

U.S. Census Bureau News

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Facts for
Features

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Thanksgiving Day: Nov. 24, 2011

In the fall of 1621, the Pilgrims, early settlers of Plymouth Colony, held a three-day feast to celebrate a bountiful harvest, an event many regard as the nation's first Thanksgiving. Historians have also recorded ceremonies of thanks among other groups of European settlers in North America, including British colonists in Virginia in 1619. The legacy of thanks and the feast have survived the centuries, as the event became a national holiday in 1863 when President Abraham Lincoln proclaimed the last Thursday of November as a national day of thanksgiving. Later, President Franklin Roosevelt clarified that Thanksgiving should always be celebrated on the fourth Thursday of the month to encourage earlier holiday shopping, never on the occasional fifth Thursday.

248 million

The number of turkeys expected to be raised in the United States in 2011. That's up 2 percent from the number raised during 2010. The turkeys produced in 2010 together weighed 7.11 billion pounds and were valued at \$4.37 billion.

Source: USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service,

<http://usda01.library.cornell.edu/usda/current/TurkRaisSu/TurkRaisSu-09-23-2011.pdf>,

<http://usda01.library.cornell.edu/usda/current/PoulProdVa/PoulProdVa-04-28-2011.pdf>

46.5 million

The preliminary estimate of turkeys Minnesota is expected to raise in 2011. The Gopher State was tops in turkey production, followed by North Carolina (30.0 million), Arkansas (30.0 million), Missouri (18.0 million), Virginia (17.5 million) and Indiana (16.0 million). These six states together account for about two-thirds of U.S. turkeys produced in 2011.

Source: USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service,

<http://usda01.library.cornell.edu/usda/current/TurkRaisSu/TurkRaisSu-09-23-2011.pdf>

Culinary Delights

750 million pounds

The forecast for U.S. cranberry production in 2011. Wisconsin is expected to lead all states in the production of cranberries, with 430 million pounds, followed by Massachusetts (210 million). New Jersey, Oregon and Washington are also expected to have substantial production, ranging from 17 million to 54 million pounds.

Source: USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service,

<http://usda01.library.cornell.edu/usda/current/Cran/Cran-08-16-2011.pdf>

2.4 billion pounds

The total weight of sweet potatoes — another popular Thanksgiving side dish — produced by major sweet potato producing states in 2010. North Carolina (972 million pounds) produced more sweet potatoes than any other state.

Source: USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service

<<http://quickstats.nass.usda.gov/results/E8F91E0D-30B4-305E-AA3C-0ABADBFB95A2>>,
<http://usda01.library.cornell.edu/usda/current/CropProdSu/CropProdSu-01-12-2011_new_format.pdf>

1.1 billion pounds

Total production of pumpkins in the major pumpkin-producing states in 2010. Illinois led the country by producing 427 million pounds of the vined orange gourd. Pumpkin patches in California, New York and Ohio also provided lots of pumpkins: Each state produced at least 100 million pounds. The value of all pumpkins produced by major pumpkin-producing states was \$117 million.

Source: USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service,

<<http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/usda/current/VegeSumm/VegeSumm-01-27-2011.pdf>>

If you prefer cherry pie, you will be pleased to learn that the nation's forecasted tart cherry production for 2011 totals 266.1 million pounds, up 40 percent from the 2010 production. Of this 2011 total, the overwhelming majority (210.0 million pounds) will be produced in Michigan.

Source: USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service,

<<http://usda01.library.cornell.edu/usda/nass/CherProd//2010s/2011/CherProd-06-23-2011.pdf>>

2.01 billion bushels

The total volume of wheat — the essential ingredient of bread, rolls and pie crust — produced in the United States in 2011. Kansas, Montana and North Dakota accounted for about 33 percent of the nation's wheat production.

Source: USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service,

<<http://usda01.library.cornell.edu/usda/current/SmalGraiSu/SmalGraiSu-09-30-2011.pdf>>

656,340 tons

The 2011 contracted production of snap (green) beans in major snap (green) bean-producing states. Of this total, Wisconsin led all states (258,320 tons). Many Americans consider green bean casserole a traditional Thanksgiving dish.

Source: USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service,

<<http://usda01.library.cornell.edu/usda/current/Vege/Vege-09-02-2011.pdf>>

\$7.8 million

The value of U.S. imports of live turkeys from January through July of 2011 — 99.7 percent from Canada. When it comes to sweet potatoes, the Dominican Republic was the source of 60.1 percent (\$3.2 million) of total imports (\$5.3 million). The United States ran a \$3.6 million trade deficit in live turkeys during the period but had a surplus of \$41.7 million in sweet potatoes.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Foreign Trade Statistics <<http://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/>>

13.3 pounds

The quantity of turkey consumed by the typical American in 2009, with no doubt a hearty helping devoured at Thanksgiving time. Per capita sweet potato consumption was 5.3 pounds.

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture as cited in the *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2012*, Tables 217 and 218, <<http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/>>

The Price is Right

\$1.38

Retail cost per pound of a frozen whole turkey in December 2010.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics as cited in the *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2012*, Table 733, <<http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/>>

Where to Feast

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Number of places in the United States named after the holiday's traditional main course. Turkey Creek, La., was the most populous in 2010, with 441 residents, followed by Turkey, Texas (421), Turkey Creek, Ariz. (294), and Turkey, N.C. (292). There are also 11 townships around the country with Turkey in their names, including three in Kansas.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census <<http://factfinder2.census.gov/>>

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Number of places and townships in the United States that are named Cranberry or some spelling variation of the acidic red berry (e.g., Cranbury, N.J.), a popular side dish at Thanksgiving. Cranberry township (Butler County), Pa., was the most populous of these places in 2010, with 28,098 residents. Cranberry township (Venango County), Pa., was next (6,685).

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census <<http://factfinder2.census.gov/>>

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Number of places and townships in the United States named Plymouth, as in Plymouth Rock, the landing site of the first Pilgrims. Plymouth, Minn., is the most populous, with 70,576 residents in 2010; Plymouth, Mass., had 56,468. There is just one township in the United States named Pilgrim. Located in Dade County, Mo., its population was 132 in 2010. And then there is

Mayflower, Ark., whose population was 2,234 in 2010, and Mayflower Village, Calif., whose population was 5,515 in 2010.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census <<http://factfinder2.census.gov/>>

116.7 million

Number of households across the nation — all potential gathering places for people to celebrate the holiday.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census <<http://factfinder2.census.gov/>>

Following is a list of observances typically covered by the Census Bureau's *Facts for Features* series:

African-American History Month (February)	Labor Day
Super Bowl	Grandparents Day
Valentine's Day (Feb. 14)	Hispanic Heritage Month (Sept. 15-Oct. 15)
Women's History Month (March)	Unmarried and Single Americans Week
Irish-American Heritage Month (March)/ St. Patrick's Day (March 17)	Halloween (Oct. 31)
Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month (May)	American Indian/Alaska Native Heritage Month (November)
Older Americans Month (May)	Veterans Day (Nov. 11)
Cinco de Mayo (May 5)	Thanksgiving Day
Mother's Day	The Holiday Season (December)
Hurricane Season Begins (June 1)	
Father's Day	
The Fourth of July (July 4)	
Anniversary of Americans with Disabilities Act (July 26)	
Back to School (August)	

Editor's note: The preceding data were collected from a variety of sources and may be subject to sampling variability and other sources of error. Facts for Features are customarily released about two months before an observance in order to accommodate magazine production timelines. Questions or comments should be directed to the Census Bureau's Public Information Office: telephone: 301-763-3030; fax: 301-763-3762; or e-mail: <pio@census.gov>.