

Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency

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FOR RELEASE: IMMEDIATE

Cooking Thanksgiving Dinner? Yep ... There's an App for That!

Coldwater, MI. Thanksgiving is the largest meal many cooks prepare every year. Its centerpiece—the turkey—is the largest dish most cooks ever encounter, and many are not experienced at roasting one. The Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency wants consumers to know that a range of resources are available to assist them in this holiday feat through the USDA Food Safety and Inspection Services (FSIS). According to Rebecca Burns, Environmental Health Director with the tri-county health department “USDA has a variety of resources that range from smartphone apps to its 30-year Meat and Poultry Hotline. These resources are available and can help consumers through any food preparation conundrums this holiday season, wherever and whenever they may arise.” Burns went on to say ““Unsafe handling and/or undercooking your turkey can lead to serious foodborne illness. If you have questions, you can call the Meat and Poultry Hotline which will be staffed with helpful experts, even on Thanksgiving Day. Call 1-888-MPHotline (1-888-674-6854) to talk to a food expert. You can also chat live with a food safety expert via your computer by going to AskKaren.gov. Someone is always available via chat from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. ET, Monday through Friday, in English and Spanish.”

Cooking the Thanksgiving turkey can be tricky, and trying to figure out when the turkey is done is often the hardest task. But, it doesn't have to be! Impress your family by using a food thermometer to cook like a PRO which stands for: **P**lace the thermometer, **R**ead the temperature, **O**ut of the oven. It works like this:

- Place the thermometer in the innermost part of the thigh, the innermost part of the wing, and the thickest part of the breast.

- Read the temperature to make sure that the bird has reached a minimum internal temperature of 165 °F.
- Take the turkey out of the oven, and serve it to your family without worry!

Of course any feast calls for planning and USDA has an app for that! You can assess your pantry, refrigerator, and freezer to plan out your meals and your shopping list. Burns adds “When you are trying to figure out if you can use something you already have at home, keep the FoodKeeper application handy. The FoodKeeper is a mobile application created by FSIS in partnership with The Food Marketing Institute and Cornell University.” The FoodKeeper offers storage advice on more than 400 different food and beverage items and can help you decide what you can keep and what you should throw out. It also offers handy guidance on leftovers, which you’ll probably have a lot of after the big meal. Download the FoodKeeper today on your Android or iOS device.

To learn more food safety tips, visit our website at www.bhsj.org and click on the Quick Info About Health Topics button; or visit FoodSafety.gov to learn more about how to safely select, thaw, and prepare a turkey. FSIS is also providing Thanksgiving food safety information all during the month of November on Twitter, @USDAFoodSafety, and on Facebook, at [Facebook.com/FoodSafety.gov](https://www.facebook.com/FoodSafety.gov).

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