

# The Turkey Crop of 1946 in North Dakota and the United States

**T**HE number of turkeys raised on farms in North Dakota in 1946 is estimated to be 1,146,000 birds, 10 percent greater than the 1,042,000 raised in 1945, but 20 percent smaller than the five year (1938-42) average of 1,434,000 birds", so says the Office of the Federal Agricultural Statistician at Fargo. The statisticians, Messrs. Grenier and Heltemes add: "Turkey marketings this season are expected to be the earliest of record for North Dakota. If producers carry out their intentions, marketings in October or earlier will account for about 56 percent of the crop". The national figures reported indicate the United States production at 41,103,000 turkeys in 1946 compared with the 1938-42 average of 32,194,000.

An examination of the production figures shows important shifts in the areas of turkey production. As an average of the years 1938-42 the four Northern Great Plains States: North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, and Kansas produced about 14.9 percent of the nation's turkeys, in 1946 only 9.8 percent. North Dakota's production dropped to 992,000 in 1944, rose to 1,042,000 in 1945, and rose again to 1,146,000 in 1946. North Dakota increased its production 10 percent in 1946 over 1945 whereas Oregon showed a decrease of 30 percent; California, a decrease of 28 percent; Idaho, 75 percent.

The national report indicates that the largest decrease in size of flocks was made by the larger producers in 1946 with many small producers and some larger producers in the Midwest who had enough feed increasing their flocks. Texas now leads in production, with Minnesota second and California third.

The B.A.E. paints the 1946 national marketing picture as follows: "Turkey marketings this season are expected to be the earliest in eleven years of record and considerably earlier

than last year. If producers carry out their intentions, marketings in October or earlier will account for about 25 percent of the crop compared with previous high October marketings of about 20 percent last year. The trend toward production of earlier birds from January and February poults is even more striking than it has been during the last five years. Flocks of early birds are easier to raise, have smaller death losses, and are in less danger of early winter storms than later hatched poults.

"Turkey growers for the country as a whole expect to market about 40 percent of the crop in November this year, compared with 36 percent as marketed in November last year. Growers intend to market about 65 percent of the crop by the end of November this year, compared with 56 percent marketed last year. Christmas and New Year's markets are expected to receive 26 percent of the marketings compared with 30 percent last year. About 9 percent are intended for the after-holiday market this year, compared with 14 percent last year."