



# FACT SHEET

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## Minnesota Turkey Industry Facts

- Minnesota currently is ranked #1 for turkey production and is home to the world's largest turkey hatchery company (Willmar Poultry Company) as well as the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest turkey processing company in the U.S. (Jennie-O Turkey Store).
- Minnesota's turkey farmers are expected to raise approximately 46 million birds in 2011, bringing more than \$600 million in income for farmers, processors and other related industries. Every Minnesota turkey generates \$11.68 of direct economic activity to the state, according to a 2003 University of Minnesota study.
- Minnesota has approximately 250 turkey farmers who operate 600 turkey farms.
- Minnesota has more independent turkey farmers than any other state in the U.S. Many of these farmers are 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and even 5<sup>th</sup> generation family farmers.
- The majority of turkeys raised in Minnesota are more likely to be shipped outside the state.
  - Ninety (90) percent of turkey products processed in state are exported out of Minnesota.
  - Of that 90 percent, approximately 15 percent are exported to international markets.
  - The top five export markets for U.S. turkey meat (2008) were: Mexico, China, Russia, Canada and Hong Kong.
- The top 10 turkey-producing counties in Minnesota (based on liveweight, 2010 statistics) are:

1. Kandiyohi	6. Rice
2. Stearns	7. Lyon
3. Morrison	8. Ottertail
4. Becker	9. Fillmore
5. Steele	10. Dodge
- Minnesota's top 2 counties also are ranked in the top 10 for largest turkey-producing counties in the U.S. – Kandiyohi (#5), Stearns (#9), according to 2005 figures from the National Turkey Federation.
- As the nation's largest producer and processor of turkey, Minnesota is home to three turkey processing companies with a total of seven processing plants around the state.
  - Jennie-O Turkey Store, the world's 2<sup>nd</sup> largest processor of turkey, owns plants in Willmar, Melrose, Montevideo, Pelican Rapids and Faribault, with one additional plant in Barron, Wisconsin. Jennie-O Turkey Store handles approximately 1.342 billion pounds of turkey annually (2008) and is a subsidiary of Hormel Foods Corp. Its Minnesota plants employ about 5,300 workers, producing annual sales of \$750 million and total economic activity of more than \$2 billion.
  - Turkey Valley Farms - one plant in Marshall. Turkey Valley Farms is ranked 20<sup>th</sup> among all turkey processing companies in the U.S.
  - Northern Pride, Inc., a growers cooperative, owns one plant in Thief River Falls. Northern Pride is ranked 21<sup>st</sup> among all turkey processing companies in the U.S.

## Minnesota Turkey Production Statistics

- The average turkey farmer raises three flocks per year. Each of these flocks is an average size of about 15,000 birds.

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- In addition to well over \$500 million in economic activity, the industry and its related businesses support 26,000 jobs in Minnesota.
- Turkeys annually consume \$74 million of corn and \$90 million of soybean meal, adding approximately \$198 million to the value of corn and soybeans in Minnesota.
- Corn and soybean production to supply turkey producers employs the equivalent of 1,767 cash grain producers and employees.

## **Turkey Production Facts**

- In the Midwest, ground corn and soybean meal are the major components of feed for turkeys. Other ingredients may be partially substituted for the corn and soybean meal, and minerals and vitamin supplements are added to a turkey's diet. Feed and fresh water are available continuously to the turkeys.
- On average, it takes 75-80 pounds of feed to raise a 30-pound tom turkey.
- Today's turkey production methods have shortened the time it takes to bring turkeys to maturity. Male (toms) and female (hens) commercial turkeys are grown separately due to their distinctly different growth rates. Age or size at marketing is determined by the type of meat product to be sold.

## **National Turkey Facts**

- An estimated 272 million turkeys were raised in the United States in 2010.
- Turkey exports are an increasingly important aspect of U.S. turkey production, especially for turkey parts and dark meat products. Total U.S. export value of turkey in 2008 was \$482 million. In 2008, nearly 676 million pounds were exported. Exports now comprise just over 10 percent of total turkey production, compared with just over 2 percent in 1990.
- The top five export markets for U.S. turkey meat (2008) were: Mexico, China, Russia, Canada and Hong Kong.

## **Turkey Health & Well-Being**

- There are no hormones or steroids approved for use in turkeys in the U.S.
- FDA approved antibiotics are used at times to help suppress microorganisms, prevent disease and ensure that consumers receive a healthy product. A withdrawal period is required after the time the antibiotic is administered and before the turkey can be processed. The Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS) of the USDA monitors the administration of antibiotics and randomly tests flocks of turkeys for residues. Therefore, consumers can be assured that turkeys do not contain antibiotic residues when they go to market.
- Turkeys are raised in scientifically designed, environmentally controlled barns that provide maximum protection from predators, disease and bad weather. Turkeys roam freely around the barn. Fresh water and food are available at all times.

## **Consumer Turkey Tips**

- *Upgrade It! with Turkey* - Nutritionally, turkey has more protein than chicken or beef – plus fewer calories with zero trans- and saturated fat. Find out how it easy it is to “upgrade” your favorite meals with turkey at [www.mealupgrade.com](http://www.mealupgrade.com).
- Producing a quality, nutritious and safe product is the top priority for turkey farmers as well as turkey processing companies, which follow USDA guidelines for food safety. Consumers, too, need to do their part to ensure that turkey is handled properly in the kitchen and cooked to an internal temperature of 165 degrees F., as measured by a food thermometer.