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November 2008: Thanksgiving Day

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Government Documents News



Thanksgiving Day



Nov. 27, 2008



Thanksgiving Facts



The nation's first Thanksgiving took place in the fall of 1621 when the Pilgrims held a three-day feast to celebrate a bountiful harvest.



Thanksgiving became a national holiday in 1863 when President Abraham Lincoln proclaimed the last Thursday of November as a national day of thanksgiving.



In 1939, President Franklin D. Roosevelt declared that Thanksgiving would be celebrated on the fourth Thursday of the month of November (never on the occasional fifth Thursday) to give time for earlier holiday shopping. All states did not adopt the date change and family members who lived in different states could not celebrate the holiday together. Attached is a letter to President Roosevelt from Eleanor Lucy Blydenburgh, a student at Pratt Institute, explaining that her school in New York will be celebrating Thanksgiving on a different day than her family in Connecticut. Click on the page links to read Miss Blydenburgh's letter. [page 1](#) and [page 2](#).



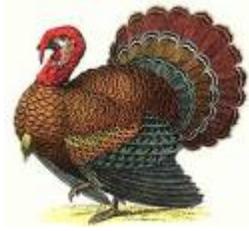
On December 26, 1941, Congress passed a law securing a unified Thanksgiving on the fourth Thursday of November.

Thanksgiving Statistics

The U.S. Government produces factual and statistical information covering a wide variety of topics. Statistics and facts from one or more agencies can be combined to create a new report or enhance an existing report. The following is a list of statistics gathered from the U.S. Census Bureau, the Department of Agriculture and several other U.S. Government agencies on the topic of Thanksgiving.



There are 116 million households across the nation — all potential gathering places for Thanksgiving celebrations.



Turkey

In 2006, the typical American consumed 13.3 pounds of turkey.

All turkeys produced in 2007 together weighed 7.9 billion pounds and were valued at \$3.7 billion.

In 2007, the cost of a frozen whole turkey was \$1.01 per pound.

The estimated number of turkeys raised in the United States for 2008 is 271 million.

States leading in turkey production include:

- Minnesota / 49 million
- North Carolina / 39 million
- Arkansas / 31 million
- Virginia / 21 million
- Missouri / 20 million
- Indiana / 15.9 million

The U.S. imported \$9.2 million live turkeys from January through July 2008. 99.3 percent of the imports were from Canada.

There are three Places in the United States named Turkey:

- Turkey, Texas / 465 residents
- Turkey Creek, La. / 363 residents
- Turkey, N.C. / 270 residents
- There are also nine townships named Turkey – three are in Kansas.



Cranberries

Cranberries are one of only three commercially grown fruits native to North America. The other two are blueberries and concord grapes.

689 million pounds of cranberries are expected to be produced in 2008.

Wisconsin leads all states in the production of cranberries, with 385 million pounds, followed by Massachusetts with 190 million pounds.

The United States imported \$2.1 million of cranberries from Canada during the first half of the year.



Cranberry bog flooded for harvest



Sweet Potatoes

1.8 billion pounds of sweet potatoes were produced in 2007.

Sweet potato consumption per capita is 4.6 pounds.

States producing the most sweet potatoes:

- North Carolina - 667 million pounds
- California - 426 million pounds
- Mississippi and Louisiana - 300 million pounds each.

\$4.4 million of sweet potatoes were imported. 86.3 percent (\$3.8 million) came from the Dominican Republic.



Pumpkins

1.1 billion pounds of pumpkin were produced in 2007.

Illinois was the leading producer with 542 million pounds.

Ohio, California and New York each produced at least 100 million pounds.

The value of all pumpkins produced by major pumpkin-producing states was \$117 million.



Cherries

Do you like cherry pie? The nation's forecasted tart cherry production for 2008 totals 177 million pounds.

Of this total, the overwhelming majority (135 million) will be produced in Michigan.



Wheat – (Bread)

2.1 billion bushels of wheat were produced in the United States in 2007— (the essential ingredient of bread, rolls and pie crust.)

Kansas and North Dakota accounted for 28 percent of the nation’s wheat production.



Green Beans

769,760 tons of snap (green) beans were contracted in 2008.

Wisconsin led all states in production with 293,200 tons of snap beans.

Thanksgiving at the White House, 2007



- ❖ Last year marked the 60th anniversary of the National Thanksgiving Turkey presentation at the White House.
- ❖ The first National Thanksgiving Turkey was presented to President Harry Truman in 1947.
- ❖ Currently, the National Thanksgiving Turkey and its alternate are chosen from a selection of 15 finalists by the National Turkey Federation. An alternate is chosen in case the National Thanksgiving Turkey cannot fulfill the responsibilities of

being the National Turkey.

- ❖ The 2007 National Thanksgiving Turkeys, May, and alternate turkey, Flower, were from Dubois, Indiana. They weighed about 45 pounds each and were raised with increased interaction with people so that they would be prepared for their role at the White House Ceremony. As is the tradition, the 2007 turkeys were granted a "pardon." They were then flown first class to Disney World in Orlando, FL to be the grand marshal of "Disney's Thanksgiving Day Parade." After the parade, guests visited the birds in the backyard of Mickey's Country House in Magic Kingdom Park.

Thanksgiving Recipes

Mamie Eisenhower's Million Dollar Fudge

Ingredients:

4 1/2 cups sugar
pinch of salt
2 tbsp. butter
1 tall can evaporated milk
12 oz. semi-sweet chocolate bits
12 oz. German sweet chocolate
1 pint marshmallow cream
2 cups nutmeats

Directions:

Boil the sugar, salt, butter, evaporated milk together for 6 minutes. Put chocolate bits and German chocolate marshmallow cream and nutmeats in a bowl. Pour the boiling syrup over the ingredients. Beat until Chocolate is all melted, then pour into a pan. Let stand a few hours before cutting. Remember its better the second day. Store in a tin box..

George Washington's Cranberry Pudding

Ingredients :

2 eggs beaten
2 tbsp. sugar
Pinch of salt
1/2 cup molasses
2 tsp. baking soda
1/3 cup boiling water
1 1/2 cups sifted flour
1 1/2 cups cranberries, cut in half

Directions:

Combine eggs, sugar, salt and molasses. In a separate container put baking soda in 1/3 cup boiling water. Add to egg mixture. Stir in flour and cranberries. Steam in a buttered rice steamer for 1 1/2 hours. Serve warm with the following sauce.. Serves 6-8

Sauce:

2 sticks of butter
2 cups sugar
1 cup half and half

Melt butter.

Add sugar and half and half and stir until sugar is dissolved

Nancy Bush's Spicy Mashed Sweet Potatoes with Maple Syrup

Ingredients:

6 lbs. Fresh sweet potatoes (scrubbed & clean)
3/4 cup sour cream or plain yogurt
1/3 to 1/2 cup of good quality maple syrup
1 1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon
4 tsp. Pureed canned chipotle chilies salt to taste.

Directions:

Cook sweet potatoes until soft in a microwave, by boiling or by baking at 350 degrees for up to one hour. Combine syrup, sour cream, chipotle puree' cinnamon and salt in a small bowl. Whisk until smooth. After potatoes are cooked and soft, remove the peel and pass through a potato ricer, hand mill or potato masher. Blend in other ingredients with a rubber spatula to combine. Taste for seasoning and transfer to a warm serving bowl. Serve Immediately.

For additional recipes see:

USDA Alternate Turkey Cooking Methods:

http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Fact_Sheets/Turkey_Alt_Routes/index.asp

USA.gov - American Recipes:

<http://www.usa.gov/Citizen/Topics/Health/Recipes.shtml#vgn-recipe-collections-publications-vgn>

Virtual Cities Internet Cookbook:

Holiday Recipes: http://www.virtualcities.com/ons/0rec/holiday/holiday_turkey.htm

Congress Cooks: <http://www.virtualcities.com/ons/0rec/congress.htm>

For a guide to food storage and other food safety tips, go to <http://www.foodsafety.gov/> – Gateway to Government Food Safety Information.

Internet Resources:

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http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/facts_for_features_special_editions/012692.html

USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service
<http://www.nass.usda.gov/>

Foreign Trade Statistics
<http://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/www>

Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2008
<http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/>

Population Estimates
<http://www.census.gov/PressRelease/www/releases/archives/population/012242.html>

The Year We Had Two Thanksgivings
<http://www.fdrlibrary.marist.edu/thanksg.html>

USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service
<http://www.nass.usda.gov/>

The White House
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/holiday/thanksgiving/2007/>

Families and Living Arrangements: 2007
http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/marital_status_living_arrangements/012437.html

Cape Cod Cranberry Growers Association
<http://www.cranberries.org/cranberries/stats.html>

Cranberry Marketing Committee
<http://www.uscranberries.com/cranberries/>

Come visit our Thanksgiving exhibit in the Government Documents Department on the second floor of Dacus Library.

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