

Toms turn out the big birds a

By GINGER SECRIST MYERS
Staff Correspondent

NEW OXFORD — "They're not traditional, they're just delicious." It that phrase sounds familiar, it's probably because you've either seen or heard it lately on T.V., the radio, or in your newspaper.

This turkey talk, aimed at promoting turkey rather than ham for your Easter dinner, comes to you from the largest volume turkey processor in the Pennsylvania, Round Hill Foods, Inc., New Oxford.

According to General Manager Tom Bross III, this is the second year that Round Hill has used this advertising program through the central Pennsylvania area. It has been quite successful and the company is now considering using

it in the Philadelphia market. The ad features Round Hill labeled turkeys, and brandname advertising of Round Hill turkeys ranks high on Bross's priority list.

The name Round Hill Foods, Inc. is relatively new to central Pennsylvania, having only been around since 1974. But the name Bross has become synonymous with turkeys in all the key markets in the northeast corridor.

Almost ironically, the name that precedes Bross is Tom. Tom Bross, Jr., now president of Round Hill Foods, Inc. started his business in 1946 when he acquired a small locker plant in New Oxford known as Winter Gardens. Bross, Jr. used half of this plant as a grocery store and converted the

rest into a fresh meat butchering operation.

By 1952 the demand for fresh dressed poultry in the area had risen enough to justify building a processing plant on the site. The business grew by leaps and bounds and in 1966 Bross sold it to Central Soya.

Bross served as turkey sales manager for all of Central Soya's poultry plants. The partnership between the Bross family and Central Soya proved profitable for both parties with Bross acquiring the East Berlin Flour and Feed Mill which still supplies feed for Round Hill growers.

However, by 1974, Central Soya was out of the picture with the Bross family holding the entire business. Bross then renamed the business Round Hill in honor of the family homestead.

Today, Round Hill Foods encompasses every aspect of turkey production including: hatching, farming, feed preparation, grow out, processing, distribution, and administration. The company contracts with 15 growers who each raise approximately 60,000 birds annually.

According to Bross III, these growers supply 60 percent of the total birds required with the remainder coming from North Carolina and independent growers. The totally integrated operation employs approximately 200 persons some of which, Bross III proudly states, have been with the company since 1946.

Mike Bross, one of Tom Jr.'s sons, is responsible for field operations which includes management of Round Hill Feeds at the East Berlin plant. While Round Hill is feeding more com-

mercially produced pelleted feed due to faster feed conversion, the East Berlin plant still produces tractor trailer loads of feed which is delivered to the growers once or twice weekly depending on the growers' output. All feedstuff used at the mill are either grown by the Bross farms or bought from local farmers.

Round Hill employs servicemen Richard Smith and Dave Boyer to check the flocks every few days for disease or management problems. If any disease is discovered, it is diagnosed and treatment is started immediately.

Dick Smith emphasizes, "We really push sanitation hard because it prevents the high losses that can destroy our image with

buyers and other processors. That's why each barn is completely disinfected between each flock."

It is establishing that image of personal service and the production of a quality product under the Round Hill label that General Manager Tom Bross III works at the hardest.

States Bross, "Our company works at being diversified. There's just not enough money in whole birds to put all our production there. We're going to stay diversified so that we can process our birds according to market demands. We're really working hard now to create a demand for our name."

Round Hill presently markets

under their own label, but they also process and wrap birds under other brand names. Bross points out that while Round Hill has been cautious about marketing conditions in the last two years, expansion plans are in the works. This year they plan to process about 50 million live pounds, a 7-million pound increase over last year. This figure translates into about 3 million head of turkeys.

Their latest expansion has been in the area of further processing. Round Hill already makes four-

types breast further than either "The get n proces demar meats locate area, Washi



Tom Bross III, general manager for Round Hill Foods, Inc. summarizes his company's policies: "Personal service from sizing to delivery, quality control that results in the best possible product, and involvement of our people in serving our customers, is the approach we take."



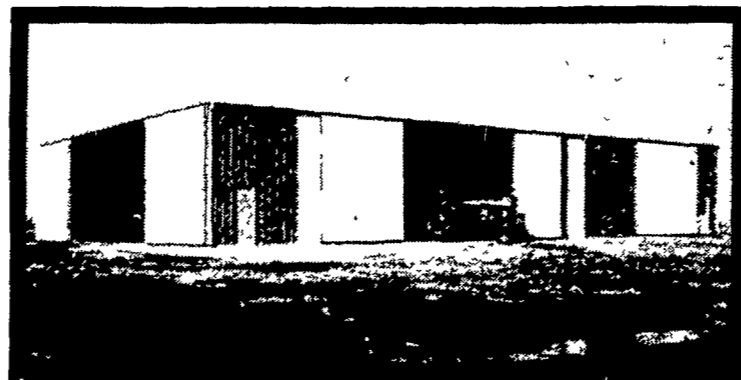
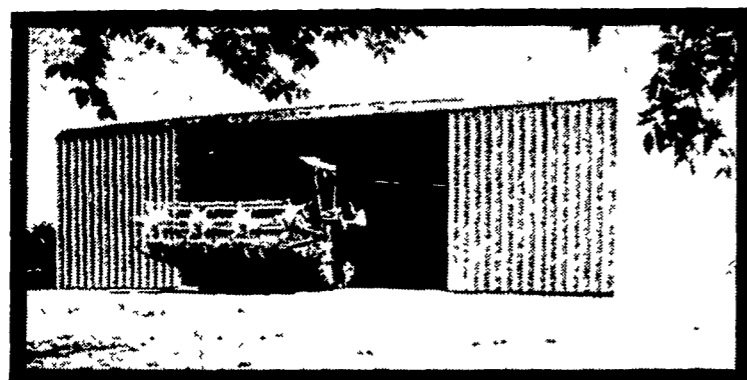
USDA inspector checks the organs of the birds for possible disease. Round Hill birds are inspected by both USDA and Round Hill inspectors.



On the site inspection takes place phases of processing at Round Hill. Here birds are being inspected for Grade 1

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