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Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving Day is a national [holiday](#) celebrated on various dates in [Canada](#), the [United States](#), some of the [Caribbean islands](#), and [Liberia](#). It began as a day of giving thanks and sacrifice for the blessing of the [harvest](#) and of the preceding year. Similarly named festival holidays occur in [Germany](#) and [Japan](#). Thanksgiving is celebrated on the [second Monday of October](#) in Canada and on the [fourth Thursday of November](#) in the United States, and around the same part of the year in other places. Although Thanksgiving has historical roots in religious and cultural traditions, it has long been celebrated as a [secular](#) holiday as well.¹

The centerpiece of contemporary [Thanksgiving in the United States](#) and [in Canada](#) is a large meal, generally centered on a large roasted [turkey](#). It is served with a variety of side dishes which vary from traditional dishes such as mashed potatoes, stuffing, and cranberry sauce, to ones that reflect regional or cultural heritage. The majority of the dishes in the traditional American version of **Thanksgiving dinner** are made from [foods native to the New World](#), as according to tradition the Pilgrims received these foods, or learned how to grow them, from the Native Americans. Thanksgiving dinner is the largest eating event in the United States; people eat more on Thanksgiving than on any other day of the year.²

Turkey is the most common main dish of a Thanksgiving dinner, to the point where Thanksgiving is sometimes colloquially called “Turkey Day.” In 2006, American turkey growers were expected to raise 270 million turkeys, to be processed into five billion pounds of turkey meat valued at almost \$8 billion, with one third of all turkey consumption occurring in the Thanksgiving-Christmas season, and a per capita consumption of almost 18 pounds (8.2 kg).^[12] The [Broad Breasted White](#) turkey is particularly bred for Thanksgiving dinner and similar large feasts; its large size (specimens can grow to over 40 pounds) and meat content make it ideal for such situations, although the breed must be [artificially bred](#) and suffers from [health problems due to its size](#).

Most Thanksgiving turkeys are stuffed with a bread-based mixture and roasted. [Sage](#) is the traditional herb added to the stuffing, along with chopped celery, carrots, and onions. Other ingredients, such as chopped chestnuts or other tree nuts, crumbled sausage or bacon, cranberries, raisins, or apples, may be added to stuffing. If this mixture is prepared outside the bird, it may be known as dressing. [Deep-fried turkey](#) is rising in popularity due to its shorter preparation time, but carries safety risks.³

¹ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thanksgiving>

² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thanksgiving_dinner

³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thanksgiving_dinner