

## Wild Turkey Numbers Up

While most domesticated turkeys raised in 1970 ended up on somebody's table, about 85 percent of the wild ones managed to escape this fate.

And the wild turkey population of the U.S. is increasing, thanks to State conservation practices and restrictive game laws.

A 1970 big game inventory conducted by the National Fish and Wildlife Service showed there were over 1 million wild turkeys in the U.S., compared with about 650,000 in 1960.

Wild turkeys can be found in about 30 States. Estimates from the four States with the largest populations in 1970 were Texas, 400,000 birds; Alabama, 228,000; Pennsylvania, 88,000; and Florida, 80,000.

Alabama's wild turkey population increased almost fourfold during the 1960's. Pennsylvania's doubled, Texas' was up a third, and Florida's wild turkey numbers expanded about a fourth.

As the wild turkey flock increased, so did the kill by hunters. During 1960-70 the hunters' bag almost doubled—from 70,000 birds in 1960 to 138,000 10 years later.

The most popular wild turkey with sportsmen is the "Eastern Wild Turkey"—sometimes called the turkey of the Pilgrims. Once quite common in New England, it became extinct in that area around the turn of the 19th century. However, the "Eastern Turkey" still thrives from Pennsylvania to Florida and as far west as New Mexico.

Wild turkeys are smaller than the domesticated bird—they average 12 to 14 pounds—and, as most hunters will attest, are the most wily of all game birds.

The domesticated turkey came to the U.S. via a circuitous route. Originally raised by the Aztecs of Mexico, the bird was taken by

## Pa. Achieves Brucellosis-Free Status

Federal officials presented Secretary of Agriculture Jim McHale with a certificate declaring Pennsylvania as a "Bovine Brucellosis Free Area."

"I am happy to accept this certificate," said McHale. "This represents a successful conclusion to years of work by our Bureau of Animal Industry in wiping out a dreaded cattle disease in the Commonwealth."

Pennsylvania officially achieved Brucellosis-Free status from the U.S. Department of Agriculture in September. A cooperative state-federal program has been in effect for years to eradicate the cattle disease that causes cows to abort, and thus has been a bane to livestock and dairy farmers.

Elimination of the disease in Pennsylvania also means a public health hazard has been alleviated, McHale noted. Bovine Brucellosis is one of the sources of human undulant fever.

The certificate yesterday was presented to McHale by Dr. Grant Balke, USDA regional director for the northeast; Dr.

Spanish explorers from Mexico to Spain and later to England, where new strains were developed. It was then brought back to North America by settlers migrating to the American Colonies.

Commercial flocks were raised on a small scale in the 1920's. By about 1935 the U.S. farmer began concentrating on turkey as a primary source of meat.

By the 1960's, over 100 million birds were produced annually, and in 1971, the American farmer raised some 120 million. Last year's consumption of turkey meat was near the record high of 8.6 pounds in 1967.

The leading turkey States in 1971 were: Minnesota (18.4 million birds), California (16.8 million), North Carolina (10.2 million), Missouri (8.7 million), Texas (8.4 million), and Arkansas (7.8 million).

E.A. Schilf, senior staff veterinarian for the USDA's Division of Cattle Diseases; and Dr. Everett Denlinger, chief of the USDA's Tuberculosis and Brucellosis Division.

Dr. Homer S. Forney, acting director of the department's Bureau of Animal Industry, also on hand for the presentation, noted that Pennsylvania was declared a modified Brucellosis-Free status in 1958. In the past five years, pockets of the disease existed within the Commonwealth, including several herds in Washington County. The disease was finally totally eliminated September 5, paving the way for Brucellosis-Free status.

## Fix-It Tip

Right-handed people will find it easier to begin a painting job at an upper right-hand corner and move to the left.

Silica gel, activated alumina, or calcium chloride may be used to absorb moisture from the air. The porous granules feel dry even when saturated — they hold half their weight of water.

When remounting last year's studded tires for winter use, compare the wear on them with the wear on your regular tires and put them on the same way. Tire studs wear at an angle depending on the direction of wheel rotation. If the angle is reversed, the studs turn in the rubber in an attempt to correct the angle, may loosen and fall out.

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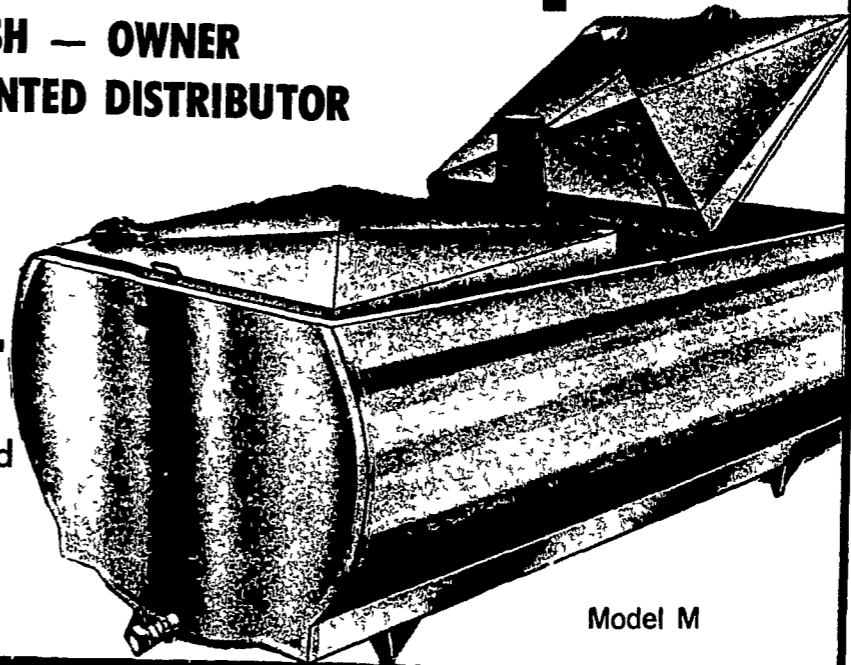
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