

# AAFCS American Association of Family & Consumer Sciences

**LifeSkills!** *bringing people together to improve the lives of individuals, families and communities*

## HOLIDAY SEASON ELECTRONIC PRESS KIT: NOVEMBER 2005

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### About the Electronic Press Kit

As we enter the holiday season, the members of the American Association of Family & Consumer Sciences (AAFCS) encourage the teaching of the 'whole' child.

"The importance of teaching LifeSkills becomes more critical each year as we work to prepare our children for the challenges that face them in our complex society," according to Ann Anderson, AAFCS 2005 National Teacher of the Year.

There is no better time than the beginning of the holiday season to: learn about safe food preparation and storage for turkeys and holiday meals, find out how to organize a holiday treat exchange, pick up some helpful tips about fighting holiday weight gain and obesity, find out how to shop safely online while saving time and money, and gather some budgeting tips for holiday expenses.

These handy and informative topics are presented by AAFCS, a national nonprofit organization of educators and businesses concerned with LifeSkills and lifelong well-being.

In addition, AAFCS highlights the 2005 Teacher of the Year, Mrs. Ann Anderson, from Duncanville High School, Duncanville, Texas, where she is currently an FCS teacher and chair of the Family and Consumer Sciences Department.

To support the significance of the Teacher of the Year story, AAFCS has produced a Video News Release and B-Roll footage in Betamax.

Please contact Steve Hines at 800-424-8080,

ext. 4619, 703-327-3243 or  
**shines@aafcs.org** to book appearances and  
 interviews with our national teacher of the  
 year and other teachers featured in this  
 press kit.

## “Turkey Talk” An Expert Speaks: Special Tips on Selection, Preparation, and Storage

*Ann Anderson  
 AAFCS 2005 National Teacher of the Year  
 Hotel and Restaurant Management – Hospitality Career Preparation Teacher  
 Duncanville High School, Duncanville, Texas*

AAFCS’ suggestions for the selection, preparation, and storage of your holiday turkey can help you provide the best turkey with optimum flavor and tenderness. Proper preparation and storage methods are essential in ensuring that your family safely enjoys your holiday meal.

### 1. Selecting Your Holiday Turkey

- Purchase a turkey to suit your individual family’s needs:
  - Whole or in parts
  - White or dark meat
  - Frozen, fresh, pre-basted or stuffed
- If you choose a frozen turkey:
  - You may keep it up to 1 year at 0°.
  - Do not thaw it if it is pre-stuffed because bacteria can develop in the stuffing.
- If you choose a fresh turkey:
  - Buy it only 1-2 days before it will be cooked because it is **very perishable**.
- Always look for:
  - A label indicating inspection by the U.S. Department of Agriculture on safety and wholesomeness.
  - Grade A – will be meaty, nice layer of fat beneath the skin, almost free of bruises, tears, and pinfeathers.
- How to determine tenderness:
  - A young turkey is the most tender – 4-6 months of age.
  - A fryer-roaster turkey is under 16 weeks of age.
  - “Hen or “Tom” refers only to gender and is more of an indication of size than tenderness.
- To decide what quantity to purchase:
  - Allow 1 pound of turkey per person, to guarantee some delicious leftovers!

### 2. Preparing Your Holiday Turkey

- There are two ways to safely thaw a whole turkey:
  - Refrigerator - If you are thawing the turkey in the refrigerator (preferred method), be sure to allow enough thawing time:
    - 8-12 pounds, 1 to 2 days
    - 12-16 pounds, 2 to 3 days
    - 16-20 pounds, 3 to 4 days
    - 20-24 pounds, 4 to 5 days

- Cold water - If you are thawing the turkey in cold water:
  - Make sure the bag is not torn and immerse the turkey in cold water.
  - Change the water every 30 minutes for the appropriate time period listed below:
    - 8-12 pounds, 4 to 6 hours
    - 12-16 pounds, 6 to 9 hours
    - 16-20 pounds, 16-20 hours
    - 20-24 pounds, 20-24 hours
- To properly roast your holiday turkey:
  - Place the turkey breast side on a rack in a shallow roasting pan.
  - Preheat the oven to 325°.
  - You may brush the turkey with oil, margarine, or melted butter but it is not necessary.
  - Make a tent of foil and place it loosely over the turkey. Secure it to the edge of the pan on the sides to prevent over browning.
  - Doneness is best determined by using a meat thermometer placed in the thigh – it should read 180° to 185°.
  - Remove the tent 20-30 minutes before removing from the oven for browning.
  - Allow turkey to stand for several minutes covered with foil for a juicier meat that will be easier to carve.
  - Consult the label included for suggested cooking time based on weight.
- Here are some alternative ways to cook your holiday turkey:
  - Oven cooking bags
  - Microwave
  - Outdoor – barbeque grill
  - Rotisserie cooking

### 3. Storing Your Holiday Leftovers

- Serve the meal within 2 hours of cooking and then refrigerate the remaining turkey, dressing, and gravy.
- Remove the stuffing from the bird as soon as it comes from the oven – keep it hot in the oven at 200°.
- Divide large quantities of food into smaller containers so the food will cool quickly in the refrigerator.
- Leftover turkey can be stored for 3 – 4 days. Dressing and gravy should be used within 1 – 2 days. Bring the gravy to a rolling boil for reheating.
- For longer storage:
  - Wrap in freezer paper or heavy duty foil to prevent freezer burn.
  - Date the package.

Information from:

<http://www.hoptechno.com/book15.htm>

Editors Note: To book an appearance or interview with Ann Anderson, contact Steve Hines at 800-424-8080, ext. 4619, 703-327-3243, or [shines@aafcs.org](mailto:shines@aafcs.org).

## Safety Measures for Preparing Holiday Meals and Storing Holiday Leftovers

*Ann Anderson  
AAFCS 2005 National Teacher of the Year  
Hotel and Restaurant - Hospitality Career Preparation Teacher  
Duncanville High School, Duncanville, Texas*

Many families and friends will gather this holiday season to spend time together and share special meals. When purchasing, preparing, and storing food for these meals, AAFCS suggests the following measures to prevent foodborne illness and help keep your family and friends healthy.

### 1. Keeping foods safe

- Do not allow food to remain in the danger zone (40°– 140°) more than four hours.
- Prevent cross-contamination by proper hand-washing when beginning work and when changing tasks, cleaning and sanitizing of all work surfaces and utensils, and storing ready-to-eat foods above raw foods.

### 2. Washing hands often and properly

- Wash hands properly – Water as hot as you can stand it; lather and scrub for 20 seconds (use nail brush) and then rinse and dry with a disposable paper towel.
- Wash your hands:
  - After using the restroom.
  - Before and after handling raw foods.
  - After touching your hair, face, or nose.
  - After you cough, sneeze, or use a tissue.
  - After you smoke, drink, or chew gum.
  - After you use chemicals.
  - After you take out the garbage.

### 3. Purchasing foods

- Always purchase food from reputable suppliers.
- Always check labels for dates of packaging or expiration and proper temperatures (most foods should be at 41° if cold).
- When purchasing meat:
  - Beef should be cherry red.
  - Lamb should be light red.
  - Pork should be pink.
  - The texture should be firm and spring back when touched.
- When purchasing poultry, look for:
  - No odor or discoloration.
  - A firm texture.
- When purchasing fish, look for:
  - Bright red gills.
  - A firm texture.
  - A mild ocean or seaweed odor.
- When purchasing eggs:
  - The shells should be clean and not cracked.
  - Eggs should have high yolks with whites that cling to the yolk.

#### 4. Storage of foods

- Label and date all food when purchased if not used within a few days.
- Foods should be kept in clean dry containers off of the floor.
- Always remember: First In First Out – FIFO.

#### 5. Proper thawing, serving, and reheating

- To properly thaw food, use one of the following methods:
  - Allow food to thaw in the refrigerator
  - Submerge the food in running drinkable water that is 70° or lower.
  - Microwave the food if cooking immediately.
  - Allow food to thaw as part of the cooking process.
- Before serving food, use a thermometer to check the internal temperature. The following foods should hold the temperature listed for 15 seconds:
  - Poultry – 165°.
  - Pork, Beef, and Fish – 145°.
  - Ground Meats – 155°.
- To cool hot foods quickly:
  - Divide a large quantity of food into smaller containers.
  - Use an ice bath – fill a larger pot or sink with ice water and put the hot food container in the ice bath while stirring.
- To properly reheat food:
  - Heat food to 165° for 15 seconds.

Information from:  
 ServSafe Employee Guide  
 National Restaurant Association  
 Educational Foundation

Editors Note: To book an appearance or interview with Ann Anderson, contact Steve Hines at 800-424-8080, ext. 4619, 703-327-3243, or [shines@aafcs.org](mailto:shines@aafcs.org).

### Organizing a Successful Holiday Treat Exchange

*Kendra K. Naef, CFCS  
 2005 Milken Family Foundation National Educator Award Recipient  
 AAFCS 2004 New Achiever  
 FCS Teacher  
 Kimberly High School, Kimberly, Wisconsin*

A treat exchange is the perfect solution for those with busy lives who want to present a variety of homemade goodies at holiday gatherings with family and friends. Start planning for the exchange the week following Thanksgiving by inviting others to join. Promote the exchange at work and church, and with neighbors and friends. Share the expectations for the exchange including the date by which they must decide to participate and the date for the exchange. Offer several ideas of homemade items they could make to contribute. When determining items to include in an exchange, consider storability, freshness, and ease in transporting. Also, plan to have a balance of cookies and candies in a variety of colors, flavors, and textures.

**Recommended holiday treat exchange items would include:**

- Dipped pretzel logs
- Rosettes
- Divinity
- Peanut butter balls
- Peanut clusters
- Haystacks
- Toffee
- Peanut Brittle
- Fudge
- Mints
- Caramels
- Date pinwheels
- Snicker doodles
- Peanut butter blossoms
- Sugar cookies
- M&M cookies
- Gingersnaps
- Peanut butter cup cookies
- Glazed cut out cookies
- Spritz cookies
- Fruitcake
- Quick breads

As individuals indicate their desire to participate, record their name along with the item they have selected to ensure there are no duplicates. Once the date for deciding to participate has passed, provide everyone in the exchange a list of other participants and their selected treats. Each participant will make one dozen of his or her treat for each person in the exchange. For example, if you are participating in an exchange with ten people, you will make ten dozen of your item. Treats should be nicely packaged by dozens and secured in inexpensive, non-returnable containers. It may be helpful to remind participants of the exchange date and details again prior to the collection. Prepare for the day of the exchange by labeling a large bag or box with each person's name. As treats begin to arrive, distribute a one dozen package of each item to all other participants in the exchange. The treat exchange allows for each person to take home quite a large amount and variety of homemade holiday goodies to share.

Editors Note: To book an appearance or interview with Kendra Naef, contact Steve Hines at 800-424-8080, ext. 4619, 703-327-3243, or [shines@aafcs.org](mailto:shines@aafcs.org).

**Fighting Holiday Weight Gain:  
Keeping Your Family Healthy and Active**

*Carol A. Watkins, CFCS  
AAFCS 2004 National Teacher of the Year  
FCS Teacher  
Gilmer High School, Ellijay, Georgia*

While Americans may only gain about one pound this holiday season according to a study by researchers at the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) and the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK), those pounds can add up over time. While opportunities abound to eat more goodies and larger, high-calorie meals for many people during the holiday season, AAFCS suggests incorporating the following tips into your family's routine to stay healthy and fight weight gain and obesity.

## **10 Tips for Fighting Holiday Weight Gain and Obesity**

### **1. Parents should be a positive role model.**

- Limit portion sizes.
- Cook with less fat.

### **2. Get active.**

- Plan family activities to get everyone moving.
- Encourage fun activities with friends.
- Get off the couch and get outside.

### **3. Make eating an activity in itself.**

- Don't eat while watching TV or riding in car.
- Sit down in the kitchen/dining room as a family.
- Involve kids in menu choices, prep, and clean up.
- Make a list of conversation starters to engage the family at meal time.

### **4. Don't use food as a reward or punishment.**

- Spend quality time with kids.
- Celebrate by doing something fun together.
- Don't withhold food as punishment.

### **5. Watch what your kids drink too.**

- Limit fruit juice to 12 oz. per day or less.
- Don't allow empty calories like sodas, even diet soda.
- Encourage drinking of low fat milk.

### **6. Don't be too restrictive.**

- Limit, don't eliminate sweets.
- Don't put your kid on a diet unless recommended by a doctor.

### **7. Limit television, video and computer time.**

- Reduce TV, video, and computer time to 2 hours per day.
- Don't put TV or a computer in your kids' bedrooms.

### **8. Focus on positive goals.**

- For example: run laps with their classmates or bike for 20 minutes without getting tired.

### **9. Take small steps as a family.**

- Substitute fruit for dessert.
- Park your car farther away from the destination.
- Limit fast food.
- Take a family walk.

### **10. Follow the newly revised Food Guide Pyramid Dietary Guidelines and consult professionals as needed. [www.mypyramid.gov](http://www.mypyramid.gov)**

"Holiday Weight Gain Slight, But May Last a Lifetime"  
<http://www.nichd.nih.gov/new/releases/holidayweightgain.cfm>

Editors Note: To book an appearance or interview with Carol Watkins, contact Steve Hines at 800-424-8080, ext. 4619, 703-327-3243, [shines@aafcs.org](mailto:shines@aafcs.org).

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## Holiday Shopping Online: A Tool for Managing Budgets and Time

*Annette Hays*  
*AAFCS 2004 Top Ten Teacher of the Year*  
*FCS Instructor and FCCLA Advisor*  
*Acorn High School, Mena, Arkansas*

In a study published recently in *Information Week*, Forrester Research Inc. said that consumers will spend 25 percent more online this holiday season as people become more comfortable with online shopping. What other factors may lead to this increase? It may also be due in part to what lifestyle trend forecaster Faith Popcorn predicted as the emergence of home-as-fortress, a trend for which she coined the term "cocooning." This trend along with the hectic tempo of the approaching holiday season and convenience of online shopping may encourage more Americans to turn to the Internet to accommodate their shopping needs.

The Internet provides you with shopping at your fingertips. You don't have to get dressed and leave home. You don't have to hassle with crowded stores and malls. You don't have to fight for a parking space. What could be more convenient? But, beware. Are you spending more online than you would by actually going to the store? There are ways to spot a bargain, save money, and avoid "identity terrorism" while shopping online. Listed below are tips compiled from several websites cited at the end of this article.

### 10 Tips for Holiday Shopping Online

1. **Shop with online merchants you trust.** If you need help finding an Internet merchant for what you need, check out the Shopping Guide by Yahoo! (<http://shopping.yahoo.com>). You can also find out about a merchant by visiting their website and reading their guarantees, warranties, and return policies. Don't hesitate to contact the Better Business Bureau and other consumer agencies for information about specific merchants.
2. **Make sure you know the merchant's policies.** Before completing an online purchase, carefully read delivery and return policies and privacy statements on the merchant's home page.
3. **Compare prices online.** Instead of running around town hunting for bargains, use your computer to compare prices and products before you buy. You may be able to get the best price by purchasing online; but watch out for shipping and handling charges that can ruin your bargain. You may get charged sales tax by some merchants and not by others. Some merchants charge more for shipping and handling than others, so watch out.
4. **Take advantage of the benefits of Internet research when making purchases.** The power of the Internet allows consumers to search the world for both everyday items and rare treasures. Shopping online gives you access to product reviews and other online information that can enhance your knowledge and help you make a more informed buying decision. Search for items via search engines. Try running a search for the item you're looking for using just the item's name. Next, run another search and this time add the word "wholesale" to your query.
5. **Look for signs of security.** There are several ways to tell if a merchant site is secure. Symbols like an unbroken lock or key, a URL that begins <https://> and the words Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) mean that no one but you and the merchant can view your payment information.
6. **Keep a record of your transactions.** Just as you would keep your receipts when shopping at your local mall, save a receipt for every purchase so you're covered if there are any questions later. Just as you would keep your receipts when shopping at your local mall, save a receipt

- for every purchase so you're covered if there are any questions later.
7. **Consult your budget, use common sense, take your time, and have fun.** Shopping on the Internet offers many advantages, from the convenience of shopping from home to the ability to find hard-to-locate collectibles. Take your time, have fun, and know that while good bargains exist, some offers may be too good to be true. There are many good products available over the Internet from respected merchants, so if you're uncertain about a particular site, there are always other places to shop online. Keep track of purchases you are making online, as they can add up in a hurry, exceed your budget and cause after-holiday stress when it is time to pay the charge card bills.
  8. **Pay by credit or charge card.** If you pay by credit or charge card online, your transaction will be protected by the Fair Credit Billing Act. Under this law, you have the right to dispute charges under certain circumstances and temporarily withhold payment while the creditor is investigating them. In the event of unauthorized use of your credit or charge card, you generally would be held liable only for the first \$50 in charges. Some companies offer an online shopping guarantee that ensures you will not be held responsible for any unauthorized charges made online, and some cards may provide additional warranty, return and/or purchase protection benefits.
  9. **Make sure the website allows you to retain a complete record of the transaction after you have concluded it.** Before concluding your transaction, a website should provide a confirmation page so that you can identify the goods or services you wish to purchase, identify and correct any errors, and modify your order if necessary.
  10. **Take action if something goes wrong.** Contact the business with details of your complaint. If they offer no resolution, file a complaint with government consumer protection agencies. Try to resolve your complaint. The Internet is open for business twenty four hours a day, today and everyday. By using this technological resource wisely, it can indeed make your life easier during the holiday season.

Check out the websites below for these tips and additional tips on Internet shopping.

<http://www.webtechgeek.com/How-to-Shopping-online-tips.htm>

<http://www.econsumer.gov/english/index.html>

[http://ilil.essortment.com/internetshoppin\\_rkrq.htm](http://ilil.essortment.com/internetshoppin_rkrq.htm)

<http://ww.umb.com/personal/checking/card/cctips.html>

"Holiday Online Spending Outlook Positive, Study Says"

[http://www.informationweek.com/story/showArticle.jhtml?](http://www.informationweek.com/story/showArticle.jhtml?articleID=173400553)

[articleID=173400553](http://www.informationweek.com/story/showArticle.jhtml?articleID=173400553)

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### **Holiday Money Handling: Rein in Your "Inner Santa"**

*Deborah J. Nelson, CFCS  
AAFCs Vice President,  
Program FCS Teacher Alameda High School,  
Lakewood, Colorado*

The holidays can be a challenging time for everyone! There are so many expectations, some real and some only perceived. The "Norman Rockwell" holiday really does not exist. People do the best they can with what they have...because when too much is spent, it puts a cramp on the beginning of a "happy new year!"

There are some tips for getting a handle on holiday spending, to keep that "inner Santa" under control and avoid debt.

### Tips for Holiday Budgeting

- **Decide how much money you truly have available to spend.** How much can you squeeze out of your November and December budgets for this purpose? What do you have in savings that could be used for holiday activities?
- **Write out your gift list and check it twice!** Be realistic here, as well as creative.
  - What talents do you have? What gifts could you make? What non-monetary gifts could you offer? Remember those coupons we used to make for our parents....."this coupon good for one hug" or "this coupon good for one pan of brownies" – how can you use this idea as an adult?
  - Encourage large families to draw names for the adults, or give gifts to the couple, rather than each individual. Set an age limit for when children join the "adult" gift pool.
  - Remember stocking stuffers – those "small amounts" can add up fast.
  - Have a few "extra" gifts on hand for those unexpected gift needs.
- **Looking at the money available and the gift list, set a dollar amount for each gift recipient.** How much can you afford to spend on each person? It doesn't have to be the same amount for everyone – you get to pick and choose.
- **Write each person/family's name on an envelope.** Go to your financial institution and withdraw the dollar amounts in cash. Put the appropriate cash into each labeled envelope. Store these envelopes in a safe place!
- **Go shopping!!!** When the cash is gone, you are done spending for that person/family. Have fun purchasing your gifts! Happy Holidays!

### For a happier holiday season next year, start NOW!

- Calculate how much you can afford to spend for the holidays next year.
- Divide this dollar amount by 12 or however many times you get paid in a year.
- Set up an automatic deduction into a holiday account at your financial institution. Holiday accounts usually earn slightly higher interest, always a plus! The automatic deduction makes it easier to "remember" to save the money.
- Next November, get the cash out, make your envelopes and repeat steps 4 and 5 for another happy holiday season!

For more tips on budgeting, see:

[www.practicalmoneyskills.com](http://www.practicalmoneyskills.com)  
[www.moneymanagement.org](http://www.moneymanagement.org)

Editors Note: To book an appearance or interview with Debbie Nelson, contact Steve Hines at 800-424-8080, ext. 4619, 703-327-3243, or [shines@aafcs.org](mailto:shines@aafcs.org)

## Teacher of the Year Biography

### Ann Anderson

### American Association of Family & Consumer Sciences (AAFCS) 2005 National Teacher of the Year (T.O.Y.)

Ann Anderson has dedicated 29 years to teaching family and consumer sciences (FCS) at the secondary school level. In 1967, Ann earned a bachelor's degree in home economics education from North Texas State University and in 1991, a master's degree in secondary education from the University of North Texas. From

1967 to 1971, Ann taught FCS classes in the Carrollton-Farmers Branch Independent School District. Since 1980, she has been working at Duncanville High School and is currently an FCS teacher and chair of the Family and Consumer Sciences Department.

To stay on the cutting-edge of her field and provide the highest quality education to her students, Ann has continued to advance her professional development. Last year, she completed a 40-hour course taught by the Intel Corporation on integrating technology into the classroom. Ann has also completed the workshops necessary so that her students can earn Tech Prep and Articulation credit in Texas. Additionally, she has completed the hours and passed the exam to be a ServSafe Instructor.

In addition to Ann's membership with AAFCS, she is an active member of related organizations. She has been a member of the Hospitality Educators Association of Texas (HEAT) for eight years; member of the Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE) and National Association of Teachers of Family and Consumer Sciences (NATFACS) for 24 years; and member of Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) and the Family and Consumer Sciences Teacher Association of Texas (FCSTAT) for 29 years.

For FCCLA, Ann is a chapter advisor and coordinates the six FCCLA chapters at her high school. She has chaired and co-chaired FCCLA regional and state STAR (Students Taking Action with Recognition) events. Ann's students have competed in the Community Service, Culinary Arts, and Job Interview STAR events and some have moved on to compete at the state and national levels.

Giving back to the community is an important aspect of Ann's curriculum and her life. Her students have prepared and served food for the Stewpot, an organization that assists homeless people in Dallas; visited senior citizens in nursing homes; assembled Easter baskets for the Children's Advocacy Center in Dallas; and participated in the Relay for Life at her high school to raise funds for breast cancer research and increase awareness about the disease. Ann personally contributes to the Duncanville Education Foundation, which gives grants to deserving programs in her school district and gives gift certificates to needy students at her high school.

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## ABOUT AAFCS

Founded in 1909, AAFCS is the only not-for-profit 501 (c)(3) organization dedicated to bringing people together to improve the lives of individuals, families, and communities. AAFCS' 9,000 members are elementary, secondary, and post-secondary educators, researchers, and administrators; cooperative extension educators; and other professionals in business and industry, not-for-profit organizations, and government.

These professionals develop, integrate, and provide practical knowledge about LifeSkills- dietetics and nutrition; financial literacy; child care and parenting; conflict resolution; consumer education; housing and environment; and apparel and textiles.

This Electronic Press Kit is sent as a courtesy of the American Association of Family & Consumer Sciences (AAFCS). For more information about AAFCS, visit [www.aafcs.org](http://www.aafcs.org)

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