



NEWS RELEASE

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By Anna Martin
Nutrition, Family and Consumer Sciences Advisor
UCCE San Joaquin County

DEEP FAT FRYING A TURKEY

A whole turkey can be successfully cooked by the deep fat frying method provided the turkey is not stuffed and has been completely thawed.

There are safety concerns when working with such a large amount of oil. Select a cooking vessel large enough to completely submerge the turkey in oil without it spilling over. The oil should cover the turkey by 1 to 2 inches. To determine the amount of oil needed, do a preliminary test using water. Place the turkey in the cooking utensil and add water to cover. Then remove the turkey and measure the amount of water. This is the amount of oil needed.

Select a safe location – such as outdoors – for deep frying a turkey. Heat the cooking oil to 350 °F. Carefully lower the turkey into the hot oil. Never leave the hot oil unattended. Allow approximately 3 to 5 minutes per pound cooking time. Remove turkey from the oil and drain oil from the cavity. Check the temperature of turkey with a food thermometer. The internal temperature of the bird should reach 180 °F when measured in the thigh.

If the turkey is not done, immediately return the turkey to the hot oil for additional cooking. When the turkey is done, remove it from the oil and place it on paper towels. It's normal for the skin to be very dark brown, almost black. Let it rest about 20 minutes before carving.

Allow the used oil to cool before pouring it into containers for refrigerator storage. The oil can be reused.

Source: Food Safety and Inspection Service, USDA (October 1999). "Turkey Alternate Routes to the Table". Online at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/OA/pubs/altroute.htm>