

Turkeymen Looking For Higher Sales

Full a wishbone with anyone in the turkey business and it's no secret what he's hoping for: More people eating more turkey more often during the year.

USDA projections of per capita turkey consumption indicate that at least part of this wish should come true: By 1980 we're slated to be eating about 10.5 pounds of turkey each, nearly a pound and a half more than last year.

Total projected 1980 consumption would be 2.4 billion pounds, necessitating a 26-percent increase in production over 1972's ready-to-cook output.

But the second half of the wish—getting Americans to spread their turkey consumption throughout the year—may take a bit longer to realize.

Turkey is still the favorite food at both Thanksgiving and Christmas: Nearly half of the annual consumption is during the October-December quarter. And while turkeymen appreciate our fondness for the fowl during the holidays, they would like to see more turkey meat on menus at other times of the year, too.

The industry, in fact, has made a concerted effort to alter

seasonal consumption patterns—including promotional campaigns as well as new product development. Some headway has been made: Between 1963 and 1972 our turkey helping in the fourth quarter fell from 57.4 to 49.5 percent of the annual total.

Biggest help in balancing out the heavy holiday dining has been the greater everyday use of further processed items developed by the industry—turkey rolls, roasts, pot pies, frozen dinners, ground turkey, and so on.

In 1972 about 35 percent of total certified ready-to-cook turkey was used in further processed items, compared with about 10 percent a decade earlier. USDA projects that 45 percent of production may be going into further processed items by 1980.

What other changes are occurring in the U.S. turkey business? A recent USDA study of the industry's structure, practices, and costs reveals the following trends:

Fewer but larger producers. The 1964 agricultural census showed 42,000 farms raising turkeys, only half as many as 5 years before. However, the average flock size had tripled in the interim to 2,500 birds.

1969 data, which aren't truly comparable with earlier census findings since they excluded farm enterprises selling less than \$2,500 annually, revealed roughly 5,400 farms marketing an average of 19,000 birds apiece.

Greater efficiency. Larger size has allowed many turkey growers to capture certain economies of scale. Since 1965 growers have shaved nearly three-quarters of a pound off the feed required to produce a pound of liveweight turkey. The in-

dustrial average is now down to just over 4 pounds. Meantime, the labor used per 100 pounds of turkey production has been almost cut in half.

Contributing to the increased efficiency in feed conversion and labor has been decreased mortality due to better management practices as well as the availability of new vaccines and drugs for disease prevention and treatment.

More vertical coordination. To assure themselves of dependable supplies and to better schedule production, turkey processing firms have taken the initiative in extending the use of production and marketing contracts within the turkey industry. Feed firms also have promoted contracting, though to a lesser extent than in the broiler industry, to promote sales of feed.

In 1970, an estimated 42 percent of all U. S. turkeys were produced under contract, up from about 30 percent in 1960. Additionally, 12 percent of turkeys in 1970 were estimated to have been grown in owner-integrated facilities while 18 percent more were sold under marketing contracts.

Regional production shifts. The record output and depressed prices of 1960 marked a turning point in regional turkey production.

Since that time only the South Atlantic and South Central regions have increased their share of total production. The No. 1 and 2 turkey regions—the West North Central and Western States—have each seen their shares slip slightly.

The relative profitability of growing turkeys versus other enterprises is a very important factor in these interregional shifts.

In some areas of the South Atlantic and South Central regions, less productive soils and limited off-farm employment opportunities have made turkeys a very attractive enterprise.

Apparently the areas emerging into turkey production in these regions have been able to overcome any differential in feed ingredient costs over the Midwest by savings resulting from low transportation rates, a tightly coordinated industry, and milk

Tree Seedlings Available For Farm Plantings

Farmers of Lancaster County are reminded that now is a good time to plan for tree planting to be done in the spring of 1974. As in past years, The Glatfelter Pulp Wood Company, Spring Grove, Pa., will again furnish tree seedlings free of charge to interested and qualified landowners. Since the inception of this Company program in 1951, more than 14 million seedlings have been furnished to landowners in 13 southcentral Pennsylvania counties.

Tree seedling species available this year under this program are white pine, Austrian pine, Norway spruce, white spruce, Japanese larch, European larch and Virginia pine. Orders are filled on a first-come, first-served basis so it is important to get orders in early. All trees are purchased by The Glatfelter Pulp Wood Company from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources.

The company imposes no restrictions of any kind, but landowners planting these seedlings must comply with normal state regulations regarding these trees. That is, they may not be used for Christmas trees, decorative or ornamental uses or for windbreaks. Minimum order acceptable is for 1,000 seedlings which will plant 1½ acres. All trees are the property of the landowner and he may cut them at a future date for any wood product that he desires.

If you are a landowner in this county who would like to plant trees in 1974 and wish to receive these free tree seedlings, act now. Stop at your County Agricultural office located at the farm and home center, Arcadia Road, to obtain information on placing your order. Do it now before the rush of fall activities - while you can be assured of having your order filled.

weather which enables them to utilize a longer ranging season and reduce costs.

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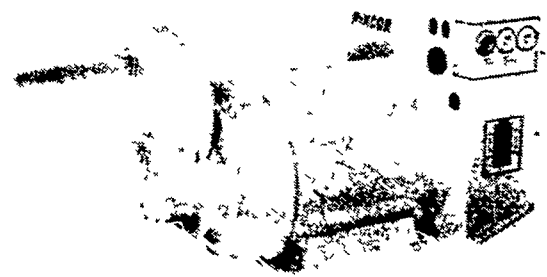
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