

November 2025

Building Strong Families in Scott County

This month...



Turkey Prepared Safely



Cushaw Pie



Homemaker Enrollment Forms

FCS Today

TALKING TURKEY: DINNER IS SERVED

Source: Heather Norman-Burgdorf, Dietetics and Human Nutrition, and Annhall Norris, Family and Consumer Sciences

There are several ways to cook your turkey. One way is not necessarily better than the other: It depends on your preference. Traditionally, turkeys are baked in the oven. They can be baked in a roasting pan or an oven-safe plastic bag. They can be cooked in a roaster oven, deep fried, or even cooked in the microwave.

How to Check Internal Temperatures

Whatever way you choose to cook your bird, remember that the final internal temperature must reach 165°F measured with a food thermometer to destroy bacteria and avoid foodborne illness.

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Cooperative Extension Service

Agriculture and Natural Resources
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MARTIN-GATTON COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND ENVIRONMENT

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Lexington, KY 40506



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Sincerely,

Alivia Stevens

Alivia Stevens
Scott County Extension
Agent for Family and
Consumer Sciences



PREPARING *a food safe* TURKEY

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A food thermometer is a metal-stemmed thermometer that can be inserted into the turkey. This is preferred over the small pop-up temperature gauges found in many turkeys. The pop-up gauges are not temperature specific and are not as accurate as food thermometers at determining if the bird is at 165°F. Check the temperature in the innermost part of the thigh and the thickest part of the breast.

Adding Flavor before Cooking

Many people choose to brine and/or baste their turkey to add flavor and increase moisture in the bird. Brining is simply soaking the bird in salty water in the refrigerator for various amounts of time to add moisture and flavor. Basting is a process of pouring juices, melted butter, or oil over meat throughout the cooking process. These steps are not required for preparation but are based on preference.

Cooking in the Oven

Start by preheating the oven to 325°F. Next remove the turkey from its packaging. Do this in the sink to allow juices to drain, but don't wash (or rinse) the turkey. Remove the bag of giblets and pat the turkey dry with a paper towel. Rub salt, pepper and other dry seasonings of your choice all over the bird. Drizzle oil (or butter) generously over the skin and massage. The oil will allow for a crispy skin. You can rub seasonings and oil inside the cavity if you like. Many also like to place celery, onion, garlic or carrots inside the cavity for extra flavor during the cooking process and to season the drippings. Note that you don't eat the vegetables cooked inside the cavity, you discard them once the turkey is done. Once the bird is seasoned, place it breast-side up on a rack in a roasting pan. The USDA recommends cooking a whole turkey breast side up during the entire cooking process. Flipping over a large, hot bird is difficult and can be dangerous. It may also tear the skin, which makes the finished product unattractive.

Placing the turkey on a rack in the roasting pan will allow air to circulate around the turkey while cooking and for drippings to collect in the bottom of the pan. If you don't have a rack you'll want to make one. Crumpled up aluminum foil or large chunks of potatoes and onions make a nice platform for the bird. Just make sure you don't place the turkey directly on the bottom of the pan as this causes uneven heating and could lead to burning. Add 1½-2 cups of liquid (e.g. chicken broth, water) to the pan. Place the pan in the oven and cook the turkey until the internal temperature reaches 165°F measured with a food thermometer. For food safety reasons, it is best to cook the stuffing separately. If you want to cook a stuffed bird, mix the ingredients right before stuffing and stuff loosely. Be sure to check the temperature of the stuffing when you check the temperature of the turkey. The stuffing should reach a temperature of 165°F as well. If your turkey already looks done and the skin is a nice golden brown, but the internal temperature has not reached 165°F, you should cover the skin with aluminum foil and keep cooking. The turkey is not safe to eat until the internal temperature reaches 165°F, no matter what color the skin is, or the color of the juices. Use Table 1 below for approximate cooking times at 325°F in the oven.

Remove the turkey from the oven and let it stand for 20 minutes before carving or removing the stuffing. This allows the meat to firm up and reabsorb some of the natural juices. If you start carving immediately, you will lose some of those juices and the meat will be dry.

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Cooking in a Bag

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Prep and season the turkey like above but place the whole bird inside a large bag specifically designed for cooking a turkey. These oven bags can be found in the same grocery aisle as sandwich bags and other storage bags. Place the bagged turkey on a rack in the roasting pan and follow the directions on the oven bag package for the manufacturer's recommended cooking times. As a general rule, whole, unstuffed turkeys in bags should be cooked at 350°F for the following times: Add at least 30 minutes to the times above if you are cooking a stuffed turkey.

Cooking in a Roaster Oven A roaster oven is a portable, electric appliance that can double as an oven. They are especially useful around Thanksgiving when you need your conventional oven for other baking purposes such as stuffing, sweet potato casserole and pumpkin pie. Generally, roaster oven temperatures and times are the same as conventional ovens. But always check the roaster's operating manual for the manufacturer's recommendations.

Preheat the roaster to at least 325°F. Prep the turkey as described above and then place it on the rack inside the roaster oven. Make sure the lid closes properly. Leave the lid on throughout cooking. Each time you lift the lid, it lets heat out and slows the cooking process. You can use a cooking bag in the roaster oven as long as no part of the bag touches the sides, bottom, or lid. Cook until the internal temperature of the bird reaches 165°F at the innermost part of the thigh and wing and the thickest part of the breast. Allow it to rest 20 minutes before slicing.

Deep-fat Frying a Turkey

Turkeys can be deep fried as long as the bird is completely thawed and has not been stuffed. The turkey should be no larger than 12 pounds. Before you start your prep, you'll need to make sure the turkey fits in your cooker with enough space to allow the oil to completely cover the turkey by 1-2 inches without it spilling over the sides. You can determine the amount of oil you need by testing the volume with water. Start by placing the turkey on the stand or in a basket and lowering it into the cooker. Add water to cover the turkey 1-2 inches. Remove the turkey and draw a line on the cooker at the water level or pour it out and measure it. This is the amount of oil you will need. Dry the cooker thoroughly before adding the oil and choose an oil that has a high smoke point. Peanut oil is best but other oils such as safflower, soybean and canola will work too.

Heat the oil to 350°F and monitor the temperature of the oil throughout the entire process using a thermometer attached to the side of the cooker. Next, you'll start prepping the bird. Pat it dry with paper towels and apply seasonings. Many people like to inject seasonings for turkeys that will be deep fried, but you can also rub seasoning onto the skin. There is no need for butter or oil on the skin, since the bird will be cooking in oil. Lower the turkey into the oil and begin cooking. Make sure it is completely covered. Allow 3-5 minutes cooking time per pound. After cooking, remove the bird from the oil and check the temperature with a food thermometer. The internal temperature must reach 165°F at the innermost part of the thigh and wing and the thickest part of the breast. If the turkey is not done, place it back in the oil for further cooking. Once done, remove it from the oil and place it on a pan or tray lined with paper towels. Let it rest 20 minutes before carving. The used cooking oil can be stored and used again. Allow it to cool and then strain it. Pour the oil into storage containers and store them in the fridge. The oil can be safely stored in the refrigerator and reused within one month if it has been strained and covered.

Microwaving a Turkey

Did you know that turkeys can be cooked in a microwave oven? They can be cooked whole or in parts, if they are completely thawed. For more information about

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thawing turkeys, see the publication Talking Turkey: Prep 3and Safety. Prep your turkey as described above but do not stuff it. Cook the stuffing in a separate casserole when using the microwave. When selecting your seasoning rub you may want to include a dark seasoning, such as paprika, so that the skin appears brown. Keep in mind the turkey will not crisp up and brown in a microwave like it does when cooked in the oven or a roaster.

Cooking bags can be used in the microwave. In fact, cooking the turkey in a bag in the microwave helps it to cook more evenly. If you're not going to use a bag, place the turkey or turkey parts in a microwave safe dish and cover it with a lid. If you don't have a lid, cover the dish with plastic wrap and vent the top. A 12-pound turkey is the largest size most microwaves will hold. It is important that you have at least 3 inches of space between the bird and the top of the microwave and 2-3 inches of space around the bird.

Follow the recommendations in the microwave owner's manual for cooking a turkey. Microwaves differ in their wattages so cooking times are different for each one. A general rule is to allow 9 - 10 minutes of cook time per pound on medium power. Remember to rotate the bird during cooking to ensure even cooking. Rotating should be done by hand if you don't have a spinning plate. Use a food thermometer to check for doneness. The internal temperature must reach 165°F at the innermost part of the thigh, the innermost part of the wing and the thickest part of the breast. After removing the turkey from the microwave, let it stand for at least 20 minutes before carving.

Cooking a Frozen

Turkey If you find yourself having to cook a frozen turkey on Thanksgiving, don't fret! It can be done. There are a few extra steps and added cook time, but the day is not lost. You'll want to use the oven for baking and allow 50% more cook time – this is simply 1.5 times the recommended cook time from suggested cooking times for oven roasted turkeys. For example, a 19-pound thawed turkey needs 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours to cook whereas a frozen 19-pound turkey needs 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ hours to cook. Oven baking/roasting is the only method recommended for cooking a frozen turkey. Don't use an oven bag or cook the frozen turkey in the deep fryer. You should also never smoke, grill or use the microwave to cook a frozen turkey.

Start the process by preheating the oven to 325°F. Remove the turkey from its packaging and place on a rack in a roasting pan. Don't try to remove the bag of giblets. You won't be able to yet. Place the turkey in the oven and let it cook undisturbed for 2 hours. After 2 hours, take the temperature using a food thermometer at the legs and thigh. The temperature should be around 90 to 95°F. At this time, you can season the bird and apply butter or oil to the outside. The breast and cavity of the bird is still partially frozen at this point, so you may not be able to remove the bag of giblets. If you can, go ahead. If not, don't worry about it just yet. Put the bird back in the oven for another hour and then check it again.

After 3 hours in the oven you should be able to remove the bag of giblets. Check to see if the bag holding the giblets is paper or plastic. If the bag is paper, there is no safety concern if the giblets continue to cook inside the bird, but if you can, go ahead and remove the giblets and cook them separately. If the bag is plastic, you need to remove it. If any of the plastic has started to melt, you will need to throw away the bag of giblets as well as the turkey. Harmful chemicals can be released into the turkey as the bag melts making the turkey unsafe to eat.

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Once the giblets have been removed, brush the outside of the turkey with butter or oil or baste with pan drippings before placing back in the oven. At this point the turkey should cook for another 1 ½ to 2 hours depending on its size. Start checking the temperature after 4 ½ hours. The turkey needs to reach an internal temperature of 165°F at the innermost part of the thigh, the innermost part of the wing and the thickest part of the breast. Once it's done, don't forget to let it rest at least 20 minutes before carving.

Additional Cooking Methods

Turkeys can also be prepared in pressure cookers and slow cookers. In these cases, turkey parts or quarters will be cooked as many turkeys will not fit in these small appliances. Refer to the owner's manual for instructions on preparing turkeys. Cooking times will vary by machine and altitude.

References

"Alternative Ways to Cook Turkey," United States Department of Health & Human Services, accessed on October 1, 2018, <https://www.foodsafety.gov/keep/charts/alternativeturkey.html>.

"Proper Thermometer Placement," United States Department of Agriculture, accessed on October 1, 2018, https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/food-safety-education/teach-others/fsis-educationalcampaigns/thermy/properthermometer-placement/ct_index.

"Turkey: Alternate Routes to the Table," United States Department of Agriculture, accessed on September 28, 2018, <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/food-safety-education/get-answers/food-safety-fact-sheets/poultry-preparation/turkeyalternate-routes-to-the-table>.

"Turkey Basics: Safe Cooking," United States Department of Agriculture, accessed on October 1, 2018, https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/food-safety-education/get-answers/food-safety-fact-sheets/poultry-preparation/turkeybasics-safe-cooking/CT_Index.

Table 1. Cooking times for oven roasting.

Unstuffed Bird		Stuffed Bird	
Weight	Time	Weight	Time
4-6 lb. breast	1 ½-2 ¼ hours	8-12 lb.	3-3 ½ hours
6-8 lb. breast	2 ¼-3 ¼ hours	12-14 lb.	3 ½-4 hours
8-12 lb.	2 ¾-3 hours	14-18 lb.	4-4 ½ hours
12-14 lb.	3-3 ¾ hours	18-20 lb.	4 ¼-4 ¾ hours
14-18 lb.	3 ¾-4 ¼ hours	20-24 lb.	4 ¾-5 ¼ hours
18-20 lb.	4 ¼-4 ½ hours		
20-24 lb.	4 ½-5 hours		

Table 2. Cooking times in a turkey bag.

Weight	Time
8-12 lb.	1 ½-2 hours
12-16 lb.	2-2 ½ hours
16-20 lb.	2 ½-3 hours
20-24 lb.	3-3 ½ hours

Table 3. Traditional cooking method and estimated cooking times.

Method	Size of Turkey	Estimated Cooking Time
Oven (stuffed, unstuffed, or in bag)	See charts above	See charts above
Roaster oven	8-24 lb.	Similar times to oven roasting
Deep-fat frying	8-12 lb.	3-5 minutes per pound in 350° oil
Frozen turkey	8-24 lb.	Add 50% additional time to oven times
Microwaving	8-12 lb.	9-10 minutes per pound on 50% power



Please Excuse our Dust

Our office is currently under construction.

We are excited about the new changes coming that will lead to new types of programs and opportunities for Scott County.

However, this means that during different phases of this process parking may be limited, meetings might have some distracting noise coming in from the outside, and room availability will be limited.

We appreciate your understanding during this exciting time.



Upcoming Dates to Remember

November 2025

3rd: Homemaker Leader Lesson @ 10:00 AM

5th: Diabetes MyPlate Workshop @ 10:00 AM

6th: Rug Hookers Meeting @ 10:00 AM

6th: Adult Quilt Class @ 5:00 PM (Registration Closed)

8th: Elkhorn Creek Quilt Guild Sit-N-Sew @ 9:00 AM

10th: Sour Dough Class @ 9:00 AM (Registration Closed)

13th: Rug Hookers @ 10:00 AM

13th: Homemaker Council Meeting @ 10:00 AM

13th: FCS Book Club @ 1:00 PM

13th: Adult Quilt Class @ 5:00 PM (Registration Closed)

17th: 5 Wishes Presentation with Bluegrass Care Navigators @ 10:00 AM

18th: Elkhorn Creek Quilt Guild Sit-N-Sew @ 9:00 AM

18th: Elkhorn Creek Quilt Guild Meeting @ 6:00 PM

20th: Needlework Club @ 1:00 PM

27th: OFFICE CLOSED

28th: OFFICE CLOSED



Cushaw Pie

2 cups cooked and mashed cushaw squash	½ cup brown sugar	½ teaspoon nutmeg
¼ cup butter	2 eggs	¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
¼ cup sugar	1 teaspoon lemon extract	1 9-inch graham cracker pie shell

- To prepare squash:** Wash and remove rind from the squash. Cut flesh into 1 inch squares. Steam squash cubes until tender. Drain and mash.
- Preheat** oven to 400° F. In a large bowl, mix together the cushaw, butter, and sugars. Add eggs, lemon extract, vanilla extract, nutmeg and cinnamon. Mix until smooth.

Yield: 8 slices

Nutritional Analysis: 250 calories, 13 g fat, 5 g saturated fat, 2.5 g trans fat, 70 mg cholesterol, 140 mg sodium, 33g carbohydrate, 1 g fiber, 3 g protein.

Buying Kentucky Proud is easy. Look for the label at your grocery store, farmers' market, or roadside stand.



Health Bulletins
Scan here to read full issues!



THINGS TO KNOW

-ANNOUNCEMENTS - UPCOMING EVENTS - SAVE THE DATES-



Homemaker Council Meeting

Nov. 13th @ 10:00 AM



Basic Meal Planning for Diabetes: Think your Plate

November 5th @ 10:00 AM



Must Sign up to participate.
to sign up call (502)863-0984

Homemaker Leader Lesson: Stretching Your Dollar

November 3rd @ 10:00 AM



LAST CHANCE

Preorder Now!

Scott County Homemaker Holiday Cookbook
Reprint from 1973
\$10.00

Preorder now - pay when you pick up
To preorder call (502) 863-0984

Call by 4:30 PM on Nov. 1st

Volunteers needed

Recipes for Life will be
December 18th

if you are interested in
volunteering please call
(502) 863 -0984.



Reminder

When Scott County Public Schools are
Closed Due to inclement Weather
Scott County FCS Programs are also
Cancelled.

-Stay Safe Everyone -



The next newsletter is
combined for December 2025
and January 2026. There will
not be a separate newsletter
mailed out in January.

Five Wishes Presentation from Bluegrass Care Navigators

November 17th at 10:00 AM

at the Scott County Extension Office

Sign up to participate, to sign up: (502)863-0984



What is Five Wishes?

Five Wishes is an easy-to-use, legal advance directive created by the non-profit organization Aging with Dignity. It goes beyond a traditional living will.

The "five wishes" covered in the document are:

1. The Person I Want to Make Care Decisions for Me When I Can't:
Naming your healthcare proxy or agent.
2. The Kind of Medical Treatment I Want or Don't Want: Specifying your wishes regarding life support and other medical interventions.
3. How Comfortable I Want to Be: Detailing preferences for pain management, comfort, and personal care.
4. How I Want People to Treat Me: Describing how you want to be treated, such as having certain people present or being in a particular environment.
5. What I Want My Loved Ones to Know: Communicating personal feelings, forgiveness, and final wishes.





LET'S TALK TURKEY

Types of turkeys regulated by the USDA:








*For more information about each type of turkey, visit fsis.usda.gov.

3 WAYS TO THAW

While frozen, a turkey is safe indefinitely. As soon as it begins to thaw, bacteria that may have been present before freezing will begin to grow again. Here are three ways to safely thaw your bird:

- Refrigerator:** Safe to store the turkey for another 1 – 2 days in the refrigerator.
This is the USDA recommended thawing method.
- How to thaw:** Allow approximately 24 hrs. for every 4-5 lbs of bird.
- Cold water:** Cook immediately after thawing.
How to thaw: Submerge the bird in cold water & change every 30 mins.
- Microwave:** Cook immediately after thawing.
How to thaw: Use defrost function based on weight

For more information on safe thawing methods, visit fsis.usda.gov

DID YOU KNOW?
It's safe to cook a frozen turkey though cooking time will be 50% longer!

Clean



Wash your hands for 20 seconds with soap and warm water.



Utensils
Plates
Countertops
Cutting boards

SHOULD ALSO BE WASHED

Bacteria, which can be present inside and outside a turkey, can't be washed off the bird! Cooking is the only way to destroy this potentially dangerous bacteria.

SO DON'T WASH YOUR TURKEY!!

SEPA RATE



Separate raw turkey from fresh food, and use separate cutting boards, plates, and utensils.



Keep dishes that touch raw food separate, too!



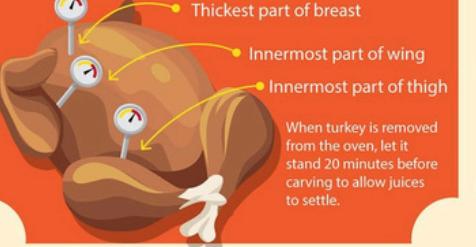
Wash items that touch raw meat with soap and warm water.

COOK



Your bird is not safe until it reaches 165 °F — you cannot tell by the color. Remember to ensure any stuffing cooked with the bird reaches 165 °F, too!

Use three places to check the temperature.



Thickest part of breast
Innermost part of wing
Innermost part of thigh

When turkey is removed from the oven, let it stand 20 minutes before carving to allow juices to settle.

CHILL

Take your time around the dinner table, but refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours!

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Safe in fridge 3-4 days
Safe frozen, but use within 2-6 months for best quality.

Leftover turkey should be cut into smaller pieces, and store items separately in smaller containers.

Be sure to pack leftovers in a cooler if traveling.

Reheat thoroughly to a temperature of 165 °F.

Remember, bacteria that cause foodborne illnesses can't be smelled or tasted!

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
Visit foodsafety.gov

If you have a specific question, call the USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline at 1-888-MPHOTLINE or visit AskKaren.gov. Visit PregunteleAKaren.gov for questions in Spanish.






Scott County Homemakers: New Member Auction

at the Scott County Extension Office

December 3rd beginning at 11:00 AM- 2:00PM



- Each club is responsible for providing information on new members and those who recruited the new member. Call (502) 863-0984 to let us know.
- We are asking each club to provide at least 3 items for the auction.
- Please have donated items to the Extension office by Dec. 1st at 4:30 PM.
- New Members will be provided \$100 of "Homemaker Bucks" and recruiters will receive \$50 of "Homemaker Bucks" (per recruit) to use during the auction. *"Homemaker Bucks" do not have monetary value outside of this auction.*
- If you would like to help setting up or cleaning up after the auction please let Alivia know by calling (502) 863-0984.





Homemaker Dues (Non Quilt Guild Member)

Dues are **\$10.00** per person and must be received by the Extension Office no later than **December 1, 2025**.

Please make checks payable to Scott County Extension Homemakers.

Dues may be dropped off at the office or mailed to: Scott County Extension Office, 1130 Cincinnati Rd., Georgetown, KY 40324. Please note this **form MUST** be included with all dues - for all new, returning, regular, and mailbox members.

You are welcome to submit the dues for your entire club on one check as long as you have forms for each member filled out and turned in with the check.

Date: _____

Enrollment Form for

County Extension Homemakers Association

Name _____

Address _____

Email _____

Name of Club _____

Phone: Home (____) _____ Work (____) _____
Cell (____) _____ Fax (____) _____

Birth year (Optional): _____

Race (Optional - circle one): White Black or African American
Asian/Pacific Islander American Indian Hawaiian Other

Ethnicity (Optional - circle one): Hispanic Non-Hispanic

Gender (Optional - circle one): Female Male

Year joined: _____ Total years of membership: _____

I, (print full name) _____, being eighteen (18) years of age or over, hereby grant permission to the University of Kentucky, including its affiliates and subsidiaries, and Kentucky Extension Homemakers Association, Inc., to interview, photograph, and/or videotape me; and/or to supervise any others who may do the interview, photography, and/or videotaping; and/or to use and/or permit others to use information from the aforementioned interview and/or the aforementioned images in educational and promotional activities and publications without compensation.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Witness: _____ Date: _____

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Where do my dues go?

\$5.00 State Dues

\$0.50 Area Membership

\$1.00 Ovarian Cancer Research

\$2.50 County Membership

\$0.50 4-H Camp Scholarships

\$0.50 Scott County Student Scholarships

