

## THANKSGIVING FOOD SAFETY TIPS

Safe food preparation procedures can reduce the risk of foodborne illness this Thanksgiving holiday.

Meat and poultry, the centerpiece of most holiday meals, can be a source of foodborne disease unless handled and prepared properly. Hidden dangers of bacterial contamination in perishable foods often go forgotten. Salmonella bacteria are commonly found on poultry, and are among the most common sources of diarrheal disease in the U.S. To date this year, more than 730 cases of foodborne diseases, and as many as 9,000 die each year as a result of micro-organisms in food.

Consumers should keep the following food safety guidelines in mind:

### Food Handling and Preparation

- Purchase only government inspected meat and poultry products. Purchase dated packages only if the "sell by" date has not expired.
- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap prior to and after preparing any food product.
- Never thaw meat or poultry at room temperature. When thawing a frozen turkey, keep it refrigerated on a tray.
- Keep two cutting boards handy – one for preparing raw meat, and the other for cutting cooked food.

### Turkey Tips

- Never cook a stuffed turkey in a microwave oven.
- Use a cooking thermometer to determine if the turkey is fully cooked. The meat should reach 180 degrees.

### After the Feast

- Do not allow cooked food to sit out at room temperature for more than two hours.
- Reheat leftovers to 165 degrees or until steaming hot.
- Never taste leftover food that looks or smells strange. When in doubt throw it out.