



## Turkey is not just for Thanksgiving!

There are many turkey products we can eat every day. Place a star next to turkey products you have tried or would like to try in the future.

- |                  |                                 |
|------------------|---------------------------------|
| Turkey sausage   | Turkey burger                   |
| Turkey jerky     | Turkey frank                    |
| Turkey meatball  | Roasted or smoked turkey breast |
| Turkey lunchmeat |                                 |
| Turkey pastrami  |                                 |

- Choose a turkey product and practice reading the nutrition label.
- On a separate piece of paper, determine how much fat, protein and sodium are associated with your chosen product.
- Identify the vitamins and minerals also provided.

## Turkey Nutrition

Nutrition influences the quality of turkey products we enjoy. Similar to humans, turkeys need a carefully balanced diet to keep them healthy and productive. Turkeys require a high protein and high energy diet for optimum development, as well as a good immune system.

Turkey growers provide feed to each turkey house. In general, the feed contains 50% corn, 29% soy, and 1% vitamins and minerals. Represent these numbers in percent, decimal and fraction form.

	Percent	Decimal	Fraction
Corn			
Soy			
Vitamins and Minerals			

## What's in a Name?

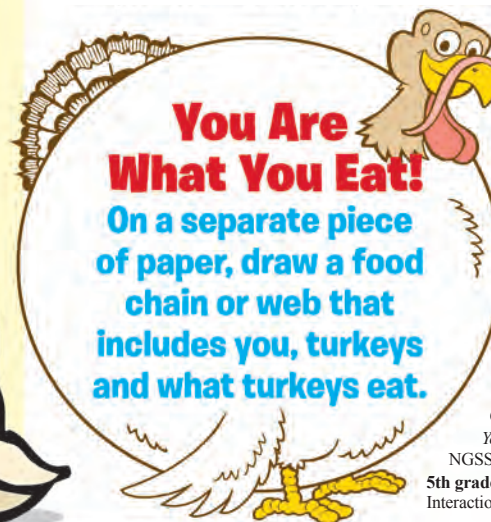
The name of the Presidential Turkey—and his alternate—will be chosen by “the people.” To take part in this democratic process, visit [www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov).

Previous names include Cheese and Mac, Popcorn and Caramel, Cobbler and Gobbler, and Liberty and Peace.

Turkey is low in fat and high in protein. It is a source of iron, zinc, phosphorus, potassium and B vitamins.

- ★ Proteins function as building blocks for bones, muscles, cartilage, skin and blood.
- ★ Iron is used to carry oxygen in the blood.
- ★ Zinc helps the immune system function properly.
- ★ Phosphorus is required by the body for the formation of bones and teeth.
- ★ Potassium-rich diets may help to maintain healthy blood pressure.
- ★ B vitamins (thiamin, riboflavin, niacin and folate) play a key role in metabolism and are essential for a healthy nervous system.

The amount of food you need depends on age, gender and physical activity. Visit [www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov) to find out how turkey products fit into your recommended daily allowance.



**Standards: Turkey Nutrition**  
 Math CCSS  
**4th grade:** Number and Operations – Fractions: 4.NF.C.6  
 Turkey Products  
 ELA CCSS  
**4th grade:** Reading Informational Text: RI.4.7 **5th grade:** Reading Informational Text: RI.5.7  
**6th grade:** Reading Informational Text: RI.6.7 Reading for Literacy in Science and Technical Subjects: RST.6.7  
 Health Benefits  
 ELA CCSS **4th grade:** Writing: W.4.7  
**5th grade:** Writing: W.5.7  
**6th grade:** Writing: W.6.7  
 Writing for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science and Technology  
**6th grade:** WHST.6.7  
*You Are What You Eat!*

NGSS  
**5th grade:** Energy: 5-PS3-1 **6th grade:** Ecosystems: Interactions, Energy, and Dynamics: MS-L.S2-3



# Activity Guide

### Dear Teachers,

It was not so long ago that Americans depended on our own families to grow and raise our food supply, providing a fundamental understanding of what food is and where it comes from, and a meaningful connection to the earth. Much has changed since then. Today’s students rely on the technological advances of food production and are accustomed to an increasingly convenience-oriented society. In the midst of agricultural advancements, young people are becoming further removed from one of the greatest sources of educational opportunities that our nation has to offer—the amazing and abundant world of agriculture.

In 2015, California’s very own Foster Farms had the great distinction of raising the Presidential Turkey (2010 was the first time Foster Farms had this honor) and, come November, was presented the turkey to President Obama for the official Thanksgiving pardon—an American tradition that dates back to 1989. We would like to take this historically significant opportunity to encourage students to think about the origin of their food, and to consider the steps necessary to bring safe, nutritious and abundant food from the farms and fields right to their dinner tables.

This resource presents engaging activities for elementary students, along with extension ideas you can use for further classroom exploration. Featured activities will connect you and your students to the world of farmers and ranchers, demonstrating the important role agriculture plays in the lives of all Americans, whether they live in big cities, small towns or anywhere in between. Thank you for joining the thousands of teachers across our state dedicated to improving agricultural literacy! For additional agriculture-themed resources, please visit [www.LearnAboutAg.org](http://www.LearnAboutAg.org).

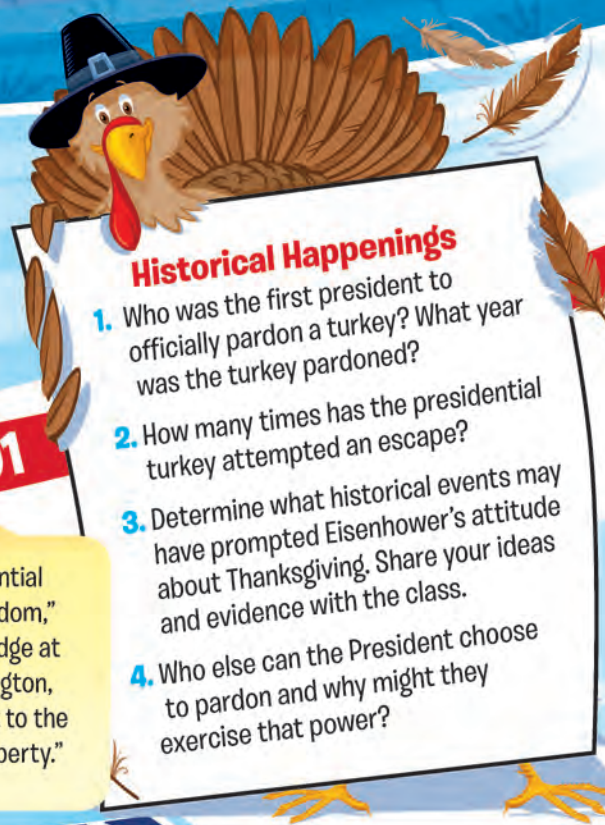
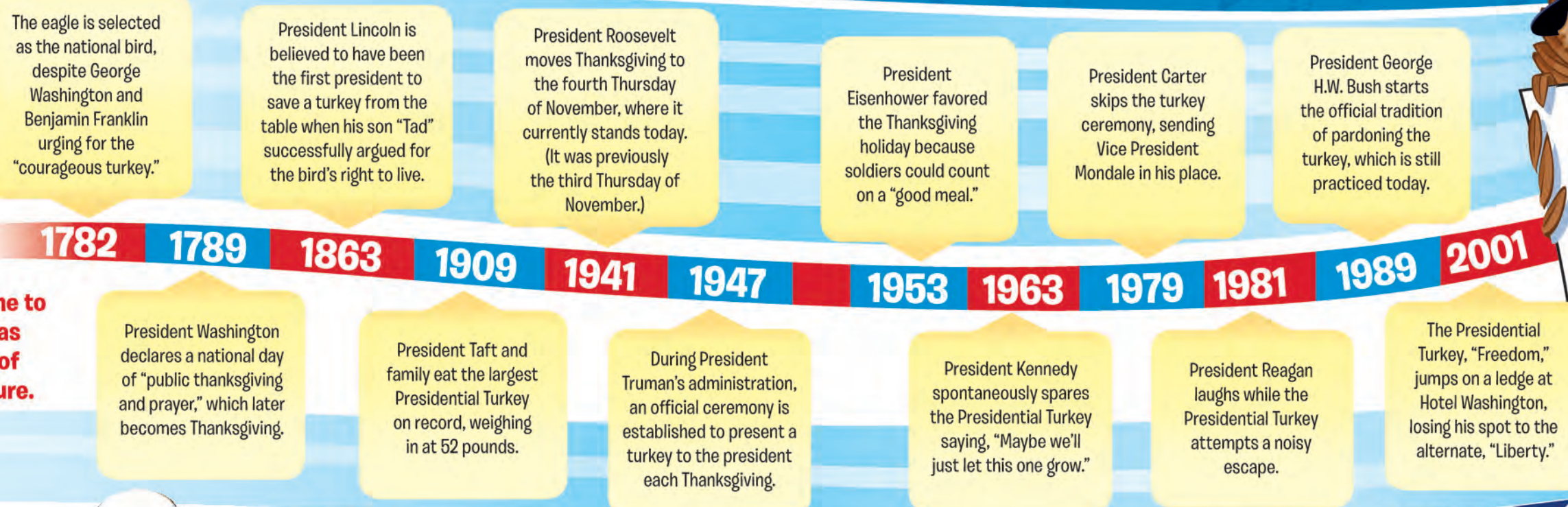
### Extension Ideas

- ★ Hatch turkeys in class to observe, monitor and journal about the process. Temperature and relative humidity, which measures the amount of moisture in the air, are extremely important in the process of egg incubation. Student scientists will keep a daily log of temperature, egg turning, humidity, water level and visual observations. McMurray Hatchery and Cackle Hatchery are examples of websites that sell turkey eggs.
- ★ Show students why feathers are so important to turkeys and other birds. Students can dissect turkey feathers to explore how birds have adapted over time, investigate the benefits of a hollow design, and observe the intricate series of barbs and barbules that give feathers their form and support their function.
- ★ Nearly 88 percent of Americans enjoy turkey on Thanksgiving, but they could be enjoying it year-round! Introduce students to a variety of turkey products by searching for non-traditional recipes and making them in class. Address issues about food safety and preparation, and nutrition information.
- ★ Raising livestock is an important component of youth organizations such as FFA or 4-H. Invite a local student, who has raised their own turkey, into your classroom to share about their experience. What type of commitment does it take to care for an animal? What are the benefits they receive? What do turkeys eat and what type of housing do they need?
- ★ What’s the price tag on your turkey dinner? Use the article, *Cost of Thanksgiving Dinner Rises, Still Under \$50 for 10* from the Voice of Agriculture with the American Farm Bureau ([www.fb.org/newsroom/news\\_article/191/](http://www.fb.org/newsroom/news_article/191/)) to learn how the cost of a Thanksgiving dinner is calculated, and the price breakdowns of popular holiday food items. See the comparisons of total meal costs over the years, all the way back from 1986.

# Turkey Timeline

Turkeys have been an important part of American history and culture since the birth of our nation in 1776.

Examine the turkey timeline to discover how the turkey has become a prominent part of American history and culture.



- ### Historical Happenings
1. Who was the first president to officially pardon a turkey? What year was the turkey pardoned?
  2. How many times has the presidential turkey attempted an escape?
  3. Determine what historical events may have prompted Eisenhower's attitude about Thanksgiving. Share your ideas and evidence with the class.
  4. Who else can the President choose to pardon and why might they exercise that power?



**Before you read...**  
 Read the headings and first sentence of each paragraph. Predict what this narrative is about.  
 Read the entire article to verify your predictions.

## Spotlight on a Turkey Grower

Foster Farms is a family-owned company founded by Max and Verda Foster, who began growing turkeys at their Waterford home in California's Central Valley in 1939. The original hatchery was built right off of their bedroom because the eggs required round-the-clock care. Today, Foster Farms has 12,000 employees and is the largest poultry producer in the western United States.

Foster Farms selects healthy and robust turkeys for breeding. Each resulting egg is carefully checked, cleaned, cooled and shipped to the hatchery. The eggs are placed in incubators, where they remain warm and undisturbed until they hatch. Turkey eggs incubate for 28 days and once hatched, the poults (young turkeys) are taken to a local ranch where they are raised for approximately four to five months, depending on gender, in specially designed houses.

In 2015, Foster Farms was selected to raise the Presidential Turkey, as it also did in 2010. The breed of the turkey is Nicholas Strain, which originated in California's Sonoma Valley. The Presidential Turkey, and one alternate, was selected from a flock of 20 toms by a Foster Farms turkey grower. Once the turkeys were flown to Washington, D.C., they were presented to President Obama by the National Turkey Federation for the annual pardoning ceremony. The ceremony pays tribute to Thanksgiving and recognizes the turkey industry's role in our national holiday.

## Turkey Care

Upon arriving at a ranch, poults enter large, open-floor buildings that offer freedom to move about. Birds are given access to food and water 24 hours a day. The floors are covered with bedding materials such as rice hulls and wood shavings. A high-tech computerized monitoring system controls air temperature through the use of fans and misters. The environment is designed to provide the best possible living conditions for turkey growth and development.

The Presidential Turkeys are raised in the same environment, but are provided with socializing experiences to become comfortable around people. The turkeys are trained to sit calmly and provided with music to become familiar with different sounds and voices.

### Lights, Camera, Action!

Choose an historical event from the turkey timeline. Research the event to gather additional information and act it out in front of the class.

**Standards**  
*Historical Happenings/Time Line*  
 ELA CCSS **4th grade:** Reading Informational Text: RI.4.1, RI.4.3, RI.4.7  
**5th grade:** Reading Informational Text: RI.5.1, RI.5.3, RI.5.7 **6th grade:** Reading Informational Text: RI.6.1, RI.6.3, RI.6.7  
 Reading for Literacy in History/Social Studies: RH.6.7  
*Lights, Camera, Action*  
 ELA CCSS **4th grade:** Writing: 4.7, W.4.9 Speaking and Listening: SL.4.4  
**5th grade:** Writing: W.5.7, W.5.9 Speaking and Listening: SL.5.4  
**6th grade:** Writing: W.6.7, W.6.9 Speaking and Listening: SL.6.4

## After you read...

- ★ On a separate piece of paper, generate a list of questions you would ask to learn more information. Conduct research to answer your questions by visiting websites such as [www.fosterfarms.com](http://www.fosterfarms.com) or contacting a turkey grower.
- ★ Draw a Presidential Turkey in a healthy growing environment. Be sure to include all the components described in the article.
- ★ On a California map, identify the state capital, your hometown and where Foster Farms and the Nicholas Strain originated.

**Standards: Pre and Post Reading**  
 ELA CCSS **4th grade:** Reading Informational Text: RI.4.3, RI.4.6 Writing: W.4.7, W.4.8 Speaking and Listening: SL.4.5 **5th grade:** Reading Informational Text: RI.5.3, RI.5.6 Writing: W.5.7, W.5.8 Speaking and Listening: SL.5.5 **6th grade:** Reading Informational Text: RI.6.3, RI.6.7 Writing: W.6.7, W.6.8, W.6.9 Speaking and Listening: SL.6.5 Writing for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science and Technology: WHST.6-8.7

### Did You Know?

Male turkeys are toms, and are the only turkeys that gobble. Female turkeys are hens, and they communicate with clicking noises.

