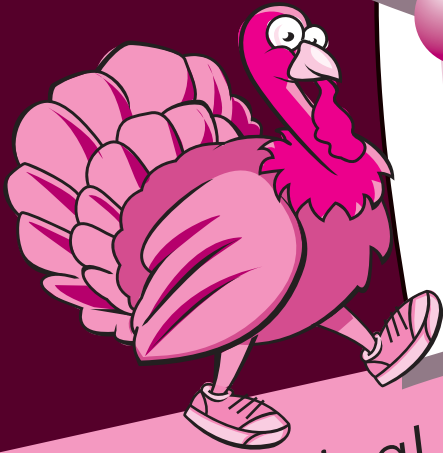


Tracking a Turkey

Turkeys and other poultry are important sources of nutrition throughout the world. We are gobbling up turkey today like never before. Today's healthy eaters want meat that's high in protein. They want it low in fat, cholesterol and calories. That's turkey and chicken, served and enjoyed all year 'round.

Where do turkeys start out, and how do they get to our tables? Let's track turkeys and find out.



Happy Eating!

Poultry is good for you and safe to eat, but remember these tips:

Safety Tips

- Never eat raw or partly cooked (pink) poultry.
- It can make you sick.
- Cook turkey to 180 degrees on a meat thermometer inserted in the thigh.
- Always thaw and store poultry in the refrigerator.
- Raw or cooked, it spoils quickly if left at room temperature.
- Store cooked poultry within two hours of cooking.

The turkeys we eat today are not much like the wild birds eaten on the first Thanksgiving.

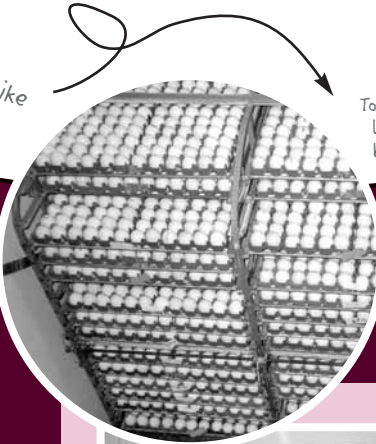
Today's birds are much larger and specially bred for more meat.



Photo Courtesy Minnesota Turkey Research and Promotion Council

1

Turkeys start out as fertilized eggs laid by female turkeys (hens) at breeding farms. Most hens lay about 100 eggs in a 28-week cycle. Hens lay one egg at a time in nests.



2



Photo Courtesy Jennie-O Turkey Store

Fertilized eggs are kept warm in huge incubators at hatcheries.

Turkeys belong to a family of livestock called **poultry**, which includes chicken, geese, pheasant, quail and ducks.

8

Turkey meat can be made into many products. Whole turkey is a special favorite on holidays. Americans eat 45 million turkeys on Thanksgiving Day alone. All year 'round, they enjoy turkey franks, ham, patties, roasts, deli slices, sausages, drumsticks and ground turkey. What's your favorite?

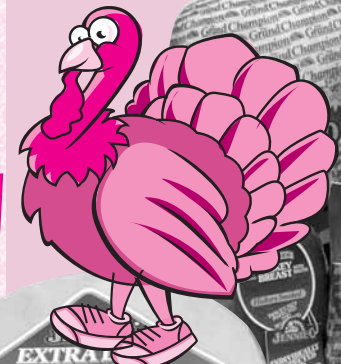
Peacocks

aren't the only birds to strut their stuff. **Tom turkeys** can fan out their tails in grand style!



Photo Courtesy Jennie-O Turkey Store

Raising a 22 to 26-pound tom turkey takes about 55-60 pounds of feed.



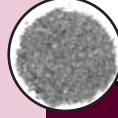
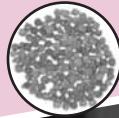
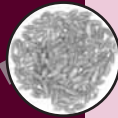
Wheat

Distillers dried grain

Corn

Soybean meal

Pellatized feed



Gobble, gobble is tom turkey talk. If the sound is click, click, it's a hen you're hearing.

Photos Courtesy Jennie-O Turkey Store



Photo Courtesy Minnesota Turkey Research and Promotion Council



4

Turkey farmers take special care for the health and safety of their birds. They provide shelter to protect the birds from predators and bad weather. They carefully heat and cool their barns to make sure turkeys stay comfortable. A balanced ration of corn, soybeans, other grains, vitamins and minerals gives the birds good nutrition. Fresh water is available to drink at all times. A typical Minnesota turkey farm raises 165,000 or more turkeys a year.

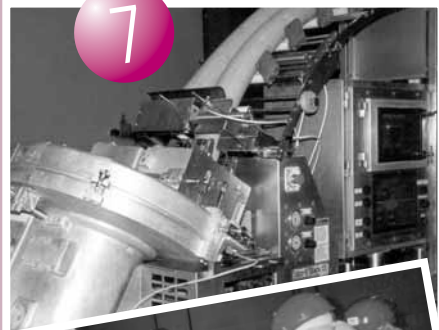
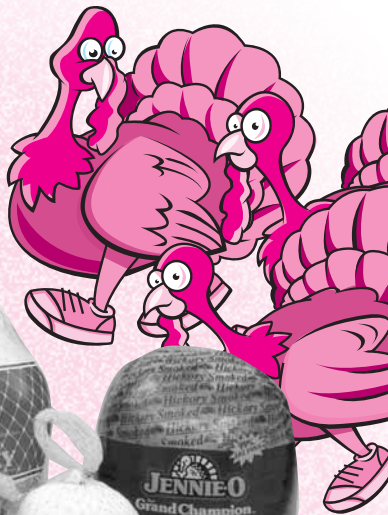


Photo Courtesy Minnesota Turkey Research and Promotion Council

5

It takes 13 weeks to grow hens and 17 weeks to grow toms until they are market size. Most turkeys are sold by farmers to processing plants. Minnesota has 11 turkey processing plants.

There are 157 bones in a turkey, compared to 206 bones in the human body. What is the turkey wishbone? How do some families use it?



7



Photos Courtesy Jennie-O Turkey Store

This processing plant has many different departments and products. Here we see 30-pound logs of cooked meat moving into a slicing machine. The slicer will make every piece the same size and weight. Look at these workers packaging turkey ham. What are they doing to make sure the product is clean and safe for you to eat?



Photo Courtesy Willmar Poultry Company

6

Turkeys are moved by special trucks from the farm to the processing plants. They are checked for good health and quality as they come from the farm and many more times during the processing cycle.

Wild turkeys are part of America's heritage. Every state except Alaska has flocks of wild turkeys. Turkeys helped keep early settlers from starving. Ben Franklin wanted the turkey to be our national bird. What is our national bird?



Photos Courtesy Jennie-O Turkey Store

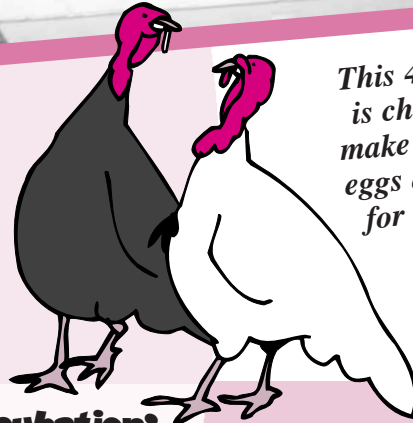
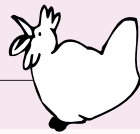
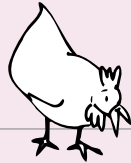
Eggstra, Eggstra! Read all About It

Photos and Illustration Courtesy 4-H Cooperative Curriculum System - Embryology in the Classroom

Chickens, like all poultry, hatch from eggs. Eggs that are to be used for chicks are produced at special farms called breeder farms. Both roosters and hens are needed to create the fertilized eggs that can grow into chicks. Fertilized eggs are collected from the hens and carefully moved to hatcheries. They are examined with bright lights (candled) and sorted to make sure there are no cracks or flaws. Then the eggs are put in large incubators. Temperature, humidity, ventilation and turning must all be carefully controlled for good hatching. Turning the eggs is important so the developing chick doesn't get stuck on one side of the eggshell.

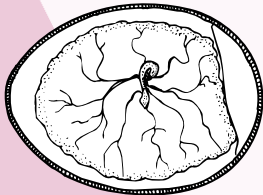
Each type of poultry has its own hatching schedule.

	Days
Chickens	21
Ducks	28
Geese	28-33
Pheasants	24-26
Turkey	28

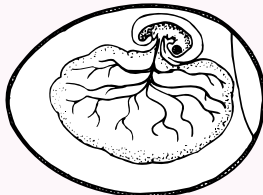


This 4-H group is checking to make sure these eggs are perfect for hatching.

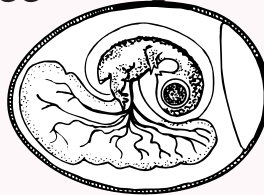
Here's how a chicken develops in its egg during incubation:



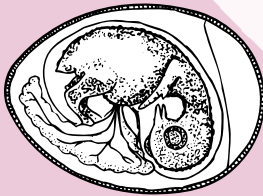
Day 3



Day 6



Day 9



Day 12



Day 18



Day 21

Watch a chick hatch. See page 12 for a web site.

Some of the yolk of the egg stays in the intestinal track of the baby chick. The chick can live on this food for several days after hatching.

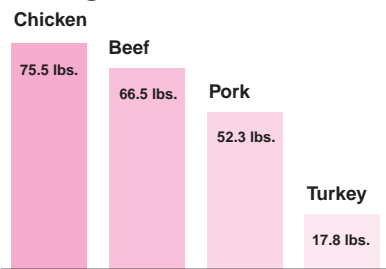
A few days after hatching, most chicks are sold directly to chicken farmers who will raise them for eggs and meat. Hens raised for eggs are called laying hens. Those raised for meat are called broilers.

There are over 150 breeds of poultry and 340 color combinations.

Did You Know?

Which meat do Americans eat most?

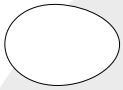
Per capita consumption of the Big Four meats in 2000



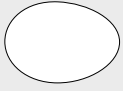
- How much total meat do we eat per capita?
- The annual per capita average for eggs is 258. How are per capita amounts figured out?

It's a fact! Chickens are probably the most common birds in the world. They are raised on every continent. There are more chickens in the world than people!

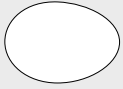
Safe Eggs... or Sorry!



For cooking and eating, use only properly refrigerated eggs with clean, unbroken shells.



Eggs can be safely stored for four to five weeks in the refrigerator. Keep them in the carton for best freshness.



Don't eat raw or undercooked eggs. A bacteria called salmonella, sometimes found in raw eggs, can make you sick.

YES, that means eggs in cookie and cake dough, salad dressing, ice cream and egg nog, too!

(Using egg substitutes is a way to avoid raw eggs in some recipes.)

Did you know?

The eggs you buy at a supermarket will not hatch into chicks. They are from hens that are raised without roosters, so the eggs are not fertilized.

Most of the eggs we eat are white chicken eggs. The color (white or brown) depends on the breed of chicken laying the egg.

Photo Courtesy: Minnesota Ag in the Classroom



What do you cook that uses eggs?



Cookin' with Eggs

Eggs make healthy snacks and nutritious meals. Boiled, broiled, basted, fried, poached, scrambled or in an omelet, they taste great and are easy to cook.

Think about your favorite omelet. What is in it?

Did you ever stop to think that all your favorite foods come from agriculture?

It takes a laying hen 23 to 32 hours to produce an egg. Each hen in a commercial egg flock lays an average of 260 eggs a year.

Did you know?