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Christmas Food Safety Tips

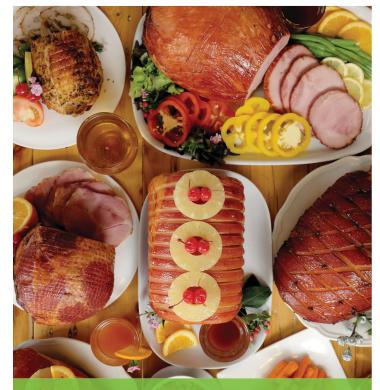
Christmas is a time of celebration with family and friends and usually involves preparation of a feast at home. Christmas should be an enjoyable and memorable part of the year. The following advice and food safety tips can help to ensure your Christmas and holiday period is memorable for the right reasons.

Christmas in Australia is in the middle of summer and the risk of food poisoning increases with the hot weather.

The average home kitchen is not designed for preparing food for large numbers of people:

- Preparation of large amounts of food in limited kitchen space will increase the chance of cross-contamination.
- Storing large amounts of food in the refrigerator often means there is limited room for circulation of the cool air, which may affect temperature of the food.
- Hot foods placed in the refrigerator to cool, may increase the temperature of the fridge.

Undertaking good food safety practices remains important during Christmas!



When preparing large amounts of food in limited kitchen space be aware of the cross-contamination risks.

You must separate raw meat, poultry, seafood and eggs from other food. Use one cutting board for fresh produce and a separate one for raw meat, poultry and seafood.



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Christmas tips include to plan ahead, avoid temperature abuse, carefully prepare and cook food and handle leftovers safely. You can do this by following the below advice:

- Remove non-potentially hazardous foods such as softdrink and alcoholic drinks from the refrigerator and keep in an esky with ice.
- If you are consuming seafood ask your fishmonger to pack your purchase with ice, transport it home in a cooler and then promptly place in the coldest part of your fridge.
- Defrost all potentially hazardous foods in the fridge, including your turkey. A large turkey may take more than 48 hours to fully defrost.
- Ensure those who bring food to your house, transport cold food in an esky with ice or ice brick and hot food in an insulated container. Keep transport times to a minimum or ask visitors to bring non-potentially hazardous food such a rum balls, gingerbread or Christmas pudding.
- If you cook large amounts of food in advance, divide it into smaller portions or put it in shallow containers, cover and place in the refrigerator or freezer, ensuring that there is good air circulation around the containers.
- Refrigerate leftovers immediately after the meal and use within 2-3 days.
- With proper handling, Christmas ham will keep safe for several weeks. It should be removed from the plastic wrap and covered with a clean cloth soaked with water and vinegar. Follow any instructions on the packaging and store under 5°C.

For more information contact Council's Customer Service Centre or visit our website.



Put drinks in an esky with ice to reduce opening and closing the fridge repeatedly.



Make sure seafood stays cold.



Reduce chances of cross-contamination by keeping raw and cooked food separate.



Always store your ham under 5°C.

Contact us Rockhampton Regional Council Environment and Public Health Unit

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