Thanksgiving Day Facts, 2010

In the fall of 1621, the Pilgrims—otherwise known as the early settlers of Plymouth Colony—held a three-day feast to celebrate a bountiful harvest. This event has been regarded as the nation’s first Thanksgiving. However, Thanksgiving did not become a national holiday until 1863 when President Abraham Lincoln proclaimed the last Thursday of November as a national holiday. President Franklin Roosevelt further clarified that Thanksgiving should always be celebrated on the fourth Thursday of November to encourage earlier holiday shopping. To commemorate this holiday, the Indiana Business Research Center has compiled a variety of facts that pertain to Thanksgiving.

The Main Course: Turkey

$43.47
This year’s average cost of the traditional Thanksgiving feast for 10 people. This includes a menu of turkey, stuffing, sweet potatoes, rolls with butter, peas, cranberries, a relish tray of carrots and celery, pumpkin pie with whipped cream and beverages of coffee and milk.

242 million
The number of turkeys expected to be raised in the United States in 2010. That’s down 2 percent from the number raised in 2009. Turkey production in 2009 weighed 7.1 billion pounds and was valued at $3.6 billion.

5th
Indiana’s rank in the nation for number of turkeys expected to be produced in 2010. Indiana is responsible for around 7 percent of total U.S. production.

75 percent
Approximate percentage of total turkey production expected from the top six turkey-producing states. The top six producing states are: Minnesota (47 million), followed by North Carolina (31.0 million), Arkansas (28.0 million), Missouri (17.5 million), Indiana (16.0 million) and Virginia (15.5 million).

$271.5 million
The value of turkeys raised in Indiana in 2009. Indiana ranked fifth in value of turkeys raised, following Minnesota, North Carolina, Missouri and Arkansas.

498
Indiana farms with turkeys in 2007. Dubois County leads the state in turkey inventory (followed by Daviess County) and is one of the top 10 turkey-producing counties in the nation.

15.3 pounds
Average market weight of a female hen that is purchased at the store for your Thanksgiving feast. The male turkey, a tom, typically weigh 33 pounds at market and is used for cutlets, tenderloins, turkey sausage, turkey franks, and turkey deli meats.
88 percent
Of Americans eat turkey at Thanksgiving. Roughly 736 million pounds of turkey was consumed in the U.S. during Thanksgiving in 2009.

41.1 percent
Of the turkeys produced are sold to grocery stores and other retail outlets. Turkey is also sold as a commodity (27.9 percent), to food service outlets (17.7 percent) and exported (6.4 percent).

Ingredients for Delectable Side Dishes and Desserts

15,650 tons
Indiana’s 2009 production of snap, or green, beans for processing (as opposed to sold fresh). Last year’s crop was a 19.5 percent increase over the 2008 crop. Indiana’s 2009 production accounted for 1.9 percent of the nation’s total and ranked Indiana eighth among states.

1.5 percent
Indiana’s share of U.S. fresh sweet corn production with an output of 421,000 hundredweight in 2009, which was a 13.8 percent increase over 2008. (Note that a hundredweight is equal to 100 pounds.)

9,620 tons
Indiana’s 2009 production of cucumbers, valued at $3.5 million. Indiana’s production made up 1.8 percent of the nation’s total production for processing and ranked eighth among states.

$36.3 million
Value of Indiana’s tomato crop for processing in 2009 from the production of 321,340 tons of tomatoes. Indiana ranks second in the production of tomatoes for processing and comprises 2.3 percent of the U.S. tomatoes for processing crop.

13.8 million
Bushels of wheat produced in Indiana in 2010. Indiana’s production is less than 1 percent of the nation’s production of wheat (2.2 billion) whereas Kansas and North Dakota account for 33 percent of the nation’s supply.

6.46 billion
Number of eggs Indiana produced from December 2008 through November 2009. Indiana’s egg production made up 7.1 percent of the U.S. total and ranks fourth in the nation.

30 million
Pounds of apples produced in Indiana versus 5.5 billion pounds in Washington in 2009. Indiana’s apple crop comprises 3 percent of U.S. production.

3.7 million
Pounds of blueberries produced in Indiana in 2009. Nationally, 364.1 million pounds of blueberries was produced.
Giving Thanks for Each Other

1.5 million
Average annual number of volunteers in Indiana between 2007 and 2009 - approximately 29.9 percent of residents. Indiana volunteers contributed 206.1 million hours of service each year or, or 42 volunteer hours per resident. Nationally, 26.5 percent of Americans volunteered (62.0 million) over this period, contributing 8.1 billion hours of service in communities across the country.

$4.3 billion
Amount of service contributed each year in volunteer hours in Indiana. In Indianapolis, $1.1 billion of service was contributed by 394,500 volunteers.

24.9 percent
The proportion of Indiana volunteers who engage in fundraising – the most popular activity. The remaining top three volunteer activities are collecting and distributing food (22.3 percent), general labor (19.4 percent), and tutoring or teaching (18.6 percent).

25,510
Approximate number of farmers in Indiana in 2007. Including other agriculture-related occupations, 4.2 percent of Indiana’s workforce is devoted to agriculture.

Other Fun Facts
- Only tom turkeys (male) gobble. Hen turkeys (female) make clicking noises.
- Domesticated turkeys cannot fly.
- Turkeys have 3,500 feathers at maturity.
- Since 1947, the National Turkey Federation (NTF) has presented the President of the United States with a live turkey and two dressed turkeys in celebration of Thanksgiving. The annual presentation of the National Thanksgiving Turkey to the President has become a traditional holiday ritual in the nation’s capital, signaling the unofficial beginning of the holiday season and providing the President an opportunity to reflect publicly on the meaning of the Thanksgiving season. After the ceremony, the live bird retires to Disneyland to live out the rest of its years.

Sources
Indiana National Agricultural Statistics Service, National Agricultural Statistics Service, National Turkey Federation, American Farm Bureau, National Turkey Federation 2009 Marketplace Survey, Corporation for National and Community Service (volunteeringinAmerica.gov), Indiana Department of Workforce Futures, USDA, and U.S. Census Bureau Facts for Features.