

Anthropology of Food Week 13

## Thanksgiving (U.S.A.) Festival Foods

(The Canadian Thanksgiving / *Jour de l'Action de grâce* is the second Monday of October)



24 November 2022  
U.S.A. Holiday  
Thanksgiving

**The big food event of the week is, of course, Thanksgiving. In the United States this week we give a great big collective thanks**—and for most of us that will be for and with the sacrificial offering of a Pre-Columbian New World bird that has been industrialized to the point where it cannot reproduce without the help of humans, and to grow quickly to the point where it can barely walk.\*\* But that stuffed bird might be appropriate, even symbolic (speaking of food symbolism) for the U.S.A. celebration where the participants themselves can often barely walk after eating the sacrificial primal bird and all its trimmings and accompanying dishes. So enjoy that, with a Pre-Columbian cigar if you are so inclined, but don't forget this year (if you're celebrating Thanksgiving this week) **your Thanksgiving Day is also an Anthropology of Food Lab Day**, and we look forward to your report as you relax on World Buy Nothing Day (aka “Black Friday”).

[\*\*See a wonderful book, by Barbara Kingsolver, Camille Kingsolver, and Steven L. Hopp, *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle: A Year of Food Life*. (NY: HarperCollins, 2007. <[www.animalvegetablemiracle.com/](http://www.animalvegetablemiracle.com/)>) for details on humans and turkeys.]

**Enjoy the day, and the day off for Thanksgiving break, and that big fat turkey that couldn't reproduce itself by itself and could barely walk when it met its maker (probably in Minnesota, as Minnesota is the biggest turkey producing state in the U.S.A.).** The Native American turkey was one of the few foods that the

Conquistadores and their folks back in Europe took an immediate liking for (most of the rest of the New World foods they didn't originally much care for). And, of course, the squash (first cultivated in Mesoamerica 8,000 or more years ago), pumpkin (from close to the same time in Mesoamerica), tomatoes (originally a Nahuatl [Aztec] word *tomatl*), vanilla and chocolate (pre-Columbian cultivars), and maize (from west of Tehuacán in Mexico) are all originally Mesoamerican foods. (The cranberries came from native North America.)

**The class [Turkey](#) website is at**

<http://www.d.umn.edu/cla/faculty/troufs/anthfood/afturkeys.html#title>.

**The class [Festival Foods and Food Festivals](#) website is at**

<https://www.d.umn.edu/cla/faculty/troufs/anthfood/afestivalfoods.html#title>.

**The class [Food Holidays](#) website is at**

<https://www.d.umn.edu/cla/faculty/troufs/anthfood/aholidays.html#title>.

**And, of course, nowadays lots of Thanksgiving foods are Genetically Modified, or grew up on Genetically Modified foods.**

(optional) **FOR FUN FOOD TRIVIA . . .**

[Food Trivia HomePage](#)

(optional) **“Are you really what you eat?”**



[Answer](#)

Have a great “Turkey Day”—or whatever you choose to call it.

Best Wishes,

Tim Roufs

<http://www.d.umn.edu/~troufs/>

<https://umn.zoom.us/my/troufs>

[other contact information](#)