



2008-2013

Turkey Industry Overview

About this Publication

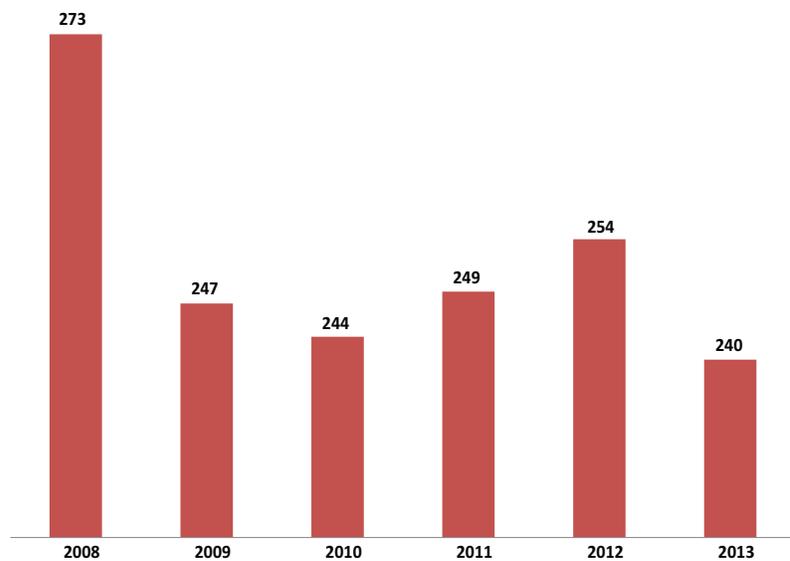
These industry highlights summarizing turkey production in the United States are second in a series of summaries drawn from the regular series of surveys that USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) conducts and publishes. The data included here cover the period from 2008 to 2013.

NASS previously published the Overview of the U.S. Turkey Industry report on November 9, 2007, which provided industry highlights from 1975 to 2007. To access this report, please visit <http://bit.ly/Turkeys2007>.

U.S. farmers have carefully bred turkeys to become efficient meat producers and continue to make strides in production efficiency even today. In 2013, turkeys weighed an average of 30.3 pounds, an increase of 1.3 pounds since 2008, when average weight was 29.0 pounds. This gain can be traced back for several decades and is directly related to genetic selection, technical advancements, and better production management.

Higher production efficiency, achieved by the increase in an average per bird weight and technological advances, led to a reduction in total turkeys raised per year. While in 2008, U.S. farmers raised 273 million turkeys, in 2013 that number is 240 million (Figure 1). But even as the number of birds declined, total pounds of turkey produced remained relatively steady during the past five years. The value of U.S. turkey production climbed up from \$4.48 billion in 2008 to \$4.84 billion in 2013.

Fig. 1: Number of Turkeys Raised in the United States (in millions)



Source: USDA NASS



Average Hatchery Capacity Reached Record High in 2012

Producing turkeys involves numerous specialized facilities. Turkeys produce eggs in laying facilities, some of which have maintained the same genetic turkey breed for more than a century. Once eggs are laid, producers ship them to hatcheries where they get set in incubators, or stored for a short period of time for later use.

For several decades, the number of turkey hatcheries has declined steadily. During the last six years, however, this decrease began to slow down. As of 2013, there are 54 turkey hatcheries in the United States, down from 58 in 2008, but up from the historical low of 49 reached in 2012 (Figure 2). The total capacity of these facilities remained steady during this period at approximately 39.4 million eggs (Figure 3). The average capacity per hatchery reached a record high in 2012. During 2013, average capacity per hatchery was 730 thousand (data records are available from 1965 to present) (Figure 4).

Fig. 2: Number of Turkeys Hatcheries in the United States by Year

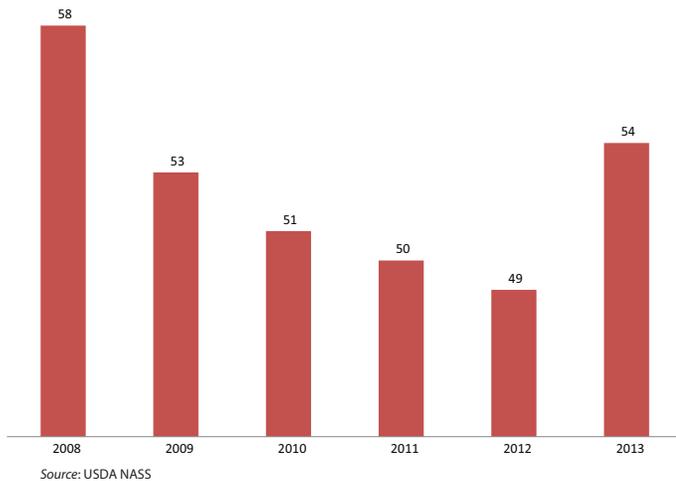


Fig. 3: Capacity of Turkeys Hatcheries in the United States by Year (in billions of eggs)

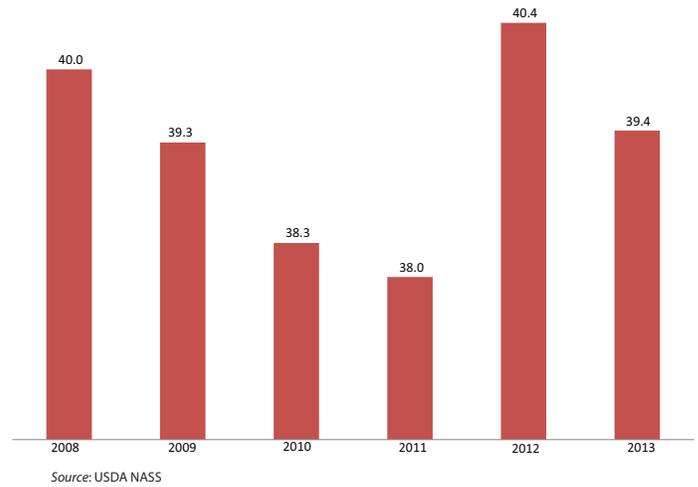
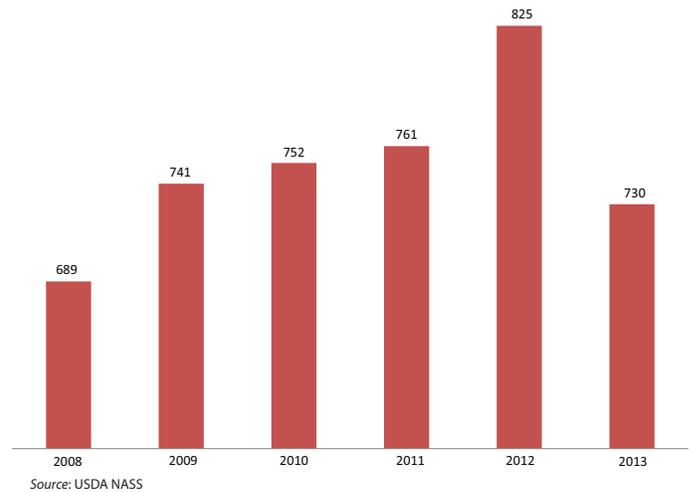


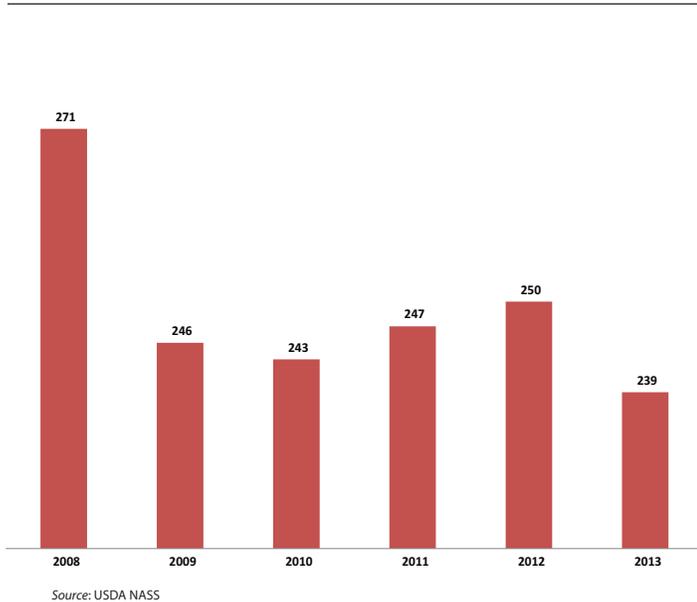
Fig. 4: Average Capacity of Turkeys Hatcheries in the United States by Year (in thousands of eggs)



Slaughter Numbers by Year

Once the poults hatch, the hatcheries ship them to brooder barns. As these poults mature, they move to grow-out facilities until they reach their appropriate slaughter weight (although some operations use the same building for the entire grow-out process). Regardless of the grow-out method used, once the turkeys reach slaughter weight, most operations ship them to slaughter facilities, where the turkeys are processed for meat products or sold as whole birds.

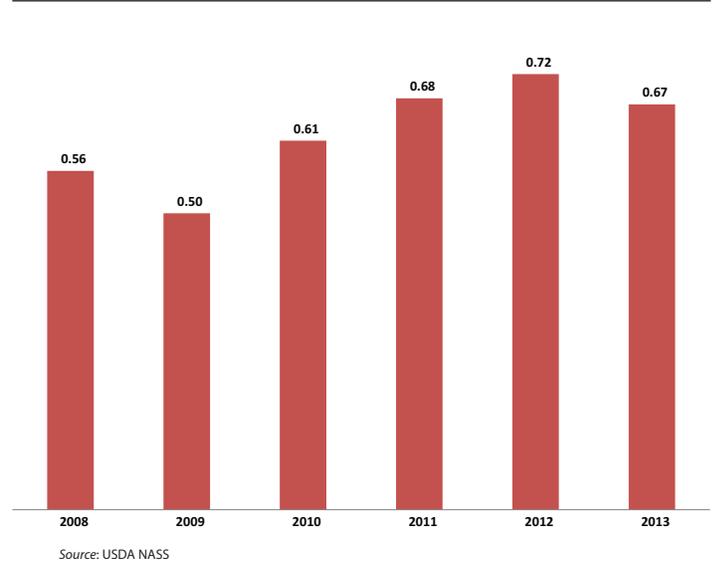
Fig. 5: Number of Turkeys Slaughtered in the United States by Year (in million head)



A \$5-Billion Industry

On the financial side, the value of turkey meat production in the United States increased over the past 5 years. In 2008, the value of turkey production reached \$4.48 billion. By 2012, the value of production increased 21 percent to \$5.45 billion. In 2013, the value of production dropped 11 percent to \$4.84 billion.

Fig. 6: Market Year Average Price per Pound by Year (in U.S. Dollars)



The value of production is driven by the per pound price received by U.S. turkey growers. These prices have climbed since 1975, a path they continued through 2012, when prices remained above 70.0 cents per pound for most of the year. Since 2008, this price has fluctuated between the low of 43.8 cents per pound, reached in January 2009, and the high of 78.1 cents per pound, reached in November 2011. Beginning in December 2012, however, U.S. turkey prices came down. During 2013, U.S. turkey growers received a monthly average price of 66.6 cents per pound (Figure 6).

Top Turkey-Producing States in 2013

Table 1: Top 5 States by Total Turkeys Raised

	Total Turkeys Raised (million head)
Minnesota	44.0
North Carolina	34.0
Arkansas	28.0
Indiana	17.5
Missouri	17.0

Source: USDA NASS

Table 2: Top 5 States by Pounds of Turkey Produced

	Turkey Meat Produced (million pounds)
North Carolina	1,156
Minnesota	1,126
Indiana	663
Arkansas	560
Missouri	544

Source: USDA NASS

Table 3: Top 5 States by Value of Turkey Production

	Value of Turkey Production (\$ million)
North Carolina	769
Minnesota	749
Indiana	441
Arkansas	372
Missouri	362

Source: USDA NASS

Additional Information

For additional turkey data, visit NASS' Quick Stats database (quickstats.nass.usda.gov) or check out the following reports:

Turkey Hatchery – A monthly report on the number of turkey eggs in incubators on the first of current month, and number of poults placed during preceding month.

Turkeys Raised – An annual report on the number of turkeys raised and intended to be raised annually in major states and the United States.

