

# N. C. Has Good Thing Going

The rising stock of the turkey as an economical, everyday food item has been fuel for the North Carolina agricultural furnace.

Expansion continues. The industry that increased in size a staggering 333 per cent from 1960 to 1966 steamed along at a fast clip again last year, growing another 12 per cent.

Where there were only about a half-million birds in 1950, there were over 6.5 million produced in the state in 1967. And there will be continued growth, the experts say.

The state already ranks sixth in the country as a turkey producer. Some of this state's progress has been made at the expense of other producing areas. North Carolina's climate, location and other favorable conditions have helped entice producers and business firms from other areas to move here.

"One of the biggest things we have going for us is our climate," points out Dr. W. C. Mills, Jr., in charge of extension poultry at North Carolina State University.

"Our winters aren't so cold that brooding expenses can't be held at reasonable levels and summers are not so hot that we can't keep the birds comfortable with a little shade," he explains.

Another big factor has been the farmer's ability to achieve a degree of efficiency that allows him to make a profit in the face of rising costs and fairly stable market prices. An amazing fact is that the 1967 producer received about the same price per pound for his birds as the 1937 producer received.

"The modern farmer, and particularly today's turkey grower, is one of the most efficient producers in the American labor force. This is how the turkey producer has been able to maintain a low price for his product and at the same time show a profit."

Dr. Mills explains further that, "This rapid application of new technology has been made possible through a corresponding increase in farm or unit size."



Mr. and Mrs. Lynwood Tyndall of Route 2, Pink Hill, and their daughter, Theresa, started growing quail as a hobby. Now the hobby has grown into a substantial part of their family income.

A decade ago, North Carolina had many turkey farmers growing 1,000 to 5,000 head yearly. There are only a few at this level currently. "Growers with an annual production of over 100,000 turkeys are more commonplace now," Dr. Mills commented.

A number of firms market between 300,000 to 500,000 and a few sell over a million.

Management and growing programs have had to change and become more efficient as unit flock size has increased, the specialist explains.

In order for efficiency to stay at a high level, growers produce turkeys 52 weeks a year. This is made possible by the state's mild climate and suitable land and moisture conditions. Feeding programs have changed drastically as the turkey

Quail require less attention than some types of farming. Mr. Tyndall has his own incubator, hatchery, and brooders, and usually raises his own breeders. Occasionally in the spring when he has sold "down too low" he has to purchase breeders.

Industry has grown. Birds are fed controlled all-mash systems that are based on the grow rate and weight of the turkey. Savings are realized through the efficient feeding of scarce and high-priced protein ingredients.

Dr. Mills believes North Carolina has an opportunity to become an even larger turkey state. "We have the climate and soil conditions; we have young, energetic businessmen with production know-how; and we

have the processing facilities and an adequate market for the product," he said.

"The long range future of turkey production is bright. There is plenty of room for expanded production," Dr. Mills related.

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Inside these pens on the farm of Lynwood Tyndall are produced the most delectable of all foods, quail, or Bob White as they are commonly called. The pens in the foreground are used to house the birds, as are the larger buildings in the background.

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