USDA SNAP, known in California as CalFresh (formerly food stamps). These institutions are equal opportunity providers and employers. CalFresh provides assistance to low-income households and can help buy nutritious foods for better health. For CalFresh information, call 1-877-847-3663.