



United States Department of Agriculture
Food Safety and Inspection Service



Food Safety Information

The USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline

The USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline can personally answer your food safety questions on weekdays year-round. The Hotline receives more than 80,000 calls yearly. This toll-free telephone service, which began on July 1, 1985, helps prevent foodborne illness by answering questions about the safe storage, handling, and preparation of meat, poultry, and egg products. The Hotline is staffed by food safety specialists with backgrounds in home economics, nutrition, and food technology.

The majority of calls come from consumers regarding how to properly handle their food, including food safety during power outages; food manufacturer recalls; foodborne illnesses; and the inspection of meat, poultry, and egg products.

Hotline Answers Millions of Calls!

The Hotline has answered over 2 million calls as part of USDA's consumer food safety education efforts. Often the first question callers ask is, "Are you a real person?" The Hotline is one of the rare services where a live person answers callers individually specific questions one-on-one.

In the more than 22 years of operation, callers have asked the Hotline increasingly more sophisticated questions. Now they frequently know the names of bacteria many people had never heard of 10 or 20 years ago.

From novice cooks wondering how long to safely roast a chicken to more experienced foodhandlers asking about additives, residues, and foodborne bacteria, Hotline food safety specialists have heard it all—2 million times over.

Hotline Services Available in Spanish

Beginning in 2002, the toll-free Hotline extended its service to callers whose first language is Spanish. By touching the appropriate number at the prompt, callers will be connected to a Spanish-speaking food safety specialist who can answer their questions. Callers may also listen to more than 50 food safety messages recorded in Spanish, 24 hours a day.

The Hotline is open on Thanksgiving Day from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., Eastern Time, but closed on other Federal government holidays.

Food Safety Questions?

Call the USDA Meat & Poultry Hotline

If you have a question about meat, poultry, or egg products, call the USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline toll free at **1-888-MPHotline (1-888-674-6854)**; TTY: 1-800-256-7072.



The Hotline is open year-round Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. ET (English or Spanish). Recorded food safety messages are available 24 hours a day. Check out the FSIS Web site at www.fsis.usda.gov.

Send E-mail questions to MPHotline.fsis@usda.gov.

Ask Karen!

FSIS' automated response system can provide food safety information 24/7.



AskKaren.gov

The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) is the public health agency in the U.S. Department of Agriculture responsible for ensuring that the nation's commercial supply of meat, poultry, and egg products is safe, wholesome, and correctly labeled and packaged.

The USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.
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