



## Australian Chicken Meat Federation (ACMF) Inc

\*\*\* MEDIA RELEASE \*\*\*

TUESDAY, 2 DECEMBER 2014

### Anxiety levels heat up with the stress of serving a 'safe' Christmas lunch

*#chookchat #foodsafety*

Throughout the year 80% of calls received by The Australian Chicken Meat Federation (ACMF), the peak body representing chicken meat growers and processors in Australia, are from anxious consumers wanting to check how to cook and handle chicken safely. This increases with the approach of Christmas with people fearing they may risk ruining the Christmas lunch.

Dr Andreas Dubs comments, "It is estimated that over the course of a year 5.4 million Australians, nearly a quarter of the population, fall sick as a direct result of poor food safety practices<sup>1</sup>. Anxiety levels also rise around food safety practices when people have more family and friends to feed around the Christmas table.

"We are often asked how to know when a whole bird is cooked properly and also questions about storage. Frequent questions relate to whether chicken can be re-frozen once defrosted, can it be refrozen once cooked, and how long can raw chicken be stored in the fridge before being cooked" he says.

When it comes to chicken, one of the leanest, most nutritious and versatile meats, it's important to remember to handle and cook it appropriately. Without a microscope, bacteria can't be seen on chicken or other raw meat so it must be handled as if it were present. To reduce food safety risks when handling chicken there are a few simple food safety rules to remember for a safe and stress-free Christmas lunch.

The ACMF recommends:

- **Clean** – keep everything - hands, boards, knives, fridge, freezer and storage containers – clean, particularly during the food preparation process
- **Chill** – Raw and cooked chicken can be stored in the fridge at 5°C or lower for 2–3 days unless "use by date" on packaging stipulates otherwise.
- **Cook** – Cook thoroughly until the meat juices run clear (ie juices are no longer tinged with blood). The thickest part of the meat should reach 75°C on a food thermometer.
- **Separate** –Keep raw chicken away from other foods in the fridge AND during preparation, so raw chicken juices do not drip on to other food that will be eaten raw, such as fruits or vegetables. Separate utensils, especially chopping boards, should be kept for uncooked foods, like fruit and salad vegetables, and raw meat.

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<sup>1</sup> Food Safety Information Council website at <http://www.foodsafety.asn.au/>

To understand more about food safety concerns read this month's [Chook Chat blog](#) (the blog for the Australian Chicken Meat Industry) by ACMF blogger Dr Vivien Kite.

“The chicken meat industry wants to make sure that consumers can safely enjoy every one of the well over 5 billion chicken meals consumed every year in Australia”, stresses Dr Dubs. “We are therefore keen to share with all those buying and preparing meals the simple rules that will keep our food safe. To support this aim, we have developed an online resource [www.chicken.org.au/foodsafety](http://www.chicken.org.au/foodsafety) which provides ready access to this information.”

In the run up to Christmas follow the useful food safety reminders and tips that will be shared on [@chookinfoline](#).



**ENDS**

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For more information and to download a food safety fact sheet visit [www.chicken.org.au/foodsafety](http://www.chicken.org.au/foodsafety)

To arrange an interview with Dr Vivien Kite or Dr Andreas Dubs, Australian Chicken Meat Federation please call;

- Quay Communications, Emma Norgrove, M: 0499 688 001, T: 02 9665 9050
- Quay Communications, Cheryl Pettinau, M: 0424 157 714, T: 02 9665 9050
- Australian Chicken Meat Federation, Dr Andreas Dubs, Executive Director, M: 0432 925 933