

Thanksgiving Facts

There are lots of things I can be thankful for this time of year but let us not forget all the men and women who are veterans. Let us celebrate and honor America's veterans for their patriotism, love of country, willingness to serve and for some the ultimate sacrifice. Again, THANK YOU to you and your families!

I realize it has rained and slowed down harvest, but we are getting close to finishing in Clinton County. Many reports are coming in with excellent yields for both corn and soybeans. Let's hope conditions improve the next few days to allow farmers to get back at harvest. It would be nice to celebrate a completed harvest by the end of November.

We will also be celebrating Thanksgiving in a couple of weeks and spending time with many friends and family. I sometimes like to share some turkey and Thanksgiving facts before the festive holiday, so I hope you enjoy:

As a nation, the US has celebrated Thanksgiving off and on since 1774. In 1789 George Washington made a proclamation that the American people should celebrate a day of thanksgiving to God on November 26th. Some presidents after him continued the tradition, sporadically declaring days of Thanksgiving. But it wasn't until 1863 with Lincoln proclaiming a day of Thanksgiving on the last Thursday of November that it became an annual holiday.

Did you know that "Jingle Bell" was originally a Thanksgiving song? Originally titled "One Horse Open Sleigh," the ditty was meant to be sung on Thanksgiving. When it was reprinted in 1859, however, the name was changed to "Jingle Bells, or the One Horse Open Sleigh," and was prescribed for Christmas.

It is estimated that over 46 million turkeys are enjoyed as the main entrée each Thanksgiving. In pounds that means Americans eat approximately 704 million pounds of turkey just on Thanksgiving.

Ohio ranks ninth in turkey production, producing 236 million pounds of turkey annually. Ohio is also home to more than 200,000 wild turkeys. While domestic and wild turkeys are genetically the same species, they are very different.

The original TV dinner was the result of a Thanksgiving miscalculation. In 1953, an executive at Swanson miscalculated the company's upcoming Thanksgiving turkey sales, leaving the company with some 260 tons of frozen fowl following the holiday. Fortunately for Swanson, a salesman by the name of **Gerry Thomas** suggested packaging the excess product into trays—along with some traditional sides—and selling them to consumers as TV dinners. Thomas was apparently inspired by the pre-portioned trays used to serve airplane food.

Supposedly, the oldest Thanksgiving parade currently is the **6abc Dunkin' Donuts Thanksgiving Day Parade**. According to some information I found, it was started in 1920 and originally called the Gimbels Thanksgiving Day Parade until the Gimbels department stores closed down. WPVI a.k.a Channel 6 a.k.a ABC6 as well as several companies have sponsored the parade since Gimbels went out of business. The Macy's day parade began in 1924.

John F. Kennedy was the first president on record for unofficially sparing a turkey in 1963. But it wasn't until the Reagan administration in 1987 that a turkey was given an official presidential pardon as a joke.

A turkey's gender can be determined from its droppings—males produce spiral-shaped poop and females' poop is shaped like the letter J. I think I will take their word for it.

Thanksgiving dinner isn't complete until the bird's wishbone is snapped, bestowing luck on the bearer of the bigger piece. Another fact I found says that this custom is thousands of years older than the holiday. Wishing on bird bones traces back to the ancient Etruscans, who used chickens to help them predict the future. After the chickens died, the Etruscans would dry their wishbones—or furcula—in the sun and keep them as good luck charms.

And finally for this week, according to a 2015 Harris Poll, a large majority of Americans (81 percent) prefer the leftovers of the Thanksgiving meal to the meal itself.



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