

## Turkey price still a bargain

**United Press International**  
WASHINGTON — With the price of almost everything going up, turkeys are a relative bargain this Thanksgiving holiday season.

American turkey growers produced a record crop this year, expected to total 155 million birds, 13 percent more than they produced last year. Retail prices for turkeys are about the same or lower than last year's prices.

Consumers, facing high beef prices, have turned to pork and poultry. Americans are eating cut-up turkey parts and cured turkey products such as turkey franks and turkey hams.

"The American public is looking at turkey as an everyday meal," said G.L. Walts of the National Turkey Federation. He said consumers are buying turkey because it is high in protein and low in fat and cholesterol.

Pork and chicken producers responded to consumer demand with so much production that they are losing money, but Walts said turkey producers are still making a profit and "the consumer's getting a bargain."

Groceries are able to sell turkeys for less this year even though middlemen and retailers' costs have gone up 12 or 13 percent, he said.

## the nation

# New offshore oil field explored

**United Press International**  
ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. — Recent strikes by deep water drilling rigs have industry analysts optimistic that several "middle-sized" reservoirs of natural gas exist in the Baltimore Canyon off New Jersey.

It is a far cry from the bullish predictions that marked early exploration, but in a nation looking for new domestic resources, a renewed effort in waters 100 miles from the Atlantic City Boardwalk is encouraging for the oilmen.

Unfortunately, geologists warn, the new finds are in deep waters above geological zones so twisted by shifts and upheavals that the possibility of finding large reservoirs has been significantly decreased.

When the rigs first went into the canyon area, drilling was concentrated in the relatively shallow waters of the Continental Shelf where, geologists hoped, the so-called Baltimore Dome would hold a large reservoir of oil and natural gas.

But repeated failures sent several major companies packing.

"A lot of people feel that area is condemned now," said Frank Basile,

regional manager of the Bureau of Land Management.

But now Texaco and Tenneco, drilling on adjacent tracts off the Continental Shelf to depths below 13,000 feet, have made four recent natural gas discoveries.

In a chorus, spokesmen for the oil companies are calling the results "encouraging." But they caution that the finds now produce only about 40 million cubic feet of natural gas daily — far short of the 200 million cubic feet needed to turn a profit.

A spokesman for Texaco, currently the only company drilling in the Canyon area, said the company plans to move its rig north to determine the extent of its find.

Basile said it appears Texaco and Tenneco have discovered at least a small reservoir but neither company will speculate beyond that.

Charles Maxwell, an energy analyst for Cyrus Lawrence Inc., a New York investment analyst group, said, "It is a game of intelligent guesses, but I think someone out there will make a middle-sized commercial find."

Maxwell said the depth of the Tex-

aco-Tenneco discoveries indicate that commercial finds will be gas, not oil, because oil rarely exists in deep zones because of pressure and high temperatures.

So far, the only oil found in the Baltimore Canyon has been crude from a 3-foot zone at the 8,322-foot level in a Tenneco well.

In all, the U.S. Geological Survey estimates there is some 4.3 billion cubic feet of natural gas and 600 million barrels of recoverable oil in the area. The USGS has also estimated that as much as 15 million barrels of oil may be hidden in the "Baltimore Reef," an untested formation 140 miles from New Jersey.

## Caffeine cause of birth defects?

**United Press International**  
WASHINGTON — Thousands of babies may be born deformed each year because their mothers drank as many as five cups of caffeine-filled coffee a day during pregnancy, a consumer group charged Saturday.

The Center for Science in the Public Interest said the safest advice for doctors to give expectant mothers is to swear off coffee, tea and other beverages containing caffeine.

The group filed a petition with the Food and Drug Administration asking that cans and packages of coffee and tea be labeled with a message — "Warning to pregnant women: Consuming coffee or tea may cause birth defects or other reproductive problems."

It also said the FDA — which has been studying caffeine — should launch a public education campaign so women "can identify coffee and tea as increasing their risk of reproductive problems."

FDA spokesman Wayne Pines said the agency is "in the process of developing proposed regulations on caffeine" including that found in coffee.

"Some of the options we are considering are label warnings and the possibility of proposing to remove caffeine as an additive in certain colas," he said. "We have under active consideration a regulation on caffeine, including coffee."

The CSPI, whose research and lobbying on health issues is funded by private contributions and grants, also sent letters to 12,200 obstetricians and 1,500 midwives to spread its caffeine warning.

"Caffeine may be the tip of the iceberg," said Michael Jacobson, director of the group. "Each year in the United States about one in seven pregnancies ends in stillbirth, miscarriage, malformed babies or similar reproductive problem."

"Controllable factors in our environment — including foods, drugs and pollutants — may account for a significant number of these hundreds of thousands of individual tragedies," he said.

Some health groups also have suggested a warning be put on alcoholic beverage bottles because heavy drinking by expectant mothers can cause birth defects, a phenomenon which has been documented. A recent government poll showed most women of childbearing age were aware drinking can harm a fetus.

The caffeine petition, which cited several animal studies implicating the substance as a cause of cleft palate, missing toes and fingers and other birth defects, said 23 percent of all Americans who drink coffee — including pregnant women — consume five or more cups a day.

## Fossil of 'camelops' found in Albuquerque

**United Press International**  
ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. — A nearly complete skeleton of a camel-like animal that roamed the Southwest at least 12,000 years ago has been found in a gravel pit in the northern part of the city.

Keith Rigby, district paleontologist for the Bureau of Land Management, said the first bones of the 6½-foot-tall, 9-foot-long herbivore, known as a camelops hestemue, were uncovered by construction workers last April.


Rigby, Mike O'Neill of the University of New Mexico Physical Anthropology Laboratory and volun-

teers then found all but about 10

of the animal's bones at the site. "As far as we know, it is the complete fossil (of a camelops) found in North America and probably in the world," Rigby said Friday during showing of the reconstruction.

He said the camelops, believed to be a female, was about a year when it died. The remains are 12,000 to 20,000 years old, he said.

Camelops, which looked like a cross between a modern camel and South American llama, lived in the Southwest until about 7,000 years ago.



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