

PANHANDLE PATH TO HEALTHY LIVING

TEXAS A&M
AGRILIFE
EXTENSION



November 2021

As the weather starts to cool off and the leaves hit the ground we all know it won't be long before we will start pulling out the winter clothing and warming up with hot bowls of soup. When this happens for me it means that the holiday season will be here shortly. In thinking about the upcoming holidays I have filled this newsletter with helpfully information for the holiday season. Including information on cooking a turkey and controlling holiday costs. We encourage you to check out the [CDC website](#) for update travel recommendation and holiday gather guidelines.

Also as we go into local stores we see empty shelves again. I want to encourage you to shop early and shop local. Nothing is better when you can walk out of store with check marks on your shopping. Remember these local business help support our communities so lets show them some love this holiday season.

Some people find this time of year the most joyful time of year others however might find it stressful and struggling with their mental health. Check out [Nami](#) website for some great tips to help with your mental health during the holidays.

Wishing you and your families have a safe and happy holiday season.

Joan Grayson



Path to Food Safety.....

Count Down to Thanksgiving - What You Need to Know

As Thanksgiving approaches, cooking the traditional turkey dinner gives rise to anxieties and questions. What kind of turkey should I buy? Should I buy a frozen turkey or a fresh one? How do I store my turkey? A few simple steps will not only ease your holiday fears, but will ensure a delicious and a safe meal for you, your family, and your friends. The following information may help you prepare your special Thanksgiving meal and help you countdown to the holiday.

Plan Ahead

Plan your menu several weeks before the holiday. Shopping early will ease the countdown tension for your Thanksgiving meal. Ask these questions to help plan your meal. Do you want a fresh or frozen turkey? Do you have enough space to store a frozen bird if purchased in advance; if not, when should you purchase a turkey? What size bird do you need to buy?

Fresh or Frozen

If you choose to buy a frozen bird you may do so at any time, but make sure you have adequate storage space in your freezer. If you buy a fresh turkey, be sure you purchase it only 1-2 days before cooking.

What Size Turkey to Purchase

Type of Turkey	Pounds to Buy
Whole bird	1 pound per person
Boneless breast of turkey	1/2 pound per person
Breast of turkey	3/4 pound per person
Prestuffed frozen turkey	1 1/4 pounds per person – keep frozen until ready to cook

Thawing Time in the Refrigerator

Size of Turkey	Number of Days
4 to 12 pounds	1 to 3 days
12 to 16 pounds	3 to 4 days
16 to 20 pounds	4 to 5 days
20 to 24 pounds	5 to 6 days

Thawing In the refrigerator

Place frozen bird in original wrapper in the refrigerator (40 °F or below). Allow approximately 24 hours per 4 to 5 pounds of turkey. A thawed turkey can remain in the refrigerator for 1-2 days.

In cold water

If you forget to thaw the turkey or don't have room in the refrigerator for thawing, don't panic. You can submerge the turkey in cold water and change the water every 30 minutes. Allow about 30 minutes defrosting time per pound of turkey. The following times are suggested for thawing turkey in water. Cook immediately after thawing.

Thawing Time in Cold Water

Size of Turkey	Hours to Defrost
4 to 12 pounds	2 to 6 hours
12 to 16 pounds	6 to 8 hours
16 to 20 pounds	8 to 10 hours
20 to 24 pounds	10 to 12 hours

Path to Food Safety.....

Preparation

The day before Thanksgiving

Make sure you have all the ingredients you need to prepare your holiday meal. Check to make sure you have all the equipment you will need, including a roasting pan large enough to hold your turkey and a food thermometer. Wet and dry stuffing ingredients can be prepared ahead of time and refrigerated separately. This may also be done on Thanksgiving Day. Mix ingredients just before placing the stuffing inside the turkey cavity or into a casserole dish.

Thanksgiving Day

If you choose to stuff your turkey, stuff loosely. The stuffing should be moist, not dry, since heat destroys bacteria more rapidly in a moist environment. Place stuffed turkey in oven immediately. You may also cook the stuffing outside the bird in a casserole. Judging cooking time for your turkey will be easier if the following chart is used. The times listed are for a fresh or thawed turkey in an oven at 325 °F. These times are approximate.

Cooking Time — Unstuffed	
Size of Turkey	Hours to Prepare
8 to 12 pounds	2 3/4 to 3 hours
12 to 14 pounds	3 to 3 3/4 hours
14 to 18 pounds	3 3/4 to 4 1/4 hours
18 to 20 pounds	4 1/4 to 4 1/2 hours
20 to 24 pounds	4 1/2 to 5 hours

Cooking Time — Stuffed	
Size of Turkey	Hours to Prepare
8 to 12 pounds	3 to 3 1/2 hours
12 to 14 pounds	3 1/2 to 4 hours
14 to 18 pounds	4 to 4 1/4 hours
18 to 20 pounds	4 1/4 to 4 3/4 hours
20 to 24 pounds	4 3/4 to 5 1/4 hours

Use a food thermometer to check the internal temperature of the turkey.

A whole turkey is safe cooked to a minimum internal temperature of 165 °F throughout the bird. Check the internal temperature in the innermost part of the thigh and wing and the thickest part of the breast. All turkey meat, including any that remains pink, is safe to eat as soon as all parts reach at least 165 °F. The stuffing should reach 165 °F, whether cooked inside the bird or in a separate dish.

When turkey is removed from the oven, let it stand 20 minutes. Remove stuffing and carve turkey.

Storing Leftovers

Cut the turkey into small pieces; refrigerate stuffing and turkey separately in shallow containers within 2 hours of cooking. Use leftover turkey and stuffing within 3-4 days or freeze these foods. Reheat thoroughly to a temperature of 165 °F.

November

Important Dates:

Path to Gray County Programs

**IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN
ANY OF THESE PROGRAMS OR
WOULD LIKE MORE
INFORMATION, PLEASE CALL
806-826-5243**

Path to Personal Finance



Plan Now to Help Control Holiday Spending

The first thing to do is actually make a budget. If you don't know how much you want to spend, you'll have no idea how you're doing. Make a list of the gifts you plan to buy and all the extra expenses -- for special dinners and parties, holiday baking and decorating, postage for sending gifts or cards, and travel, entertain-

ment or charitable giving, and estimate how much you want to budget for those items.

Then take a look at your savings or assets -- the money you have set aside for holiday spending, and any cash gifts or bonuses you are certain you'll be getting. If your assets don't match your anticipated expenses, you'll either have to cut back on spending, go into debt, or both. If you do plan to spend more than you have on hand, be sure the amount is something you can pay off in one or two months.

Reducing spending might be easier than you think. Instead of buying gifts for everyone in your family, consider drawing names instead. For holiday meals and parties, have a potluck instead of preparing everything yourself.

When you're ready to start shopping, be sure to do so wisely. Here are a few tips:

- The "envelope method" works well for many people. For each person, family, or event, place the amount of money you plan to spend for that expense in an envelope. When the money is gone, you've finished shopping for that particular category.
- Be sure to do comparison shopping. Before you buy, get three different prices at different stores or over the Internet. You may be surprised at how much you'll save.

Track credit card spending closely. It might help to keep a sticky note on the card and jot down the amount every time you charge something. Tally up the expenses every evening to make sure you're staying on track.

When you're out and about, be cautious about signing up for store credit cards in order to get a discount. Signing up for too many will negatively affect your credit score. Even if you never use the card again, you could be seen as a credit risk because you have lots of available credit and could pick up a lot of debt quickly.

TEXAS A&M AGRI LIFE EXTENSION

Panhandle Path to Healthy Living is a Family and Community Health information resource for area families in the Texas Panhandle Counties. The newsletter is published monthly. Readers are encouraged to read the newsletter and then pass it on. Any information may be reproduced for education purposes in any form and credit cited appropriately.

Editors: Carolyn Bennett, Amalia Mata, Chelsey Rash, Eadie Bradford, Jill Killian, Joan Soria, Kay Rogers, Kelli Lehman, Lizabeth Gresham, Molly Forman, Sidney Atchley, Tanya Holloway, Billie Peden & Wendy Hazzard.

Layout & Design: D1 County Extension Agents- Family & Community Health

TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION SERVICE
Gray County
12125 E. Frederic Ave., Ste. C
Pampa, TX 79065

Postage

Return Service Requested

Joan Gray-Soria is a Family and Community Health Agent with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Gray County. Family and Community Health helps Texans better their lives through science-based educational programs designed to improve the overall health and wellness of individuals, families, and communities. FCH focuses on topics such as child and adult health, nutrition, child care, financial management, passenger and community safety, and building strong families. Our goal is to encourage lifelong health and well-being for every person, every family, and every community. <https://gray.agrilife.org>

Path to Plate.....

Homemade Cranberry Sauce

Serves: 10

12 ounces fresh cranberries
1 cup orange juice
1/2 cup white sugar

Combine cranberries, orange juice and sugar in a sauce pan over medium-high heat and cook stirring frequently until the mixture begins to boil. Once the mixture boils, reduce the heat to low and continue to cook for 3 to 5 additional minutes, or until it is the chunkiness you desire. The longer you cook the more smooth it will be. Remove from heat and cool in fridge until serving. Cranberry sauce will thicken as it cools. Serve chilled and enjoy!

Note: Can be made up to 1 week ahead of time and stored in an airtight container until you are ready to use.

Source: <https://www.thepinningmama.com/homemade-cranberry-sauce-recipe/>

