

## **Taking the Guess work out of Cooking a Turkey**

### **BUYING A TURKEY**

#### **FROZEN:**

Allow 1lb. per person. Buy anytime, but keep frozen until 1-5 days before cooking. (See "Thawing a Turkey" below)

#### **FRESH:**

Allow 1 lb. per person. Buy 1-2 days before cooking.

### **THAWING A TURKEY**

#### **IN THE REFRIGERATOR (40F):**

**Approximately 24 hours per 5 lb.  
of whole turkey**

|               |             |
|---------------|-------------|
| 8 to 12 lbs.  | 1 to 2 days |
| 12 to 16 lbs. | 2 to 3 days |
| 16 to 20 lbs. | 3 to 4 days |
| 20 to 24 lbs. | 4 to 5 days |

#### **IN COLD WATER:**

**Approximately 3 minutes per pound of whole  
turkey. Change water every ½ hour.**

|               |                |
|---------------|----------------|
| 8 to 12 lbs.  | 4 to 6 hours   |
| 12 to 16 lbs. | 6 to 8 hours   |
| 16 to 20 lbs. | 8 to 10 hours  |
| 20 to 24 lbs. | 10 to 12 hours |

**After thawing, remove neck and giblets from the neck and body cavities, rinse turkey inside and out with cold water, and drain well. Thawed turkey may remain in refrigerator 1 – 2 days.**

**Thawing in microwave is not recommended.**

### **ROASTING A TURKEY**

#### **TIMETABLE FOR FRESH OR THAWED TURKEY AT 325°F:**

These times are approximate and should always be used in conjunction with a pop-up timer or properly placed thermometer.

#### **Unstuffed:**

|               |                 |
|---------------|-----------------|
| 8 to 12 lbs   | 2 ¾ to 3 hrs.   |
| 12 to 14 lbs. | 3 to 3 ¾ hrs.   |
| 14 to 18 lbs. | 3 ¾ to 4 ¼ hrs. |
| 18 to 20 lbs. | 4 ¼ to 4 ½ hrs. |
| 20 to 24 lbs. | 4 ½ to 5 hrs.   |

#### **Stuffed:**

|               |                 |
|---------------|-----------------|
| 8 to 12 lbs   | 3 to 3 ½ hrs.   |
| 12 to 14 lbs. | 3 ½ to 4 hrs    |
| 14 to 18 lbs. | 4 to 4 ¼ hrs    |
| 18 to 20 lbs. | 4 ¼ to 4 ¾ hrs. |
| 20 to 24 lbs. | 4 ¾ to 5 ¼ hrs  |

### **ROASTING INSTRUCTIONS:**

- Set the oven temperature no lower than 325°F.
- Place turkey breast-side up on the rack in a shallow roasting pan.
- It is recommended to cook stuffing outside the bird, in a casserole dish, or on the stove top. But if stuffed, stuff the body and neck cavities loosely.
- For safety and doneness, the pop-up timer in the breast should have popped, or the internal temperature registered on a meat thermometer should reach a minimum of 180°F in the thigh before removing from oven. The center of the stuffing should reach 165°F after stand time.
- Juices should be clear
- Let the turkey stand 20 minutes before removing stuffing and carving.

**Wash hands, utensils, sink, and anything else that has contacted raw turkey with hot, soapy water!**

## **STORING LEFTOVERS**

Debone turkey and refrigerate all leftovers in shallow containers within 2 hours of cooking. Use leftover turkey and stuffing within 3 to 4 days, gravy within 1 to 2 days, or freeze these foods. Reheat thoroughly to a temperature of 165°F or until hot and steaming.

## **ROASTING A TURKEY BREAST**

**Timetable for fresh or thawed turkey breast at 325°F.**

These times are approximate and should always be used in conjunction with a pop-up timer or properly placed thermometer.

4 – 6 lbs.      1 ½ to 2 ¼ hrs.

6 – 8 lbs.      2 ¼ to 3 ¼ hrs.

## **ROASTING INSTRUCTIONS FOR TURKEY BREAST:**

- Set the oven temperature no lower than 325°F.
- Place turkey breast on a rack in a shallow roasting pan.
- For safety and doneness, the pop-up timer should have popped, or the internal temperature registered on a meat thermometer should reach a minimum of 170°F in the thickest part of the breast before removing from the oven.
- Juices should be clear.
- Let the breast stand 20 minutes before carving.

## **ADDITIONAL ROASTING HINTS**

- Tuck wing tips back under shoulder of bird, called “akimbo”, before roasting for easier carving afterwards.
- Add one-half cut of water to the bottom of the pan.
- In the beginning, a loose tent of aluminum foil may be placed over the turkey for the first 1 to 1 ½ hrs, then removed for browning. Make sure the foil does not block the pop-up timer.
- Or a tent of foil may be placed over the turkey after the turkey has reached a golden brown.
- Check periodically to see if the pop-up timer has activated, indication the bird has reached final temperature for safety and doneness.