

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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**PROSECUTION MOTION
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Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

November 23, 2009

Presidential Proclamation -- Thanksgiving Day[Click here to download PDF](#)**A PROCLAMATION**

What began as a harvest celebration between European settlers and indigenous communities nearly four centuries ago has become our cherished tradition of Thanksgiving. This day's roots are intertwined with those of our Nation, and its history traces the American narrative.

Today, we recall President George Washington, who proclaimed our first national day of public thanksgiving to be observed "by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many and signal favors of Almighty God," and President Abraham Lincoln, who established our annual Thanksgiving Day to help mend a fractured Nation in the midst of civil war. We also recognize the contributions of Native Americans, who helped the early colonists survive their first harsh winter and continue to strengthen our Nation. From our earliest days of independence, and in times of tragedy and triumph, Americans have come together to celebrate Thanksgiving.

As Americans, we hail from every part of the world. While we observe traditions from every culture, Thanksgiving Day is a unique national tradition we all share. Its spirit binds us together as one people, each of us thankful for our common blessings.

As we gather once again among loved ones, let us also reach out to our neighbors and fellow citizens in need of a helping hand. This is a time for us to renew our bonds with one another, and we can fulfill that commitment by serving our communities and our Nation throughout the year. In doing so, we pay tribute to our country's men and women in uniform who set an example of service that inspires us all. Let us be guided by the legacy of those who have fought for the freedoms for which we give thanks, and be worthy heirs to the noble tradition of goodwill shown on this day.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim Thursday, November 26, 2009, as a National Day of Thanksgiving. I encourage all the people of the United States to come together, whether in our homes, places of worship, community centers, or any place where family, friends and neighbors may gather, with gratitude for all we have received in the past year; to express appreciation to those whose lives enrich our own; and to share our bounty with others.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twentieth day of November, in the year of our Lord two thousand nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-fourth.

BARACK OBAMA

**BLOG POSTS ON THIS ISSUE**

June 22, 2013 3:00 PM EDT

President Obama is Taking Action on Climate Change

President Obama explains why we're taking action to combat climate change.

June 22, 2013 5:30 AM EDT

Weekly Address: Time for Congress to Pass Commonsense Immigration Reform

President Obama discusses the bipartisan legislation in the United States Senate that would take important steps towards fixing our broken immigration system, while growing our economy and reducing the deficit.

June 21, 2013 6:18 PM EDT

Weekly Wrap Up: "Peace with Justice"

This week, President Obama welcomed the WNBA champion Indiana Heat, celebrated Father's Day, and traveled to Northern Ireland and Germany.

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Newsroom



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Thanksgiving Day 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. Historians have also recorded ceremonies of thanks among other groups of European settlers in North America, including British colonists in Virginia in 1619. The legacy of thanks and the feast have survived the centuries, as the event 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.
Source: USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service <<http://www.nass.usda.gov/>>

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). These six states together would probably account for about two-thirds of U.S. turkeys produced in 2009.

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). New Jersey, Oregon and Washington are also expected to have substantial production, ranging from 16 million to 54 million pounds.

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).

1.1 billion pounds

Total production of pumpkins produced in the major pumpkin-producing states in 2008. Illinois led the country by producing 496 million pounds of the vined orange gourd. Pumpkin patches in California, Pennsylvania and New York also provided lots of pumpkins. Each state produced at least 100 million pounds. The value of all pumpkins produced by major pumpkin-producing states was \$141 million.

If you prefer cherry pie, you will be pleased to learn that the nation's forecasted tart cherry production for 2009 totals 284 million pounds. Of this total, the overwhelming majority (220 million) will be produced in Michigan.

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.

794,777 tons

The 2008 contracted production of snap (green) beans in major snap (green) bean-producing states. Of this total, Wisconsin led all states (320,200 tons). Many Americans consider green bean casserole a traditional Thanksgiving dish.

Source: The previous data came from the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service <<http://www.nass.usda.gov/>>.

\$9.2 million

The value of U.S. imports of live turkeys from January through July of 2009 -- 99.3 percent from Canada. When it comes to sweet potatoes, however, the Dominican Republic was the source of 60.7 percent (\$2.8 million) of total imports (\$4.7 million). The United States ran a \$5.8 million trade deficit in live turkeys during the period but had a surplus of \$23.1 million in sweet potatoes.
Source: Foreign Trade Statistics <<http://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/>>

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.
Source: *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2010*, Tables 212-213 <<http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/>>.

The Turkey Industry

\$3.6 billion

The value of turkeys shipped in 2002. Arkansas led the way in turkey shipments, with \$581.5 million, followed by Virginia (\$544.2 million) and North Carolina (\$453 million). In 2002, poultry businesses whose primary product was turkey totaled 35 establishments, employing about 17,000 people.

Source: Poultry Processing: 2002 <<http://www.census.gov/prod/ec02/ec0231i311615.pdf>>

\$3.8 billion

Forecast 2009 receipts to farmers from turkey sales. This exceeds the total receipts from sales of products such as barley, oats and sorghum (combined) and peanuts.

Source: USDA Economic Research Service <<http://www.ers.usda.gov/Data/farmincome/finfidmu.htm>>

The Price is Right

\$1.33

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

Source: *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2010*, Table 717 <<http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/>>

Where to Feast

3

Number of places in the United States named after the holiday's traditional main course. Turkey, Texas, was the most populous in 2008, with 456 residents, followed by Turkey Creek, La. (361) and Turkey, N.C. (272). There are also nine townships around the country named Turkey, three in Kansas.

Source: Population estimates <<http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/population/cb09-99.html>>
<<http://factfinder.census.gov/>> <<http://www.census.gov/popest/cities/cities.html>>

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Number of places and townships in the United States that are named Cranberry or some spelling variation of the red, acidic berry (e.g., Cranbury, N.J.), a popular side dish at Thanksgiving. Cranberry township (Butler County), Pa., was the most populous of these places in 2008, with 27,194 residents. Cranberry township (Venango County), Pa., was next (6,795).

Source: Population estimates <<http://factfinder.census.gov/>>, <<http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/population/cb09-99.html>>
<<http://www.census.gov/popest/cities/cities.html>>

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Number of places in the United States named Plymouth, as in Plymouth Rock, the landing site of the first Pilgrims. Plymouth, Minn., is the most populous, with 71,486 residents in 2008; Plymouth, Mass., had 55,705. There is just one township in the United States named "Pilgrim." Located in Dade County, Mo., its population was 128 in 2008. And then there is Mayflower, Ark., whose population was 2,231 in 2008.

Source: Population estimates <<http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/population/cb09-99.html>>
<<http://factfinder.census.gov/>> <<http://www.census.gov/popest/cities/cities.html>>

117 million




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

Source: Families and Living Arrangements: 2008 <http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/families_households/cb09-29.html>

Following is a list of observances typically covered by the Census Bureau's *Facts for Features* series:

African-American History Month (February)	Labor Day
Super Bowl	Grandparents Day
Valentine's Day (Feb. 14)	Hispanic Heritage Month (Sept. 15-Oct. 15)
Women's History Month (March)	Unmarried and Single Americans Week
Irish-American Heritage Month (March)	Halloween (Oct. 31)
St. Patrick's Day (March 17)	American Indian/Alaska Native Heritage Month (November)
Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month (May)	Veterans Day (Nov. 11)
Older Americans Month (May)	Thanksgiving Day
Cinco de Mayo (May 5)	The Holiday Season (December)
Mother's Day	
Hurricane Season Begins (June 1)	
Father's Day	
The Fourth of July (July 4)	
Anniversary of Americans With Disabilities Act (July 26)	
Back to School (August)	

Editor's note: The preceding data were collected from a variety of sources and may be subject to sampling variability and other sources of error. Facts for Features are customarily released about two months before an observance in order to accommodate magazine production timelines. Questions or comments should be directed to the Census Bureau's Public Information Office: telephone: 301-763-3030; fax: 301-763-3762; or e-mail: <PIO@census.gov>.

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Source: U.S. Census Bureau | Public Information Office | PIO@census.gov | Last Revised: June 14, 2013