



## Thanksgiving Facts from the U.S. Census Bureau Nov. 26, 2009



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. It eventually 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.

### **250 million**

The preliminary estimate of turkeys raised in the United States in 2009. That's down 8 percent from the number raised during 2008. The turkeys produced in 2008 together weighed 7.9 billion pounds and were valued at \$4.5 billion.

### **Weighing in With a Menu of Culinary Delights**

#### **45.5 million**

The preliminary estimate of turkeys Minnesota expected to raise in 2009. The Gopher State was tops in turkey production, followed by North Carolina (37.5 million), Arkansas (28 million), Missouri (21 million), Virginia (16.4 million) and California (15 million).

#### **709 million pounds**

The forecast for U.S. cranberry production in 2009. Wisconsin is expected to lead all states in the production of cranberries, with 400 million pounds, followed by Massachusetts (190 million).

#### **\$9.2 million**

The value of U.S. imports of live turkeys from January through July of 2009 — 99.3 percent from Canada.

#### **1.8 billion pounds**

The total weight of sweet potatoes — another popular Thanksgiving side dish — produced by major sweet potato producing states in 2008. North Carolina (874 million pounds) produced more sweet potatoes than any other state. It was followed by California (437 million pounds) and Mississippi (335 million pounds).

#### **2.2 billion bushels**

The total volume of wheat — the essential ingredient of bread, rolls and pie crust — produced in the United States in 2009. North Dakota and Kansas accounted for 34 percent of the nation's wheat production.

#### **13.8 pounds**

The quantity of turkey consumed by the typical American in 2007, with a hearty helping devoured at Thanksgiving time. Per capita sweet potato consumption was 5.2 pounds.

### **The Price is Right**

#### **\$1.33**

Retail cost per pound of a frozen whole turkey in December 2008.

#### **117 million**

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

\*\* This data is excerpted from the Thanksgiving Facts for Features from the U.S. Census Bureau. For complete source information and to view the entire document, visit < [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov) > and click on "Facts for Features."

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



### Thanksgiving Facts from the U.S. Census Bureau Student Activity Sheet



Fill in the blanks with the correct answer from the information provided in the Thanksgiving Facts from the U.S. Census Bureau. Then use the letters in the boxed blanks to form a six-letter word related to Thanksgiving. (Hint: There are too many letters because some are duplicates.)

1. There are 117 \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_  households across the U.S.
2. The retail cost per pound of a frozen  \_ \_  \_ \_ last December was \$1.33.
3. The forecasted production for U.S. cranberry production in 2009 is 709 million \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ .
4. \_ \_  \_ \_   \_  leads all states in cranberry production.
5. North Carolina produced more of this food – a popular Thanksgiving side dish – than any other state.  \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_    \_ \_ .
6. The total volume of wheat produced in the U.S. in 2009 was 2.2 billion \_ \_   \_ \_ .
7. Minnesota is nicknamed the \_ \_ \_  \_ \_ state.
8. From January through July 2009 the U.S. imported most live turkeys from the country of \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ .
9. Did you eat your share of turkey? The average American ate 13.8 \_  \_  \_ .
10. What general observation can you make about the geographic location of cranberry production?

Use the letters in circles above to form a word related to Thanksgiving \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ .

Can you find these geographic place names related to Thanksgiving? Once you locate them, take this home and challenge your relatives to a Thanksgiving geography lesson.

- Turkey, TX, NC
- Turkey Creek, LA
- Cranberry Township (Butler County) PA
- Cranbury, NJ
- Plymouth, MA, MN
- Mayflower, AR

**Thanksgiving Facts from the U.S. Census Bureau  
Teacher Sheet**

Answer Key:

1. million
2. turkey
3. pounds
4. Wisconsin
5. sweet potatoes
6. bushels
7. Gopher
8. Canada
9. pounds
10. Cranberries are grown in northern climates

Word Related to Thanksgiving - Thanks