

Thanksgiving Day: Nov. 26, 2015

In the fall of 1621, the Pilgrims — early settlers of Plymouth Colony — held a three-day feast to celebrate a bountiful harvest. This event is regarded by many as the nation’s first Thanksgiving. The Wampanoag Indians in attendance played a key role. Historians have recorded ceremonies of thanks among other groups of European settlers in North America. These include the British colonists in Virginia as early as 1619.

The legacy of thanks and the feast have survived the centuries, as the event became a national holiday 152 years ago (Oct. 3, 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.

Where to Feast

117 million

Number of occupied housing units across the nation in the second quarter of 2015 — all potential stops for Thanksgiving dinner.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Housing Vacancies and Homeownership, Table 8

<http://www.census.gov/housing/hvs/data/histtabs.html>

4.5 million

Number of multigenerational households in the U.S. in 2014. It is possible these households, consisting of three or more generations, will have to purchase large quantities of food to accommodate all the family members sitting around the table for the holiday feast — even if there are no guests!

Source: 2014 American Community Survey, Table B11017

http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_14_1YR_B11017&prodType=table

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Number of places in the United States named after the holiday’s traditional main course. Turkey Creek Village, La., was the most populous in 2014, with 443 residents, followed by Turkey Creek, Ariz. (412), Turkey City, Texas (396) and Turkey Town, N.C. (296). There are also 11 townships in the U.S. with “Turkey” in the name. (Please note that the Turkey Creek, Ariz., population total pertains to the 2009-2013 American Community Survey and is not statistically different from the population estimates of the other three places.)

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014 Population Estimates

<http://www.census.gov/popest/data/cities/totals/2014/index.html>

<http://www.census.gov/geo/maps-data/data/gazetteer.html>

U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2013 American Community Survey

http://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/13_5YR/B01003/1600000US0477415>

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Number of places and townships in the United States that are named Cranberry, a popular side dish at Thanksgiving. Cranberry township (Butler County), Pa., was the most populous of these places in 2014, with 30,170 residents. Cranberry township (Venango County), Pa., was next (6,546).

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013 Population Estimates and 2010 Census Summary File 1

<http://www.census.gov/popest/data/cities/totals/2014/index.html>>

<http://www.census.gov/geo/maps-data/data/gazetteer.html>>

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Number of counties, places and townships in the United States named Plymouth, as in Plymouth Rock, the landing site of the first Pilgrims. The two counties, both named Plymouth, are in Massachusetts (507,022) and Iowa (24,874).

Plymouth, Minn., is the most populous place, with 75,057 residents in 2014. There are two places in the United States named Pilgrim: one, a township in Dade County, Mo., had a population of 129; the other, a census designated place in Michigan, had a population of 36. And then there is Mayflower, Ark., whose population was 2,345, and Mayflower Village, Calif., whose population was 5,662.

Note: Townships have been included in these counts from 12 states (Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont and Wisconsin) where the primary governmental or administrative divisions of a county serve as general-purpose local governments that can perform the same governmental functions as incorporated places. These county subdivisions are known as minor civil divisions, and the Census Bureau presents data for these in all products for which place data are provided.

(Please note that population totals for the two places on the list that are census designated places — Pilgrim, Mich., and Mayflower Village, Calif. — pertain to the 2009-2013 American Community Survey.)

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Vintage 2014 Population Estimates

<http://www.census.gov/popest/data/counties/asrh/2014/index.html>>

<http://www.census.gov/popest/data/cities/totals/2014/index.html>>

<http://www.census.gov/geo/maps-data/data/gazetteer.html>>

U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2013 American Community Survey

http://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/13_5YR/B01003/1600000US0646436>

http://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/13_5YR/B01003/1600000US2664100>

Participants in the First Feast

24.4 million

Number of U.S. residents of English ancestry as of 2014. Some could very well be descendants of the Plymouth colonists who participated in the autumn feast that is widely believed to be one of the first Thanksgivings — especially the 655,000 living in Massachusetts.

Source: 2014 American Community Survey, Table B04006

<http://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/14_1YR/B04006>

6,500

Number of members of the Wampanoag American Indian tribal grouping, as of 2010, roughly half of whom reside in Massachusetts. The Wampanoag, the American Indians in attendance, played a lead role in this historic encounter, and they had been essential to the survival of the colonists during the newcomers' first year. The Wampanoag are a people with a sophisticated society who have occupied the region for thousands of years. They have their own government, their own religious and philosophical beliefs, their own knowledge system, and their own culture. They are also a people for whom giving thanks was a part of daily life.

Sources: 2010 Census American Indian and Alaska Native Summary File, Table DP-1

<[http://www.census.gov/population/www/cen2010/cph-t/t-6tables/TABLE%20\(1\).pdf](http://www.census.gov/population/www/cen2010/cph-t/t-6tables/TABLE%20(1).pdf)>

American Indian Perspectives on Thanksgiving, National Museum of the American Indian

<http://nmai.si.edu/sites/1/files/pdf/education/thanksgiving_poster.pdf>

Preparing the Feast ... Enjoying the Day ... and the Aftermath

98.6%

Percentage of households in 2011 with a gas or electric stove — essential for cooking their Thanksgiving feast. Another 96.8 percent had a microwave, also helpful in preparing the meal.

Source: Extended Measures of Well-Being: Living Conditions in the United States: 2011,

Table 3 <<http://www.census.gov/prod/2013pubs/p70-136.pdf>>

98.3%

Percentage of households with a television in 2011. No doubt, many guests either before, after or perhaps even during the feast will settle in front of their TVs to watch some football.

Source: Extended Measures of Well-Being: Living Conditions in the United States: 2011,

Table 3 <<http://www.census.gov/prod/2013pubs/p70-136.pdf>>

35.8%

Percentage of households with a stand-alone food freezer in 2011, which they may want to use to preserve their Thanksgiving leftovers. Far more (99.2 percent) have a refrigerator. Once all the guests leave, it will be time to clean up. Fortunately, 69.3 percent have a dishwasher to make the task easier.

Source: Extended Measures of Well-Being: Living Conditions in the United States: 2011,

Table 3 <<http://www.census.gov/prod/2013pubs/p70-136.pdf>>

Culinary Delights

66,286

The number of supermarkets and other grocery (except convenience) stores in the United States in 2013. These establishments are expected to be extremely busy around Thanksgiving as people prepare for their delightful meals.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013 County Business Patterns, NAICS Code 44511
<<http://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/BP/2013/00A1//naics~44511>>

3,235

The number of baked goods stores in the United States in 2013 — a potential place to visit to purchase tasty desserts.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013 County Business Patterns, NAICS Code 445291
<<http://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/BP/2013/00A1//naics~445291>>

2,761

The number of fruit and vegetable markets in the United States in 2013 — a great place to find holiday side dishes.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013 County Business Patterns, NAICS Code 445230
<<http://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/BP/2013/00A1//naics~445230>>

228 million

The forecast for the number of turkeys the United States will raise in 2015. That is down 4 percent from the number raised during 2014.

Source: USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service
<http://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/Todays_Reports/reports/tuky0915.pdf>

40.0 million

The forecast for the number of turkeys Minnesota will raise in 2015. The Gopher State was tops in turkey production, followed by North Carolina (29 million), Arkansas (27 million), Indiana (19.1 million), Missouri (18 million) and Virginia (17.4 million).

Source: USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service
<http://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/Todays_Reports/reports/tuky0915.pdf>

\$24 million

The value of U.S. imports of live turkeys for 2014, with 100 percent of them coming from Canada. When it comes to sweet potatoes, the Dominican Republic was the source of 48.8 percent (\$6.6 million) of total imports (\$13.6 million). The United States ran a \$16.5 million trade deficit in live turkeys during the period but had a surplus of \$98.3 million in sweet potatoes.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Economic Indicators Division
<<https://usatrade.census.gov/>>

841 million pounds

The forecast for U.S. cranberry production in 2015. Wisconsin was estimated to lead all states in the production of cranberries, with 503 million pounds, followed by Massachusetts (estimated at 211 million). New Jersey, Oregon and Washington were also estimated to have substantial production, ranging from 18 million to 59 million pounds.

Source: USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service

<http://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/Todays_Reports/reports/cran0815.pdf>

3.0 billion pounds

The total weight of sweet potatoes — another popular Thanksgiving side dish — produced by major sweet potato producing states in 2014.

Source: USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service

<http://www.nass.usda.gov/Data_and_Statistics/index.asp>

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)/ St. Patrick's Day (March 17)	Halloween (Oct. 31)
Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month (May)	American Indian/Alaska Native Heritage Month (November)
Older Americans Month (May)	Veterans Day (Nov. 11)
Mother's Day	Thanksgiving Day
Hurricane Season Begins (June 1)	The Holiday Season (December)
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. Questions or comments should be directed to the Census Bureau's Public Information Office: telephone: 301-763-3030 or e-mail: <pio@census.gov>.

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