

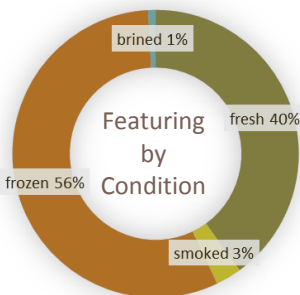
Thanksgiving Marketing of Whole Turkeys - 2016

During the 2016 Thanksgiving marketing period, over 87 percent of whole body turkey features were from conventional production systems. The remaining 13 percent of offerings were of specialty types, birds either from non-conventional production systems, of certain breeds, or those to which special processing methods were applied. Within the specialty category, antibiotic-free (ABF) types commanded over half of offerings while features for organic birds were next most common with 20 percent of features, followed by kosher offerings at 12 percent and free range birds at nearly 10 percent.

Offerings of antibiotic-free turkey have seen an increase in recent years, following a growing trend across most poultry and red meats. During the Thanksgiving marketing period in 2016, a little over 6 percent of all whole birds offered were of the antibiotic-free variety.

Whole body turkeys are primarily marketed either in fresh or frozen form but a growing trend in some parts of the country is for smoked and for brined birds. Frozen turkeys continue to dominate features, accounting for 56 percent of offers in 2016 with fresh birds making up 40 percent. This trend is consistent across conventional offerings where frozen accounts for a full 60 percent and fresh 37 percent of offerings. However, the trend is reversed for featuring of specialty whole birds where over 64 percent of offerings were for fresh birds and 30 percent for frozen during the Thanksgiving 2016 season. Smoked turkeys are most likely to be from conventional production systems while brined birds more likely to be of a specialty type at 5 percent.

Thanksgiving 2016 - Turkey Features by Type				
Condition & Type	Activity		Overall %	
	Conventional	98,685		87.5%
Specialty	14,111	category share	12.5%	
	<i>abf</i>	7,254	51.4%	6.4%
	<i>organic</i>	2,802	19.9%	2.5%
	<i>kosher</i>	1,688	12.0%	1.5%
	<i>free range</i>	1,370	9.7%	1.2%
	<i>heritage</i>	439	3.1%	0.4%
	<i>non-GMO</i>	295	2.1%	0.3%
	<i>organic heritage</i>	241	1.7%	0.2%
	<i>halal</i>	22	0.2%	0.02%
Total	112,796			



Smoked whole birds usually weigh between 10-12 pounds and can usually be found in retail outlets. Brined birds are soaked in a salt and water solution and are commonly seasoned with herbs or spices. Smoked birds were predominately offered at traditional supermarkets across the country while brined birds were more likely to be found at more upscale grocers.

Within the fresh specialty category, antibiotic-free types accounted for 40 percent of the category followed by organic with 29 percent and free range at just over 13 percent. Antibiotic-free birds accounted for 72 percent of frozen specialty offerings with frozen kosher turkeys just over 23 percent. Organic birds are less frequently sold at retail in the frozen state with just over 4 percent being offered in that condition. Only antibiotic-free, organic, and free range birds were offered in smoked form with antibiotic-free leading all smoked offerings with 76 percent, free range at just over 12 percent and organic with the balance. Brined whole specialty turkeys were limited to either antibiotic-free, 82 percent, or free range, 18 percent.

During the 2016 Thanksgiving season, nearly three quarters of conventional birds were offered under a processor brand while 19 percent were store-branded and the remainder split about evenly between distributor branded and not identified. Offerings by brand varied by condition of the birds being offered. Fresh birds were predominately split between processor branded (82 percent) and store branded (16 percent). For frozen offerings, processor branded was still the most common but by a much lesser degree than fresh at 66 percent. The share of store-branded birds, at 21 percent, was the most common condition store branded birds were packed under. Birds with no identified brand in ads accounted for 7 percent of the remainder with distributor branded at 6 percent.

Information for this report is derived from data collected during the holiday marketing period and reported in the [Feature Advertising by U.S. Supermarkets Meat and Poultry](#) reports, available in open data format at no cost upon request to: Michael.sheats@ams.usda.gov. Similar data for chicken, turkey, pork, and lamb is also available upon request.

