

# Pastured Turkey Tips

*Thank you for choosing to support local, sustainable farming by purchasing a pasture-raised turkey from us this year. Your turkey is special because he was raised on pasture with plenty of fresh grass and bugs to nibble, using no genetically-modified feeds and no soy. He was never medicated or administered arsenic-containing products or hormones. He was processed carefully by hand without bleach or irradiation and he contains no flavor additives, preservatives, or other chemicals. We hope you enjoy celebrating the great harvest that sustainable farming can yield!*

## **Thaw & let age.**

Your turkey will benefit from a gentle thaw in the refrigerator that will allow the meat to age and tenderize significantly. Plan to thaw your turkey 1 day per every 4-5 pounds in the refrigerator to ensure tenderness and a reasonable cooking time.

## **Remove giblets before cooking!**

Your turkey includes the giblets (heart, liver, and neck), which are a nutritious way to add value to your pasture-raised bird. They are inside the body cavity in a plastic bag. **Be sure to remove the bag before cooking the bird!**

## **Basic Roast Turkey Recipe.**

Preheat oven to 325F. Place turkey (with giblets removed) into large roasting pan, breast side up. Rub coarse sea salt and pepper under skin on breast and legs, loosening skin carefully to prevent tearing. (If you tear the skin, you may stitch it back together with a toothpick.) Insert quartered onion, 2 sticks each of coarsely chopped carrots and celery, and fresh herbs (sage, basil, oregano, rosemary and/or parsley) into body cavity. Rub outside of skin with melted lard, butter, or coconut oil. Alternatively, you could lay strips of raw pork belly or sliced jowl across the surface of the turkey to create a “self-basting” bird.

Roast for about 8-10 minutes per pound until the internal thigh temperature is 180 and the juices run clear and have slowed down when you prick the skin. Baste frequently (if not using bacon), about every 10-15 minutes. You may use melted lard, butter, coconut oil, or pan drippings. The more often you baste, the more crisp and tender the skin will be. Let the bird rest for at least 10 minutes prior to carving. Use pan drippings for giblet gravy. When everyone is done eating turkey, pick off the last of the meat and use the bones, leftover veggies from the body cavity, and the feet to make broth.

## **How to tell when your turkey is done cooking**

We find that the most reliable means of testing whether your turkey is done is to observe the juices. They should go from clear and bursting from the skin when pricked to slowing down and barely dribbling out. This is when you know it's done. A thermometer will read about 170-185. **Pasture-raised turkeys cook FASTER than conventional turkeys**, so keep that in mind and watch those juices and the temperature while cooking. Let the turkey rest, loosely covered with foil, for about 15 minutes prior to carving.

## **Giblet Gravy Recipe (Adapted from Joy of Cooking)**

Rinse and pat dry the neck, heart, and gizzard. Reserve the liver in the fridge. Sauté neck, heart, and gizzard in cooking fat over medium heat with 1 cup of chopped onions. Brown well, about 5-10 minutes for each side. Add 4 cups broth, 1/2 cup white wine, 1/4 cup chopped carrots, 1/4 cup chopped celery, parsley, a bay leaf, and 1/2 tsp thyme. Cover and simmer gently until meat is tender, about 1 hour.

Add liver and simmer until firm, about 5 minutes. Strain the liquid and add enough water to make 4 cups. Debone the neck and finely chop the meat along with the liver, gizzard, and heart. Return meat to stock. Discard veggies. Reserve the bones for future broth.

Heat 3 Tbs. butter in large saucepan until foaming. Whisk in 1/3 cup flour, cooking for 1 minute. Remove pan from heat and whisk in the stock. Bring to simmer over medium and cook for 1 minute. When turkey is done, pour pan drippings into gravy. Add salt and pepper to taste.

## **Don't forget to make broth with the leftover bones!**

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