

# Thawing Food Properly Fact Sheet

**Here are the four acceptable ways to thaw food safely:**

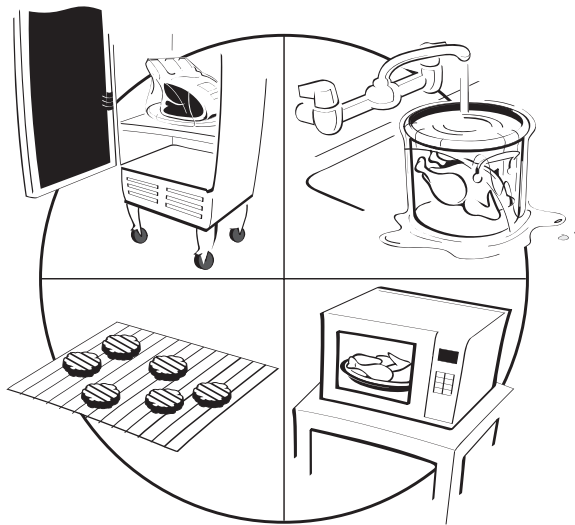
**In a refrigerator.** Thaw food in a refrigerator at 41°F (5°C) or lower to keep dangerous microorganisms from growing. Plan ahead when thawing large items such as turkeys—they can take several days to thaw.

**Under running water.** Thaw food submerged under running water at a temperature of 70°F (21°C) or lower. The water flow must be strong enough to wash food particles into the overflow drain.

Freezing does not kill microorganisms, but it does slow their growth. When you thaw frozen food, parts of the outer surface warm up enough to allow dangerous microorganisms to grow. Since it can take more than four hours to thaw most food, it is very important to thaw it properly, so dangerous microorganisms are not allowed to grow.

**In a microwave oven.** You can safely thaw food in a microwave oven if the food will be cooked immediately. Large items such as roasts or turkeys may not thaw well in a microwave.

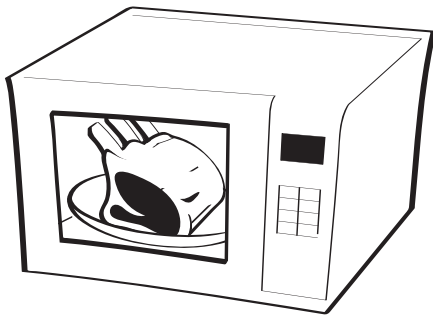
**As part of the cooking process.** You can thaw food as part of the cooking process. For example, when you cook frozen hamburger patties on the grill, you thaw the hamburgers and then cook them to a minimum internal temperature of 155°F (68°C) for 15 seconds all in one step.



# And the Winner Is?

**Directions:** This large frozen roast will need to be cooked two days from now and be ready for service at 6:00 p.m. Circle the letter of the picture that shows the best way to thaw this roast.

**A**



**B**

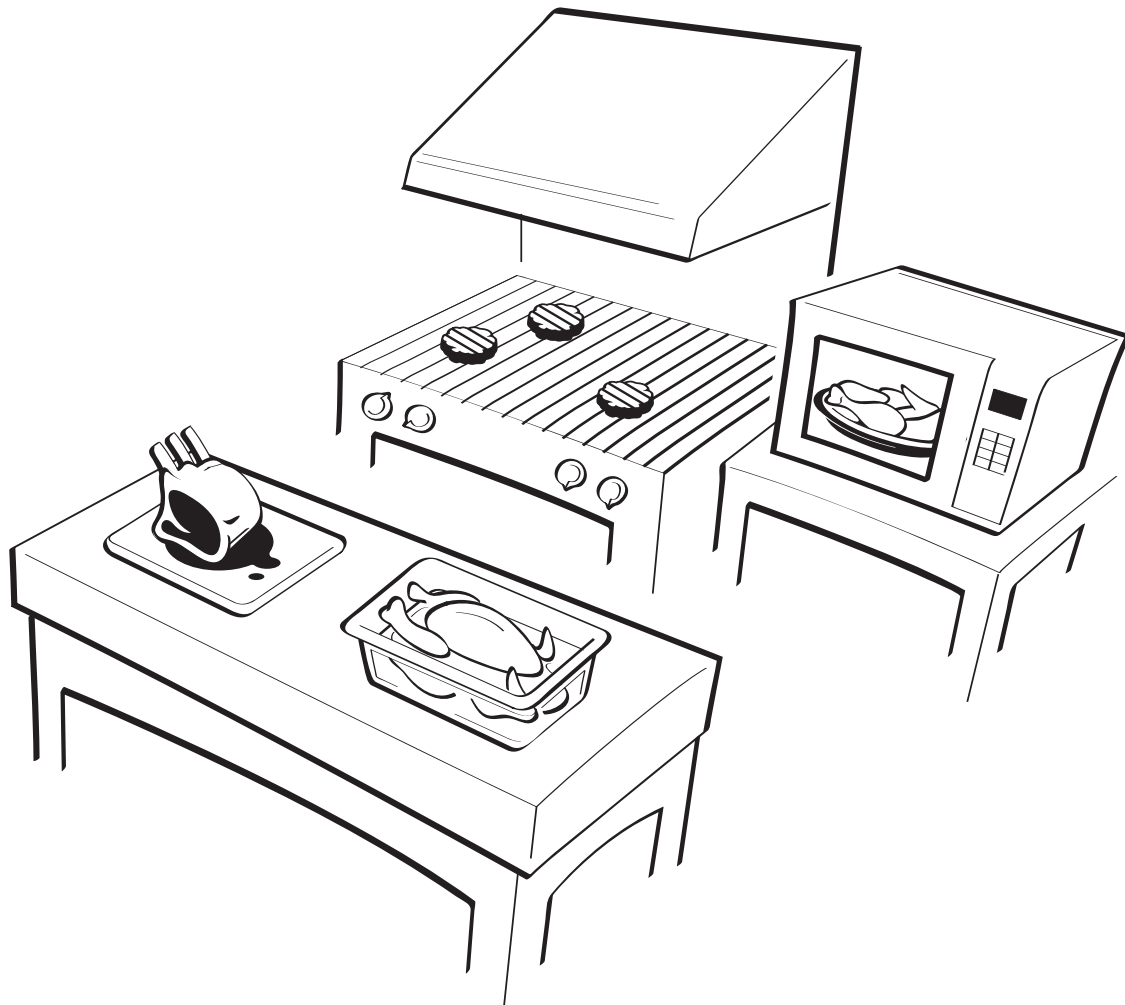


**C**



# What's Wrong with This Picture?

**Directions:** The picture below shows several examples of incorrect thawing. Circle the food items that are being incorrectly thawed.



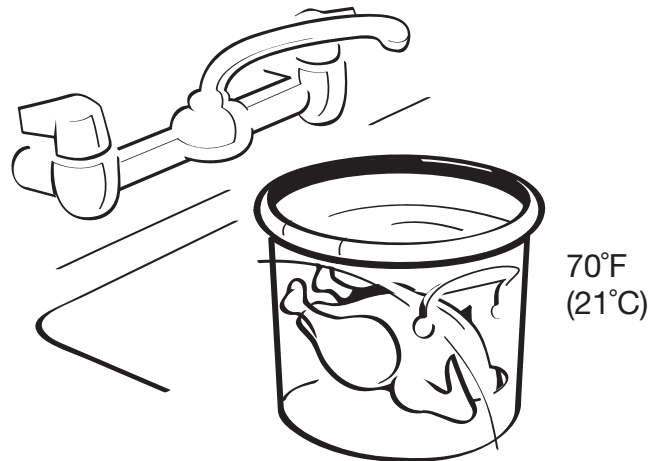
# Pick a Sink

**Directions:** Circle the letter of the picture that shows the proper way to thaw this frozen turkey.

**A**



**B**



# Thawing Food Properly

## Fact Sheet Optional Activity

### Answers

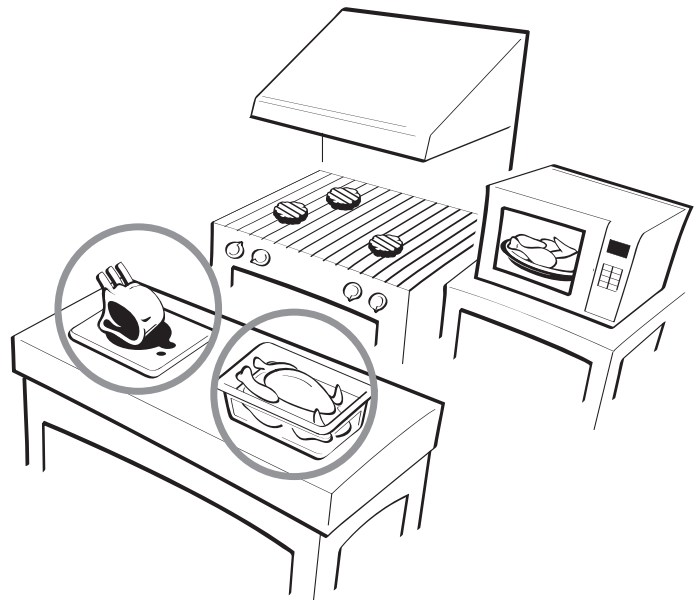
#### 1. And the Winner Is?

Picture B showing the roast food in a refrigerator is the best method for thawing this food item. While all three methods of thawing are correct, it is best to plan ahead in the case of large food items and use the refrigerator for thawing. This will ensure the roast thaws safely and thoroughly.



#### 2. What's Wrong with This Picture?

The roast sitting on the counter and the turkey in the pan of water are being thawed incorrectly. You should never thaw large food items, such as roasts or turkeys, at room temperature. If you want to thaw these types of food, you can safely submerge the item under running potable water at 70°F (21°C) or lower; never thaw food in standing water.



#### 3. Pick a Sink

Picture A shows the correct way to thaw this turkey. Even though the water in the sink in picture B is at the correct temperature, it may eventually warm up. Flowing water is needed to keep the item cool and to allow food particles to wash into the overflow drain.

