Turkey Safety Tips!

Thaw turkey in the refrigerator, not on the counter top

Room temperature encourages the growth of bacteria, so defrost your turkey in the refrigerator rather than on the counter top. Allow one day of defrosting for each five pounds of turkey weight. You can safely refrigerate the thawed turkey another day or two, but don’t let the juices drip on other foods. To reduce defrosting time, wrap the bird in a waterproof plastic bag and submerge it in cold water. Cold water slows the bacterial growth that may occur in the thawed outer portions while the inner areas are still thawing. Change the water every 30 minutes.

Make sure cooking temperatures are high enough to kill bacteria

The temperatures between 40 and 140 degrees Fahrenheit are the most dangerous for bacterial growth. Bacteria grow best, and some produce heat-resistant toxins, in this temperature range. Cooking a turkey at an oven temperature lower than 325 degrees is unsafe because it lets the bird and the stuffing remain in the danger zone too long. A meat thermometer, inserted into the thickest part of the thigh next to the body but not touching the bone, is the best way to assure the temperatures are high enough to kill any bacteria present.
Health: H1N1 Update

Situation Update
During the week of October 18-24, 2009, influenza activity continued to increase in the United States as reported in Flu-View. Flu activity is now widespread in 48 states. Nationally, visits to doctors for influenza-like-illness continue to increase steeply and are now higher than what is seen at the peak of many regular flu seasons. In addition, flu-related hospitalizations and deaths continue to go up nation-wide and are above what is expected for this time of year.

What You Can Do to Stay Healthy

Get vaccinated. Vaccination is the best protection we have against flu. Seasonal flu vaccine is available now and initial doses of 2009 H1N1 flu vaccine also are available, with additional doses available later this year. Influenza is thought to spread mainly person-to-person through coughing or sneezing of infected people.

Take everyday actions to stay healthy.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Germs spread that way.
- Stay home if you get sick. CDC recommends that you stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.

Follow public health advice regarding school closures, avoiding crowds and other social distancing measures.

Stay informed. This Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website (www.cdc.gov) is updated regularly as information becomes available. Call 1-800-CDC-INFO for more information.

Money Matters: Saving Money at the Gas Pump

Adjusting Your Driving
Stay close to the speed limit. Lower speeds provide greater fuel efficiency than higher speeds.

Keep your car light by leaving heavier objects at home. The more weight for your car to carry, the more fuel it needs.

Use cruise control for long stretches on roads like freeways, except on hills.

Try to avoid toll roads if possible, it can reduce the amount of stops and starts if you do not have a toll pass.

Organize
Plan out your errands so you do not have to make multiple trips to the same end of town during the week.

Use the most fuel efficient vehicle you own.

Coordinate errands with a neighbor; take turns driving to the grocery store.

Make a list of what you need for the week to make the fewest trips possible.

Alternate Transportation
Take public transportation or carpool.

Ride a bicycle.

Participate in new community car programs where cars are available for use by residents at sites throughout the city.

For more tips check out: www.fueleconomy.gov

Source: “Managing in Tough Times” handbook, UF/IFAS Extension

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