

2024

Annual Report

NATIONAL
Turkey
FEDERATION





Letter from the Chairman

Our industry is built on resilience, determination and a shared commitment to providing high-quality turkey products to consumers across the country and around the world.

Throughout 2024, I have been continually impressed by the dedication of our farmers, processors, allied industry partners and the National Turkey Federation (NTF) staff, all of whom work tirelessly to advance and protect our industry.

This year has brought both challenges and victories. The ongoing fight against Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza and Avian Metapneumovirus has required constant vigilance. Thanks to the aggressive advocacy

efforts of NTF, our state organizations and industry members, we have made critical strides in disease preparedness, vaccine development and response strategies. Notably, we secured USDA authorization for the first importation of a live vaccine for Avian Metapneumovirus, a step that will have a lasting positive impact on flock health and hopefully set a precedent for aggressive disease mitigation in the future. Our collaboration with international trade officials has also helped minimize market disruptions, ensuring continued global access for American turkey products.

Our commitment extends beyond animal health to encompass trade, food safety and consumer engagement, ensuring continued industry growth.

Letter from the Chairman (cont.)

The past year has seen significant wins in trade policy, with NTF working closely with federal officials to protect existing export markets while expanding new opportunities for American turkey abroad, including the first shipment of U.S. turkey to India. We also engaged with USDA and regulatory agencies to ensure that food safety policies like the USDA's *Salmonella* Framework for Raw Poultry remain grounded in science and practical for producers.

Consumer outreach remains a top priority for NTF. The Turkey Smoke and Tailgate with Turkey programs continue to elevate and reinforce turkey's place as a year-round protein, whether in turkey lettuce wraps or straight off the grill. Through these efforts, we are building new audiences and driving greater demand for our products.

I want to extend my heartfelt gratitude to the NTF staff, my fellow members and all of you who made this industry strong in 2024. The challenges we faced were significant, but so too was our ability to meet them head-on. Together, we will continue to advocate, innovate and build a bright future for the turkey industry!

SINCERELY,

John Zimmerman

2024 NTF CHAIRMAN



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NTF Membership Events



2024 Annual Convention

NTF hosted over 550 attendees in Austin, Texas, last February for the 2024 Annual Convention. Over the course of the event, NTF welcomed various speakers who dove into the key issues facing the industry. Maintaining industry-wide support and education about the diseases impacting the industry was a primary focus of the event. Additionally, 2023 Chairman Steve Lykken passed the torch to John Zimmerman of P&J Products and wished him luck for the year ahead.



2024 Leadership Conference

NTF's Leadership Conference brought nearly 130 members to Washington, D.C. in mid-September. Attendees were able to meet with legislators, government agencies and staff to advocate for the turkey industry. Key topics discussed were the need for a Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) Strategic Initiative, 2024 Farm Bill Priorities, Avian Metapneumovirus vaccines (aMPV) and food safety policy priorities. NTF's Technical and Regulatory Committee also gathered to continue NTF's work on topics ranging from *Salmonella* reduction efforts to inspection issues.

2024 Spring Technical and Regulatory Committee Meeting

As a part of NTF's member engagement initiative, NTF began hosting a Technical and Regulatory Committee meeting each spring. In 2024, more than 60 members of the committee gathered in Indianapolis, Indiana for a day-long meeting where they discussed food safety issues impacting the industry, including the FSIS *Salmonella* Framework.

National Turkey Pardoning

On November 25, 2024, President Joe Biden upheld the cherished tradition of the National Thanksgiving Turkey Presentation by pardoning two turkeys, Peach and Blossom. These turkeys, raised in Northfield, Minnesota, by NTF Chairman John Zimmerman and his nine-year-old son Grant, were honored in a ceremony on the South Lawn of the White House.

In his remarks, President Biden humorously acknowledged the record-breaking crowd, stating, "They tell me there's 2,500 people here today — looking for a pardon." He also highlighted the significance of the turkeys' names, noting that Peach and Blossom are named after Delaware's state flower, the peach blossom, which symbolizes resilience.

This ceremony held added significance as it marked President Biden's final turkey pardoning and

his last public event at the White House as president. Reflecting on his tenure, he expressed gratitude, stating, "It's been the honor of my life. I'm forever grateful."

Ahead of the White House ceremony, the NTF hosted its annual press conference at the historic Willard InterContinental Hotel, drawing extensive media attention. This year's press event served as a key platform for highlighting the story behind the turkeys, the deep-rooted tradition of the pardoning, and the strength of the U.S. turkey industry. The event generated significant coverage across major media outlets, including national segments on CBS Mornings and PBS, which brought the story of Peach and Blossom to a broad audience. With top-tier journalists and broadcasters in attendance, the press conference reinforced the prominence of



this Thanksgiving tradition and the role of American turkey farmers in feeding families nationwide.

Following the ceremony, Peach and Blossom retired to FarmAmerica, Minnesota's Center for Agricultural Interpretation in Waseca, where they receive top-tier care and serve as educational ambassadors for school groups and visitors. The National Thanksgiving Turkey Presentation



has been a cherished White House tradition since 1947, with the formal pardoning of turkeys becoming a regular practice in 1989 under President George H.W. Bush. Over the years, the event has grown into a celebration of American agriculture, recognizing the dedication of turkey farmers and the vital role they play in providing food for families across the country.

Health, HPAI, and aMPV

TURKEY HEALTH

In 2024, addressing turkey health challenges remained a top priority for NTF. The focus was heavily on combating Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) and Avian Metapneumovirus (aMPV), while also tackling other threats like Reovirus and Blackhead.



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Health Task Force pushed forward efforts to eliminate regulatory obstacles, helping facilitate the development of new, innovative animal health tools to better protect commercial turkey flocks.

After announcing a fundraising effort at NTF's Annual Convention in February 2023, the NTF Foundation Board of Directors introduced the

NTF Foundation Reovirus Project in July 2024. The initiative aimed to offer a substantial reward for the development and successful commercialization of a diagnostic tool and/or vaccine to help mitigate the impact of Reovirus on the turkey industry. The NTF Foundation accepted pledges toward the Reovirus Project throughout

the year and continues to prioritize the progression of the project.

Furthermore, NTF also took part in global discussions, including attending the World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH) General Session in Paris, where they explored

international animal health issues and collaborated on the future of poultry welfare and disease prevention.

HPAI

The U.S. turkey industry continues to face a devastating outbreak of HPAI that has resulted in the loss of over 18 million turkeys since February 2022, with nearly 3.8 million lost in 2024 alone. Throughout the year, NTF worked closely with federal agencies, stakeholders and legislative leaders to develop solutions to limit the spread, focusing on improving biosecurity, enhancing wild bird surveillance and exploring the development of

HPAI vaccines. The federation also addressed the impact of HPAI on turkey growers, tackling issues such as indemnity, restocking criteria and trade disruptions, while working to mitigate the risk of virus transmission from migratory birds and neighboring commercial livestock operations with positive detections of HPAI H5N1. The appearance of HPAI H5N1 in domestic livestock and humans in March 2024 raised additional concerns and risks related to the spread of the virus, resulting in a more complex and evolving HPAI landscape. With the virus presenting itself in new species of mammals, NTF continued urging USDA and international partners to collaborate on solutions to protect both poultry, livestock, farm workers and wildlife.



NTF also engaged with USDA and Congress to advocate for the creation of a HPAI Strategic Initiative in 2024, aimed at uniting government, academia and animal health experts to drive research on advanced biosecurity, vaccination and more efficient response measures.



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HPAI (cont.)

NTF also engaged with USDA and Congress to advocate for the creation of a HPAI Strategic Initiative in 2024, aimed at uniting government, academia and animal health experts to drive research on advanced biosecurity, vaccination and more efficient response measures. Throughout all these challenges, the federation remained committed to supporting the turkey industry by providing resources, hosting webinars and gathering feedback to guide efforts in combating the deadly disease.

aMPV

Organizing a strong response to the aMPV challenge was a major priority for the National Turkey Federation (NTF) in 2024, as the virus posed significant risks to commercial turkey flocks. To better understand its impact and communicate it to USDA, NTF developed a survey to collect data from members experiencing aMPV cases in March 2024. Gathering this data continues to be crucial for shaping strategies and working with federal agencies to create effective solutions.

Following NTF's sustained advocacy efforts—including legislative meetings, engagement with federal agencies and strategic media outreach—USDA announced in late December 2024 that it would approve the importation of a commercial modified live aMPV vaccine. This decision, announced during an aMPV listening session, marked the first time USDA had approved the import of a modified live virus for use in the U.S.

Building on this progress, we are pleased that in early 2025, two

additional live vaccines received import approval. Furthermore, the Center for Veterinary Biologics (CVB) has allowed for the import of killed vaccines and the use of experimental autogenous vaccines, ensuring that our industry has access to nearly all available vaccine options. With these approvals, continued access to vaccines and the development of a domestic strain vaccine remain top priorities for NTF as we work with the animal health industry to bolster long-term preparedness and response efforts.

Expanding Global Trade Opportunities

NTF continues to advance international trade opportunities for U.S. turkey producers. In 2024, a major milestone was reached with the first-ever shipment of American turkey to India, following a trade agreement that opened access to the nation's rapidly growing protein market. This historic achievement underscores the growing global demand for high-quality U.S. turkey products, and our industry's commitment to expanding international markets. In early 2024, NTF joined the USA Poultry and Egg Export Council (USAPEEC) in India to view the marketplace firsthand, and several members of our team attended USAPEEC's Annual Meeting in California.

In this vein, NTF remains engaged in trade expansion efforts across the Americas. In May, NTF traveled to Guatemala for the USAPEEC's Americas Expo, where we connected with trade partners from Central America, South America, and the Caribbean. The Americas Expo serves as a key platform for fostering relationships and expanding opportunities for U.S. turkey exports in these vital markets.

Colombia, in particular, represents an exciting opportunity as we engage with industry leaders, government officials and trade partners to increase market access and drive demand for U.S. turkey. Recently, members of the U.S. turkey industry participated in an agribusiness trade mission to Bogotá, gaining valuable insights and forging key connections. Their efforts in networking and understanding the local market are paving the way for growth in Colombia, further positioning U.S. turkey as a competitive and sought-after protein choice in the region.

Our trade initiatives are critical to ensuring a strong future for the U.S. turkey industry, supporting American farmers and processors while meeting the growing demand for nutritious and high-quality turkey worldwide.





NTF has been tracking emerging food safety trends, exploring new testing technologies, and amplifying consumer education efforts

Food Safety

From farm to table, NTF members are dedicated to ensuring consumers are provided with safe and nutritious turkey. To build on this commitment and help foster a stronger future in food safety, NTF remained dedicated to advancing food safety efforts, particularly in addressing *Salmonella*. The federation provided crucial feedback on USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service's (FSIS) proposed regulatory changes, including the "Proposed Regulatory Framework to Reduce *Salmonella* Illnesses Attributable to Poultry" (*Salmonella* Framework) and the agency's decision to declare not-ready-to-eat (NRTE) breaded stuffed chicken products containing *Salmonella* at levels of 1 CFU per gram as adulterated. NTF has remained actively engaged in this process and other efforts pertaining to food safety and continues to collaborate with stakeholders across the industry to ensure that future policies are grounded in sound scientific research. In addition to this advocacy, NTF has been tracking emerging food safety trends, exploring new testing technologies, and amplifying consumer education efforts to improve overall safety standards across the industry.

Turkey Smoke



Turkey Smoke continued to roll through 2024, building strong relationships with renowned pitmasters and seeking new opportunities to engage an audience ranging from beginners to pros, all with a focus on turkey-inspired barbecue. In its fifth year of partnering with the Kansas City Barbecue Society, NTF connected pitmasters to turkey through the Turkey Smoke

Series and the Turkey Smoke 'Team of the Year' points chase through the Kansas City Barbecue Society (KCBS). The competition was fierce, and last year's Team of the Year winners, Piggin' Whiskey, were dethroned, with There's No Place Like Smoke taking home the 2024 Turkey Smoke Team of the Year title. In 2024, Turkey Smoke attracted over 600 barbecue teams across 16 states, including its seventh appearance at the American Royal World Series of Barbecue.



Tailgate with Turkey



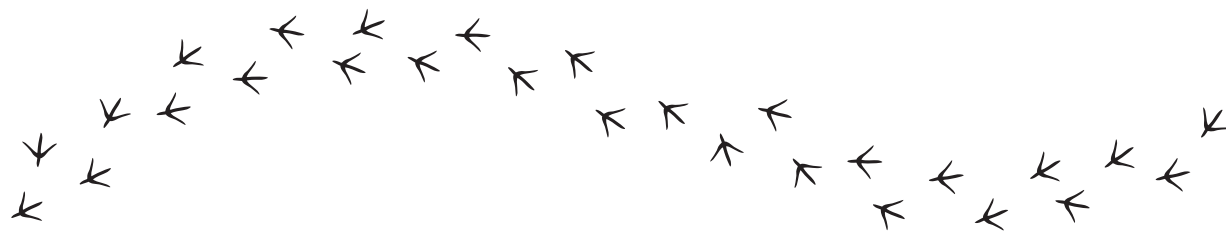
NTF's "Tailgate with Turkey" campaign made its return in 2024 for its fourth year, marking the second full year of support from a grant provided by the United Soybean Board. This year, NTF continued its successful partnership with the Kansas City Chiefs Radio Network and expanded the campaign to include the Southeastern Conference (SEC) College Football markets, broadening its reach to an even

larger audience. The campaign offered participants a chance to win the Ultimate Tailgate with Turkey Prize Pack, which included an array of grilling products and other BBQ essentials. This initiative aimed to engage subscribers while amplifying interest in grilling or smoking turkey during tailgate season. The campaign was a great success, attracting over 6,000 new subscribers and driving more than 154,000 visitors to the dedicated website, www.tailgatewithturkey.com.





Content Marketing Initiative (CMI)



NTF's Content Marketing Initiative (CMI) in 2024 focused on expanding audience reach and increasing user engagement across all web and social media platforms. This was achieved through a series of targeted social media advertising campaigns designed to appeal to three key consumer segments: practical providers, health-conscious eaters

and foodies. The campaigns, which ran on Facebook and Instagram, featured approachable, eye-catching themes aimed at boosting social media engagement. These efforts brought more than 130,000 visitors to EatTurkey.org and accounted for 99% of our total reach.

Over the course of 2024, the CMI focused on "best of" content,

leveraging seasonally relevant recipes that have been developed over the years. This year's themes were Nutritious Eats, Fun Spring & Summer Dishes, Grilling & BBQ and Game Day Eats.

For the first time since the CMI's launch in 2021, the same recipe was the top performer across all three consumer segments. The Turkey

Mushroom & Wild Rice Soup recipe, featured in Q1, achieved the lowest cost per click (CPC) and the greatest reach among all target segments. As with all top-performing ads in the CMI campaign, this particular ad inspired a significant number of people to share the recipe and try cooking it themselves.

NTF 2024 Leadership

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