

NUTRITION

U. S. Turkey Crop Biggest

Record turkey year also sees drop in average size of the bird, now only about four and a half pounds. Estimated U. S. production for 1954 is 61,045,000 turkeys.

► AMERICAN HOUSEWIVES can look forward to a five-cent per pound drop in the price of turkeys this Thanksgiving, as well as a drop in the weight of the average dressed turkey and more turkeys than ever in the history of the United States to choose from.

The U. S. Department of Agriculture has reported that 1954 will be the biggest turkey year on record, with an estimated production of 61,045,000 birds. This is a nine percent increase over the production last year, and a one percent increase over the last record year of 1952, when 60,868,000 turkeys were raised.

It was also reported that the price of the average turkey will come down five cents a pound.

Along with the drop in the price, there has been a noticeable drop in the average weight of today's turkeys. Whereas in 1951 the average bird weighed six and one-half pounds, today's fowl averages only four and one-half pounds. The Department explained that poultrymen are raising more and more of the Beltsville White turkey, which is a smaller bird.

The production of more than 60,000,000 turkeys this year will mean more than \$300,000,000 to the nation's turkey raisers. More than one-half of these turkeys will be bought by American housewives during the months of November and December alone.

California is the nation's largest turkey producer, having raised 9,899,000 last year. California was followed in production by Minnesota, which produced 5,617,000 birds,

and then Virginia and Texas. Massachusetts, where the turkey became the Thanksgiving symbol for the nation, produced only 633,000 turkeys.

Although the Agriculture Department reported that the modern trend is toward chilled or frozen turkeys this year, it is still possible in many states for the head of the house to go out and bag a wild turkey. In 1953, it was estimated that hunters killed more than 50,000 of the estimated 465,000 wild turkeys in the United States.

Both Pennsylvania and Texas boasted a wild turkey population of over 70,000, while Ohio counted a total of 18. Not one of the six New England states listed a wild turkey for 1953 as being free and roaming the wooded areas of those states.

It takes four pounds of feed to make one pound of turkey. The largest birds in the country's butcher shops and poultry markets average about 26 pounds dressed, while the Beltsville White averages only four and one-half pounds dressed. Every year, however, someone reports a bird weighing more than 50 pounds.

The United States is not the only producer of turkeys, although the first turkeys were of American origin. Latest figures for foreign production of turkeys were: Canada, 2,500,000; France, 2,300,000; Ireland, 211,000; Italy, 2,000,000; United Kingdom, 1,390,000; Yugoslavia, 484,000; Formosa, 166,000, and the Philippines, 50,000, to name just a few.

Turkey, of course, produced 1,285,000 turkeys for Turkey.

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emitted speech while working in an experimental phonetics laboratory. The practical applications of being able to talk ear-to-ear, the scientists point out, might:

1. Eliminate the use of oral microphones, leaving a pilot's hands free for other tasks.
2. Reduce engine noise and breath noise, thereby reducing interference.
3. Solve problems that arise in installing a microphone in an oxygen mask, or other equipment.

The scientists believe that the study will improve communications systems now used where noise conditions offer a problem, such as in aircraft.

Science News Letter, November 20, 1954

VETERINARY MEDICINE

Baby Lambs Born After Surgical Ova Transfer

► THERE ARE baby lambs born to ewes that are not their mothers, as the result of the surgical transfer of ova from one breed of sheep to another at Cambridge, England.

Duplicating in lambs what had been done earlier in rabbits, G. L. Hunter of the University of Cambridge's School of Agriculture and C. E. Adams and L. E. Rowson of the British Agricultural Research Council transferred successfully ova by surgical techniques between Border Leicester sheep and lighter-weight Welsh Mountain breed.

Lambs fathered by the same breed males as the real mothers showed the birth-weight characteristics of the true parents and not the "foster mothers." The research is reported in *Nature* (Nov. 6).

Science News Letter, November 20, 1954

MEDICINE

More Rapid Detection Of Liver Diseases

► RADIOACTIVE DYE and a scintillation counter, cousin of the well-known Geiger counter, have been combined to provide a test that will diagnose liver diseases more rapidly and more accurately.

The test was developed by doctors of the University of California at Los Angeles Atomic Energy Project and the Los Angeles Veterans Administration Center.

The dye is injected intravenously. The scintillation counter, placed over the liver area, measures radioactivity of the dye and thus indicates the rates of uptake and excretion by the organ.

Patients with normal liver function show a rapid uptake of the dye for 20 to 30 minutes. Then it is cleared from the organ in about two hours.

A significantly slower rate of uptake indicates a functional impairment of liver cells and/or poor circulation to the organ, characteristic of cirrhosis of the liver.

If the liver is slow in clearing itself of the dye, this would suggest a blocking of the bile ducts. Such a pattern is found in gall bladder, disease with stones blocking the bile passage.

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PHYSIOLOGY

Talking With Your Ears

► THE EAR is a human two-way radio, and if experiments being conducted at the Ohio State University Speech and Hearing Clinic prove successful, pilots of the future may be talking through their ears, as well as hearing through them.

The first systematic research on the human ability to emit speech through the ear is now being conducted at the Clinic. The scientists report that everyone produces ear-emitted speech in the course of normal talking.

Dr. Henry M. Moser, director of the clinic, said that the research has not yet determined exactly how speech is emitted from the ear, but that it may be conducted through the Eustachian tube or possibly through the bones of the head.

The problem confronting the Ohio scientists is how to separate the ear-emitted sounds from the mouth-emitted sounds. This is being done by having persons speak into a baffle box that is lined with several layers of a sound-absorbing material to trap the mouth-emitted sounds.

The speaker and the listener wear stethoscopic earpieces. The listener is then able to hear speech faintly but intelligibly that is emitted through the ears, traveling through the glass and rubber tubing connected between the two persons. If the rubber tube is pinched, the listener hears nothing.

Research on ear speech began at the University when Herbert Oyer, a graduate student in speech science, observed ear-