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NORTH DAKOTA Farm Research

Bimonthly
Bulletin

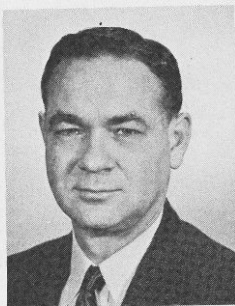
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From the DIRECTOR

A. G. HAZEN



Feed is the largest single cost in producing turkeys. Our poultry research staff, for that reason, has been studying the use of local grains such as oats for turkey feed.

The recent trend toward increased turkey production in North Dakota results mainly from the relatively low production cost when compared with most other areas of the country. North Dakota has an abundance of relatively low-cost feed grains. Their proper use in turkey rations is fundamental to establishing and maintaining a production cost advantage in this highly competitive industry.

Turkey production has been an important segment of North Dakota agriculture for many years. More than 2 million turkeys were raised in the state in 1933 to rank North Dakota second in the nation that year in turkey numbers. Most farms then had a turkey flock under "loose" management, allowing them to forage for themselves. The turkey industry began changing shortly thereafter into a highly specialized enterprise. For various reasons, most North Dakota growers did not keep pace. The low point in turkey production in the state was in 1948 when only 359,000 were raised. In 1967, 1.1 million North Dakota-raised turkeys were marketed, even though the number of flocks has decreased steadily over the past 20 years.

Turkeys are an effective way to market feed grains. However, turkey production is exacting and highly specialized and the farm operator must have production and marketing skill for the enterprise to be profitable.

On The Cover: Newly-hatched turkey poults — future dinners for American and foreign tables from North Dakota producers.

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