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Safe Thawing

“The Big Thaw”

The USDA recommends three ways to safely thaw a frozen turkey: in the refrigerator, in cold water, and in the microwave. If the turkey is allowed to thaw at a temperature above 40°F, any harmful bacteria that may have been present before freezing can begin to grow again unless proper thawing methods are used. Thawing your frozen turkey on the counter for longer than 2 hours is not safe. Even though the center of the turkey may still be frozen, the outer layer of the turkey is in the “danger zone,” where harmful bacteria multiply rapidly.

Refrigerator Thawing

When thawing a turkey in the refrigerator, plan ahead. For every 4-5 pounds of turkey, allow approximately 24 hours of thaw-

ing time in a refrigerator set at 40°F. A thawed turkey can remain in the refrigerator for 1 or 2 days before cooking.

Whole Turkey

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

Microwave Thawing

Follow the manufacturer’s instructions when thawing a turkey in the microwave oven. Plan to cook it immediately after thawing because some areas of the turkey may become warm and begin to cook during microwave thawing. Holding partially cooked food is not recommended because any bacteria present wouldn’t have been destroyed.

Cold Water Thawing

Allow about 30 minutes per pound when thawing a turkey in cold water. Be sure the turkey is in leak-proof packaging. Tissues can absorb water like a sponge, resulting in a watery product. Change the water every 30 minutes until the turkey is thawed. Turkeys thawed by the cold water method should be cooked immediately because conditions were not temperature controlled.

Cold Water Thawing Times

8 to 12 pounds — 4 to 6 hours

12 to 16 pounds — 6 to 8 hours

16 to 20 pounds — 8 to 10 hours

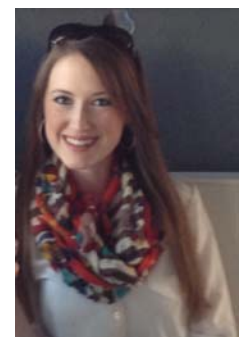
20 to 24 pounds — 10 to 12 hours



Meet the newest member of the Better Living for Texans team!

Emily Kasmiroski was born and raised in Seguin, Texas, and currently resides in College Station, Texas with her husband. She attended Texas A&M University and graduated in December 2012 with a Bachelor’s degree in Nutritional Science. She has a passion for nutrition and educating

the public about nutrition education. She loves to cook so if you attend one of her classes there will most likely be a cooking demonstration! Emily is the Extension Assistant for Better Living for Texans in Brazos county.



Easy Bread Stuffing

What you need:

Utensils:

- Cutting board & knife
- Measuring cups & spoons
- Large skillet
- Large mixing bowl
- Can opener
- Mixing spoon
- 9 inch x 13 inch casserole dish

Prep Time: 45 minutes

Cook Time: 1 hour

Cost per serving: \$0.82

Ingredients:

- 2 8.5 ounce boxes corn bread muffin mix or corn bread mix
- 1 teaspoon vegetable oil
- 2 cups chopped celery
- 1 chopped bell pepper
- 5 chopped green onions
- 1 26 ounce can low sodium cream of chicken soup
- 2 1/2 14.5 ounce cans low sodium chicken broth
- 2 cups bread crumbs, plain
- 1/2 cup whole kernel corn, drained & rinsed
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon ground sage
- 1/2 teaspoon poultry seasoning
- 1 6 ounce package slice almonds, toasted (optional)



What to do:

1. Wash your hands and clean your cooking area.
2. Clean the tops of canned food items before opening them.
3. Bake cornbread or muffins according to package directions.
4. Preheat oven to 350°F.
5. Heat oil in a large skillet. Add celery, bell pepper, and onions. If using green onions, add onions last. Cook for 5 to 7 minutes.
6. Add cream of chicken soup and chicken broth to the onion mixture. Mix well.
7. In large bowl, crumble cornbread. Add bread crumbs, onion mixture, corn, pepper, ground sage, poultry seasoning, and almonds (optional). Mix well.
8. Pour mixture into a 9 inch x 13 inch pan or casserole dish.
9. Bake at 350°F for one hour.