



## Talking Turkey

### The Answers to Commonly Asked Questions

Turkey buyers find several options at retail stores. Turkey selection should be largely dependent on when the bird is to be cooked. Refrigerated storage for long periods of time reduces quality. Buying a frozen turkey too late may not provide sufficient time to properly thaw the bird prior to cooking.

#### Buying Recommendations

*Frozen* buy anytime and thaw 1 to 5 days prior to cooking.

*Fresh* buy 1 to 2 days before cooking and refrigerate.

*Pre-stuffed* not recommended because home refrigerators may not keep the stuffing below 4°C.

#### Thawing Recommendations

Weight (pounds)	Thaw In Refrigerator (days)	Thaw In Cold Water (hours)	In Microwave
8-12	1-2	4-6	See Manufacturers Instructions.
12-16	2-3	6-9	
16-20	3-4	9-12	
20-24	4-5	11-12	

#### Roasting Recommendations at 325°F

Weight (pounds)	Stuffed (hours)	Unstuffed (hours)
8-12	3.00-3.50	2.75-3.00
12-14	3.50-4.00	3.00-3.75
14-18	4.00-4.50	3.75-4.25
18-20	4.25-4.75	4.25-4.50
20-24	4.75-5.25	4.50-5.00

Lower cooking temperatures for longer times, such as overnight at 250°F, are not recommended because the meat may not heat fast enough to stop pathogenic organisms from growing.

#### Verification of Cooking

Time is not everything. Several factors, including incomplete thawing and inaccurate oven thermostat could cause the turkey to be undercooked. Use a meat thermometer to ensure that the meat (without touching the bone) and stuffing reach at least 165°F. Also, the juices should be clear with no trace of pink. These two conditions confirm that the meat is safe to eat.