

FEATURE –USDA ON-LINE ADVICE FOR SAFE TURKEY DINNER

INTRO: The US Dept of Agriculture has a virtual food safety representative to give consumers on-line advice, just in time for holiday turkey preparation. USDA’s Pat O’Leary has more. (1:43)

AS THE HOLIDAYS APPROACH CONSUMERS ARE SEEKING ADVICE FROM THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE ON HOW TO SAFELY PREPARE TURKEY AND OTHER HOLIDAY MEATS. THIS IMPORTANT INFORMATION COMES FROM USDSA’S FOOD SAFETY & INSPECTION SERVICE, AND IS EASY TO GET FROM FSIS’ VIRTUAL REPRESENTATIVE, ASK KAREN.

Bob Tuverson, USDA Food Safety & Inspection Service : Let me show you how easy it is to ask a Thanksgiving food safety question at AskKaren.gov. For example, let’s type in “stuffing a turkey” to find an answer. OK? And there it is. We learn all about the safest ways to prepare stuffing to prevent foodborne illness and keep your family safe.

(Hotline Operator: Good afternoon, Meat & Poultry Holtine.)

IN ADDITION TO ON-LINE ADVICE, THE USDA MEAT AND POULTRY HOTLINE TAKES CONSUMER CALLS AT 1-888-MPHOTLINE.

Caller: What’s the safest way to thaw a turkey?

Tuverson: (to caller): Okay, the best way to thaw a frozen turkey is in the refrigerator, but once it’s thawed it should be cooked within 2 days.

Caller: And how can I tell when my turkey is safe to eat?

Tuverson: You should use a food thermometer to make sure your turkey is cooked to a safe internal temperature. The thermometer should read 165°Fahrenheit in the innermost part of the thigh, the wing and the thickest part of the breast.

Caller: Well thank you very much.

Tuverson: Alright and thank you for calling.

IF YOU’VE GOT A FOOD SAFETY QUESTION, VISIT ASKKAREN.GOV OR CALL THE USDA MEAT & POULTRY HOTLINE AT 1-888-MPHOTLINE. THE HOTLINE IS OPEN ON THANKSGIVING DAY FROM 8AM TO 2PM EASTERN, IN ADDITION TO THE USUAL HOURS, MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY FROM 10AM TO 4PM EASTERN, WITH PRE-RECORDED MESSAGES 24/7. IN BELTSVILLE, MARYLAND, FOR THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, I’M PAT O’LEARY.