

BUY and STORE IT!

Fresh Turkey

- Support PEI farmers - Buy PEI farm-fresh turkeys directly from producers or your local grocery store. Choose a fresh turkey that is cold and well wrapped.
- Labels on fresh store-bought turkey usually show the date of packaging. Choose one packaged on the day you are buying the turkey.
- Like all raw meat, fresh turkey can spoil quickly. Pick up your fresh turkey just before going home. Put the turkey in the refrigerator or freezer right away. Use a fresh turkey within 2-3 days.

Frozen Turkey

- At home, store your frozen turkey in the freezer until it is time to thaw it.
- Once a frozen turkey has thawed, do not freeze it again until it has been cooked.

Allow about 1 pound or 0.5 kg per person. For lots of leftovers, allow 1 ½ pounds or 0.65 kg per person.

THAW IT!

If you have a frozen, **pre-stuffed** turkey, **DO NOT THAW IT**. Cook it while it is still frozen. Read its package for instructions.

- **Do not** leave a frozen turkey on the counter to thaw.
- The refrigerator is the **safest** place to thaw a turkey. Keep the turkey in its plastic wrapper and put it on a tray (to catch juices) in the fridge. It takes at least 5 hours for each pound of turkey or 10 hours for each kilogram, or 2 full days for a 10 pound or a 4.5 kilogram turkey. Allow extra time for thawing.
- A **faster** way to thaw turkey is to keep the turkey in its plastic wrap and put it in a big pan. Fill the pan with cold water to cover the whole turkey. Change the water every hour. Always use **cold** water. It will take about 1 hour for every pound or 2 hours for every kilogram to thaw the turkey. Be sure that the bird is thoroughly defrosted, with no ice in the cavity, before roasting.

CLEAN IT!

- Always wash your hands well in hot soapy water before and after handling raw turkey.
- Take the plastic wrap off the turkey. Take the neck and the bag of giblets out of the turkey. They can be boiled to make stock for soup.
- It is not necessary to rinse the thawed turkey with water prior to cooking. Although washing the turkey can remove surface bacteria, the recommended roasting temperature easily destroys any bacteria present on the surface of the turkey.
- Don't let raw turkey or its juices touch other foods in the refrigerator or during preparation. Do not put any foods on the plate that held raw turkey.
- Wash utensils, dishes, sinks and counters used for preparing the turkey with hot, soapy water. Then rinse them using a sinkful of warm water with one capful of chlorine bleach (eg. Javex). Finally, rinse surfaces, dishes and utensils with hot water.

STUFF IT!

Here's a favorite recipe.

¾ c.	Melted butter or margarine	175 mL
¾ c.	Chopped onions	175 mL
12 c.	Bread crumbs	3 L
1 ½ c.	Chopped celery	375 mL
2 tsp.	Salt	10 mL
1 tsp.	Pepper	5 mL
1 Tbsp.	Sage or summer savory	15 mL
1 Tbsp.	Poultry seasoning	15 mL
3	Chopped apples	3

Combine all ingredients. Pack loosely into turkey just before roasting. Makes enough for a 14-16 lb or 6-7 kg turkey.

TIME IT!

 Approximate Roasting Times for Whole Turkeys at 350°F (180°C)

Weight	Stuffed	Unstuffed
6-8 lbs (3 - 3.5 kg)	3 - 3 ¼ hours	2 ½ - 2 ¾ hours
8-10 lbs (3.5 - 4.5 kg)	3 ¼ - 3 ½ hours	2 ¾ - 3 hours
10-12 lbs (4.5- 5.5 kg)	3 ½ - 3 ¾ hours	3 - 3 ¼ hours
12-16 lbs (5.5 - 7 kg)	3 ¾ - 4 hours	3 ¼ - 3 ½ hours
16 -22 lbs (7 - 10 kg)	4 - 4 ½ hours	3 ½ - 4 hours

ROAST IT!

- Preheat your oven to 350°F (180°C). Do not roast turkey at a lower temperature.
- If you want to stuff your turkey, do so lightly (don't pack it in!) and just before it goes into the oven. **Do not** stuff it the night or day before roasting. If you wish, you can sew the cavity closed with a darning needle and household string and loosely tie the legs together.
- It is safer to cook the stuffing separately in a covered baking dish. Cook it in the oven during the last half hour of the roasting time of the turkey.
- Put the turkey, breast up, on a rack in a shallow pan. Brush the turkey lightly with cooking oil.
- If you have a meat thermometer, stick it into the thickest part of the inner thigh. Do not let the thermometer touch the bone. Roast the turkey uncovered.
- Loosely cover the turkey with foil (shiny side down) when it is golden brown, so it doesn't become too dark.
- If you baste your turkey, once an hour is enough. To **baste** means to spoon the juices in the cooking pan over the turkey.

- Start checking for doneness about a half hour before the chart says it may be cooked. Roast until the thermometer reads 170°F (77°C) for an unstuffed turkey or 185°F (85°C) for a stuffed turkey. Stuffing temperature should be 165°F (74°C).
- **If you do not have a meat thermometer**, use a long fork to stab the turkey in the thickest, meaty part under its leg. It is cooked when the juices that run out are clear, with no trace of pink. You can also tell if a turkey is done by “shaking hands” with its leg. The drumstick moves easily when it is cooked.
- Remove the turkey from the oven when it is cooked and let it stand 15-20 minutes to allow the juices to set and make it easier to carve. Remove the dressing.

CARVE IT!

To remove drumstick and thigh, press the leg away from body. The joint that connects the leg to the backbone might snap free or may be cut with a sharp knife. Cut the dark meat completely from the body by following the turkey’s body shape with the knife.

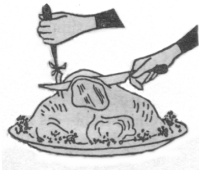


To slice the dark meat, put the drumstick and thigh on a plate and cut through the connecting joint. Slice each piece by holding the leg upside down and slicing the meat toward plate. To slice the thigh, hold it with a fork and cut even slices parallel to the bone.



Use a fork to pull the wing aside. Insert the point of the knife into the joint and cut through the joint.

To carve the breast, use a large fork to hold the turkey steady. First, cut a slice from the most rounded area of the breast (about halfway down). Continue to slice downwards to get medium-thin slices.



STORE IT!

- To be safe, turkey needs to be kept hot (in the oven 150°F or 70°C) or cold (in the fridge).
- Do not leave cooked turkey at room temperature for more than 2 hours.
- Take the meat off the bones. Take out all the stuffing. Packages of turkey meat should be no more than 2 inches (5 cm) thick, to allow them to cool quickly and safely. Refrigerate leftovers.
- Keep cooked turkey sealed in a covered dish, plastic bag, or aluminum foil for up to 4 days in the fridge or up to 3 months in the freezer.
- Leftover stuffing and gravy should be used within 1-2 days. Reheat leftovers to 165°F (74°C). Leftover gravy should be boiled for one minute before it is used. Stuffing should be reheated thoroughly.



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It’s Turkey Time!

Make it Tasty.

Keep it Safe.

An instructional video is also available for loan to groups or individuals. Contact the PEI Home Economics Association.

