



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Comanche County Health Department Offers Important Tips for Food Safety this Holiday Season**

The holiday season is upon us and with it comes many activities that involve food. The Comanche County Health Department reminds you to take extra care not to let foodborne bacteria ruin your holiday.

**Keep foods Cold or Hot.** Don't allow foods to remain exposed to room temperature for extended periods of time while preparing dishes. Cold Foods should be stored at or colder than 41° F and hot foods should be kept at 135° F or hotter, whenever possible. If foods have been at a temperature between 41° F and 135° F for more than 2 hours, it is recommended to discard the food items. Move leftovers to the refrigerator as soon as possible.

**Cook Foods Thoroughly.** Use a thermometer to check internal temperatures of cooked foods and ensure they have reached appropriate temperatures for safe consumption. Foods that are prepared from raw beef such as large roasts are recommended to reach 140° F internal temperature at the center of the thickest portion. All poultry products or casserole dishes are recommended to reach a minimum temperature of 165 ° F at the center of the thickest portion and check multiple areas for consistent and adequate heating. Fish, Pork, and eggs should be cooked to reach at least 145° F internal temperature at the center of the product.

**Separate Raw and ready to eat foods.** Be sure to keep raw foods like turkey, chicken, beef, or fish away from foods that are already cooked or do not require cooking. When space is limited in the kitchen, prepare raw animal foods before or after other foods. Be sure to clean and sanitize all surfaces and utensils before doing any other food preparation.

**Wash Hands** with warm water and soap often.

**Approved Foods.** If you are purchasing already prepared foods, be sure the vendor is a licensed and regularly inspected food service provider as required by Oklahoma State Statute **63:310:257-15-12**. An Oklahoma State Department of Health License is not required for a Home Bakery that prepares only traditionally baked pastries, breads, and cakes. The Home Bakery Exemption does not allow foods containing fresh fruit or meat to be sold to the public. For more information regarding the specific types of foods allowed under this exemption contact the Consumer Protection Division at Comanche County Health Department at 580-585-6699 or visit the Comanche County Health Department website:

[https://www.ok.gov/health/County\\_Health\\_Departments/Comanche\\_County\\_Health\\_Department/Services/Consumer\\_Health/index.html](https://www.ok.gov/health/County_Health_Departments/Comanche_County_Health_Department/Services/Consumer_Health/index.html) .

