

## Enjoy Your Holiday Turkey!

Turkey is a common food served at Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners. One way to ensure you enjoy a safe and healthy holiday is through safe food handling methods. Poultry contains harmful bacteria and if it is handled carelessly or cooked inadequately these bacteria can cause illnesses such as **Salmonellosis**. By following these guidelines, you can ensure that you, your family and your guests remain healthy.

- Make a fresh turkey the last thing you pick up when shopping. Check the temperature of the refrigerator in the store to ensure the product has been stored at 4°C/40°F or colder. If you are purchasing a frozen turkey the freezer temperature should be -18°C/0°F or colder.
- Avoid buying damaged or frost covered packages, dry or discoloured meat or packages that are warm to the touch.
- When you get home from the store, place your turkey in a pan or container to catch any dripping juices. Store on the lowest shelf of the fridge to prevent spillage of the raw turkey juices contaminating other foods with bacteria.
- The safest ways to thaw a frozen turkey is in the refrigerator or under cold running water. Do not thaw turkey at room temperature because it allows harmful bacteria to multiply.
- Prepare raw turkey on a non-porous surface which is easy to clean and sanitize. After handling a turkey, wash your hands with warm water and soap for at least 15 seconds. Thoroughly wash and sanitize any utensils, cutting boards and surfaces that raw juices may have touched.
- Sanitizing solution: Mix 2 teaspoons (30mL) of bleach with one gallon (4L) of water.
- It takes thorough cooking to kill harmful bacteria and prevent food poisoning. Cook your turkey to an internal temperature of least 82°C/180°F. If you have stuffed the turkey the stuffing should be cooked to at least 74°C/165°F. Use a probe thermometer and check the temperature at the thickest part, usually the thigh or breast away from the bone.
- When carving your turkey use clean plates and utensils. Do not use utensils that came in contact with raw meats unless they have been washed and sanitized. Remember to wash your hands before handling the cooked turkey.
- Leftovers should be refrigerated within two hours. Carve the meat off the bones before storing the poultry. Refrigerate or freeze meat and stuffing separately and in small quantities so they will cool to 4°C/40°F quickly.
- Reheat leftovers rapidly to 74°C/165°F and serve. Leftovers should not be reheated more than once.