



# 2011 VERMONT WILDLIFE HARVEST REPORT - WILD TURKEY



 VERMONT  
FISH & WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT  
(802) 241-3700 / [www.vtfishandwildlife.com](http://www.vtfishandwildlife.com)



# 2011 VERMONT WILD TURKEY HARVEST REPORT

Most of the programs described in this report are funded through the *Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Program*. This program was initiated in 1937 as the Federal Aid In Wildlife Act and created a system whereby taxes are paid on firearms, ammunition and archery equipment by the public who hunts. Today this excise tax generates over a hundred million dollars each year that are dedicated to state wildlife restoration and management projects across the United States. The State of Vermont uses these monies for acquiring land, and for restoring and managing wildlife. These excise tax dollars, coupled with state hunting license fees, have been the predominant source of money funding the successful restoration and management of Vermont’s wildlife resources.

## Contents

<b>Wild Turkey Population Status .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2011 Harvest .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2011 Spring Turkey Season Summary .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2011 Fall Turkey Season Summary .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2011 Legal Turkey Harvest by Town .....</b>	<b>6-11</b>



*The MISSION of the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department is the conservation of fish, wildlife, and plants and their habitats for the people of Vermont.*

## Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department

Agency of Natural Resources

103 South Main Street, 10 South  
Waterbury, Vermont 05671-0501

(802) 241-3700 / [www.vtfishandwildlife.com](http://www.vtfishandwildlife.com)

# 2011 Wild Turkey Report

## Wild Turkey Population Status

Vermont's current wild turkey population is estimated at 45,000 to 50,000 birds in the fall. Wild turkeys occur throughout the state and are hunted in all 24 Wildlife Management Units (WMUs) during the spring season and all but three (3) northern WMUs during the fall season. Examination of long-term trends of harvest and hunter effort suggest that after a fairly dramatic population increase through the period of mid to late 1990s and into early 2000s, Vermont's turkey population may now be stabilizing near peak historic levels.



Each year, two different brood surveys are conducted to evaluate annual productivity. A brood survey is conducted during August and September, and a public "web" brood survey is done in August.

The results of the two surveys are important in tracking annual recruitment in the population as winter severity and spring weather conditions influence chick survival and overall population size. The surveys yield a wild turkey brood Production Index (PI) measured by the total poults/total adult hens (poults:hen ratio). In 2011, the statewide mean was 2.8 poults:hen (PI) for the first survey and 2.7 PI for the public web survey. For the past several years, results of the brood surveys indicated lower than average PI, but the high numbers of overall turkey observations as well as high numbers of total birds observed per mile driven indicates that the population has declined in the past few years but remains at a relatively high level. This population increase is reflected in the overall harvest.

(Figure 1).

## 2011 Harvest

A total of 17,886 licensed hunters harvested 5,231 wild turkeys between the spring and fall hunting seasons, 4,889 of which were bearded turkeys. Turkeys were harvested statewide in all 24 Wildlife Management Units (Figure 2). The majority of turkeys were harvested during the spring season (90.8%) while the fall season harvest proportion decreased substantially from the high 2010 harvest. Despite a late season snowstorm on the first day of the 2-day Youth Season, hunters enjoyed a 23.7 % success rate and harvested 572 turkeys (Table 1). Vermont allows only half-day hunting during the regular spring season and the youth season. The spring season is for the month of May, the youth season is the last weekend in April, while the fall season occurs as either a 9-day or a 16-day season in October with the length varying by WMU. The bag limit is 2 bearded birds in the spring and 1 bird of any sex in the fall. Harvest registration is mandatory.

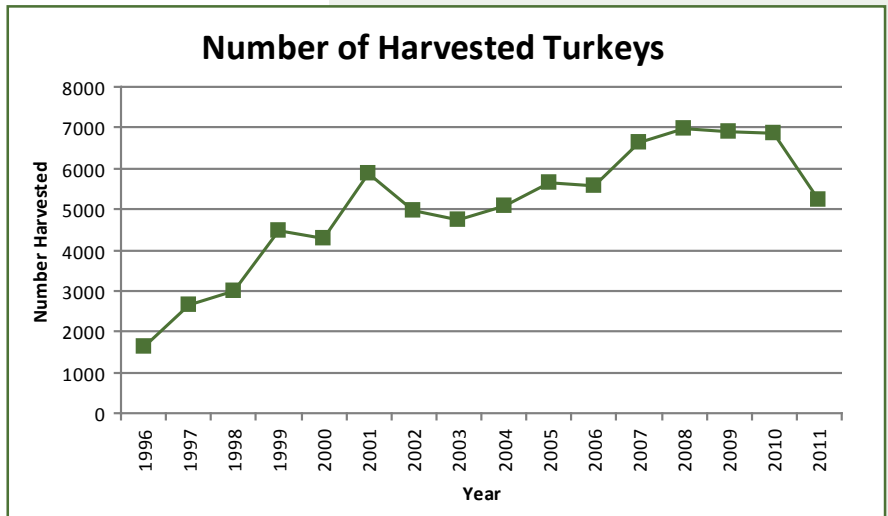


FIGURE 1. ANNUAL TOTAL WILD TURKEY HARVEST TRENDS IN VERMONT FOR 1996-2011. NUMBERS ARE FOR SPRING AND FALL SEASON HARVESTS COMBINED.

TABLE 1. SPRING 2011 TURKEY HARVEST BY SEASON

Season	Non-Resident	Resident	Unknown	Total
Youth Turkey	15	555	2	572
Regular May	309	3,871	3	4,183
<b>Total</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>4,426</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4,755</b>

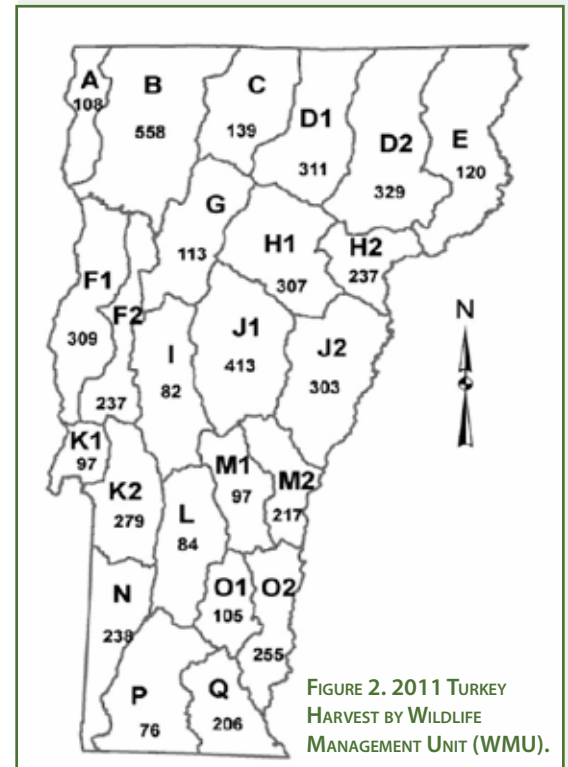
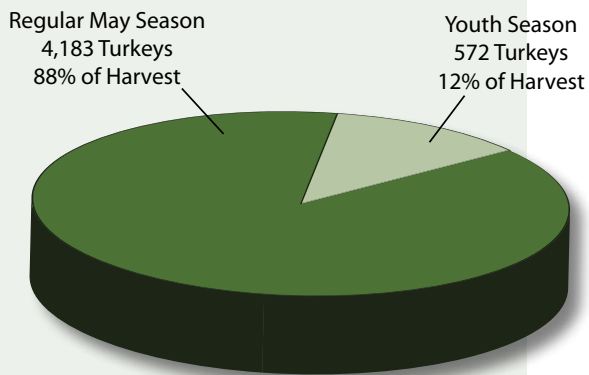


FIGURE 2. 2011 TURKEY HARVEST BY WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT UNIT (WMU).

**TURKEY HARVEST BY SEASON**  
**4,755 TOTAL SPRING HARVEST**



**Spring Turkey Season Summary**

Vermont's 2011 spring season resulted in a harvest of 4,732 bearded birds, 13% less than the 2010 harvest of 5,486 bearded birds. The 2011 harvest includes the 572 birds taken on the 2-day, April youth turkey hunting weekend (Table 1). The youth season contribution to the total spring turkey harvest was 12.0%. Resident hunters took 93% of the total spring harvest.

Hunter success rates remained high with 22.5% of hunters harvesting at least one turkey. Among these successful hunters, an impressive 25.1% of them harvested a second bearded bird to fill the 2-bird spring bag limit. Hunting pressure in 2011, measured in terms of spring (i.e., turkey licenses sold by June 1, 2011) turkey license sales (17,002) was only slightly higher (2.6%) than the 2010 spring season license sales of 16,569.

Adult birds comprised a higher percentage of the harvest (64%) than immature birds which comprised the remaining 36% (Table 2). The 2011 season also included 23 bearded hens in the tally. Birds were harvested in 238 of Vermont's 253 towns, 5 less towns than were reported for 2010 (Table 7).

**TABLE 3. SPRING 2011 WILD TURKEY HARVEST BY WMU**

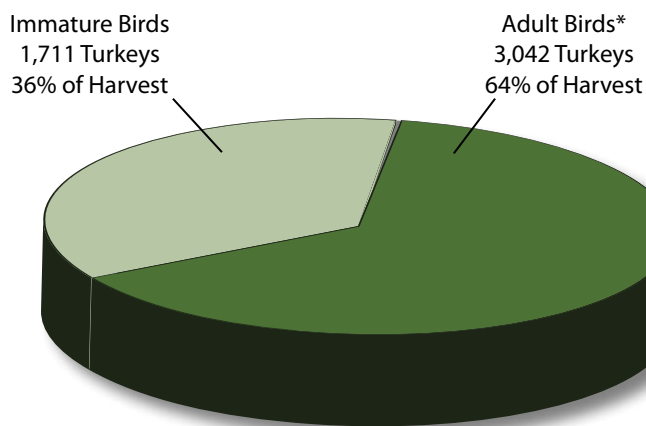
WMU	Number Harvested	Turkeys Harvested Per Mi2 of Habitat
A	106	5.00
B	515	1.30
C	137	0.39
D1	266	0.77
D2	267	0.49
E	119	0.22
F1	281	2.78
F2	208	1.51
G	103	0.28
H1	264	0.67
H2	206	1.09
I	77	0.19
J1	373	0.78
J2	270	0.57
K1	84	1.06
K2	250	0.96
L	74	0.21
M1	92	0.37
M2	208	1.02
N	226	0.81
O1	101	0.53
O2	251	0.98
P	73	0.16
Q	202	0.75
Unknown	2	--
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,755</b>	

**TABLE 2. SEX AND AGE OF SPRING 2011 TURKEY HARVEST**

Sex	Adult	Immature	Unknown	Total
Bearded Female	23	0	0	23
Male	3,020	1,711	1	4,732
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,043</b>	<b>1,711</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4,755</b>

Wild turkeys were harvested again in all of Vermont's 24 Wildlife Management Units (WMUs) during the spring season. WMU B, with 515 birds reported, again had the highest harvest followed by J1 in central Vermont (373 birds) and J2 (270 birds reported) in east central Vermont (Table 3). Wildlife Management Unit A (Champlain Islands) recorded the highest density of turkeys taken with 5.00 bearded turkeys harvested per square mile of forested habitat. As to county harvest, Windsor County led this year with the highest harvest numbers reported (632 birds) followed closely by Rutland County (458), Caledonia County (438), Franklin County (421), and Addison County (421) (Table 4).

**TURKEY HARVEST BY AGE – 4,755 TOTAL SPRING HARVEST**



\*2 Unknown Age

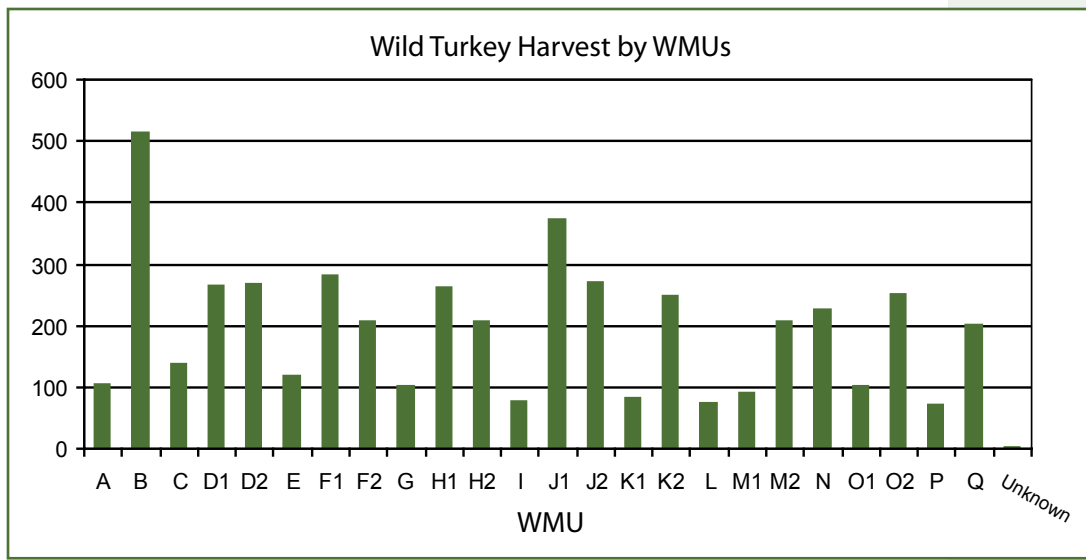


TABLE 4. SPTING 2011 WILD TURKEY HARVEST BY COUNTY

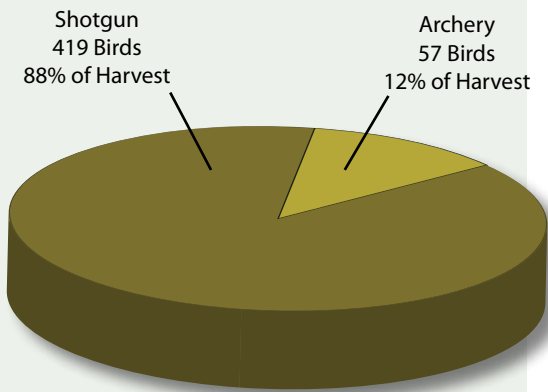
County	Adult	Immature	Unknown	Total
Addison	286	135		421
Bennington	161	64		225
Caledonia	231	206	1	438
Chittenden	190	106		296
Essex	72	52		124
Franklin	267	154		421
Grand Isle	63	42		105
Lamoille	108	81		189
Orange	266	153		419
Orleans	168	125		293
Rutland	333	125		458
Washington	226	120		346
Windham	244	144		388
Windsor	428	204		632
<b>State Total</b>	<b>3,043</b>	<b>1,711</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4,755</b>

Management strategies for wild turkeys in Vermont continue to emphasize high quality spring hunting. The Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department believes this management strategy helped stimulate a three-fold population increase over subsequent years, resulting in an impressive string of record harvests. In the interest of maintaining Vermont's high quality spring turkey hunting seasons, and in light of our recent record harvests, we believe it is most appropriate to continue our overall management strategy of a modest fall harvest structure, yet still allowing for some increased hunting opportunities for a fall harvest in additional WMUs where the spring harvest has increased in recent years.



MATT PAGE

**FALL TURKEY HARVEST  
METHOD OF HARVEST  
476 TURKEYS HARVESTED**



**Fall Turkey Season Summary**

The 2011 fall season resulted in a harvest of 476 male and female turkeys, down 66% from the fall 2010 harvest of 1,391. The fall harvest accounted for 9.1% of the overall harvest for 2011, which is markedly down from 20.2% for 2010. The decrease in the 2011 fall harvest is likely due to turkeys being spread out foraging on beechnuts in more remote areas away from hunters. During the fall of 2011 the beechnut crop was much higher than normal; evidence of turkey's feeding on remote beech ridges was a common observation by hunters.

The 2011 fall archery-only season accounted for 57 (12%) of the fall harvested birds, with the balance of the birds (419) taken in the shotgun season. Fall birds were taken in 147 Vermont towns. Wildlife Management Unit D2 reported the highest number of fall birds with 62 taken, followed by WMU D1 with 45 birds and B and H1 each reporting 43 (Table 5). The newly opened WMUs, accounted for 41% of the harvest while that region of the state open for a 16-day season (F1, F2, K1, K2 and N) reported 23% of the total fall harvest in Vermont (Table 6).

**TABLE 5. 2010 FALL WILD TURKEY HARVEST BY WMU**

WMU	Harvest	% of Fall Harvest
B	43	9.03
D1	45	9.45
D2	62	13.03
F1	28	5.88
F2	29	6.09
G	10	2.10
H1	43	9.03
H2	40	8.40
I	5	1.05
J1	40	8.40
J2	33	6.93
K1	13	2.73
K2	29	6.09
L	10	2.10
M1	5	1.05
M2	9	1.89
N	12	2.52
O1	4	0.84
O2	4	0.84
P	3	0.63
Q	4	0.84
Unknown	5	1.05
<b>Total</b>	<b>476</b>	<b>100%</b>

**TABLE 6. FALL HARVEST BY REGION AND SEASON LENGTH**

Region (WMUs)	Season Length	Birds Harvested
F1, F2, K1, K2, N	16-day season	111 (23%)
B, D1, D2, G, H1, H2, I, J1, J2, L, M1, M2, O1, O2, P and Q	9-day season	365 (77%)
New WMUs only (B, D1, D2 and H1)	9-day season	193 (41%)

Final tallies indicate immature birds comprised 34% of the fall hunting season harvest, while the female cohort accounted for 52% of the total harvest. The adult female to immature ratio was 1: 0.66. A total of 65 adult males (14%) were taken in the fall season as compared to 3,019 adult males taken in the spring season for a total of 3,084 adult male birds in all of 2011.

**SEX AND AGE DISTRIBUTION OF FALL HARVEST  
476 TURKEYS HARVESTED**

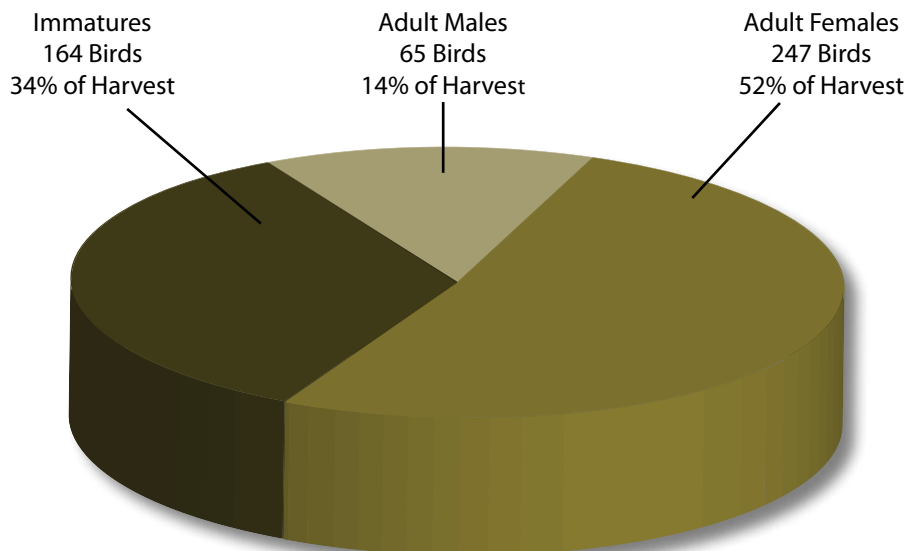


TABLE 7. 2011 LEGAL TURKEY HARVEST BY TOWN

COUNTY	Town	Spring 2011 Harvest	Fall 2011 Harvest	Town Total
ADDISON	Addison	49	7	56
	Bridport	20	1	21
	Bristol	10	3	13
	Cornwall	32	2	34
	Ferrisburg	40	1	41
	Goshen	3	0	3
	Granville	6	0	6
	Hancock	8	1	9
	Leicester	11	2	13
	Lincoln	8	0	8
	Middlebury	38	1	39
	Monkton	13	4	17
	New Haven	14	4	18
	Orwell	44	4	48
	Panton	10	3	13
	Ripton	4	1	5
	Salisbury	16	4	20
	Shoreham	42	2	44
	Starksboro	20	2	22
	Vergennes	2	0	2
Waltham	5	2	7	
Weybridge	10	3	13	
Whiting	16	1	17	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>421</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>469</b>
BENNINGTON	Arlington	14	3	17
	Bennington	22	1	23
	Dorset	33	3	36
	Glastenbury	0	1	1
	Landgrove	1	0	1
	Manchester	15	1	16
	Peru	5	0	5
	Pownal	33	0	33
	Readsboro	7	0	7
	Rupert	28	1	29
	Sandgate	10	1	11
	Shaftsbury	42	2	44
	Stamford	2	0	2
	Sunderland	3	0	3
	Winhall	3	1	4
Woodford	7	0	7	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>239</b>
CALEDONIA	Barnet	34	9	43
	Burke	13	1	14
	Danville	45	4	49

TABLE 7. 2011 LEGAL TURKEY HARVEST BY TOWN

COUNTY	Town	Spring 2011 Harvest	Fall 2011 Harvest	Town Total
CALEDONIA (cont.)	Groton	33	0	33
	Hardwick	44	10	54
	Kirby	20	4	24
	Lyndon	45	6	51
	Newark	6	5	11
	Peacham	32	7	39
	Ryegate	55	10	65
	Saint Johnsbury	29	10	39
	Sheffield	4	1	5
	Stannard	4	0	4
	Sutton	17	7	24
	Walden	19	2	21
	Waterford	35	3	38
	Wheelock	3	2	5
	<b>Total</b>		<b>438</b>	<b>81</b>
CHITTENDEN	Bolton	4	0	4
	Charlotte	51	4	55
	Colchester	43	9	52
	Essex	19	3	22
	Hinesburg	37	6	43
	Huntington	6	0	6
	Jericho	8	0	8
	Milton	51	5	56
	Richmond	14	0	14
	Saint George	1	0	1
	Shelburne	10	0	10
	Underhill	15	1	16
	Westford	23	0	23
	Williston	14	1	15
<b>Total</b>		<b>296</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>325</b>
ESSEX	Bloomfield	22	1	23
	Brighton	6	0	6
	Brunswick	6	0	6
	Canaan	10	0	10
	Concord	15	0	15
	East Haven	1	0	1
	Granby	4	0	4
	Guildhall	10	0	10
	Lemington	4	0	4
	Lunenburg	23	0	23
	Maidstone	10	0	10
	Norton	8	0	8
	Victory	5	1	6
	<b>Total</b>		<b>124</b>	<b>2</b>



TABLE 7. 2011 LEGAL TURKEY HARVEST BY TOWN

COUNTY	Town	Spring 2011 Harvest	Fall 2011 Harvest	Town Total
FRANKLIN	Bakersfield	13	0	13
	Berkshire	32	4	36
	Enosburg	46	0	46
	Fairfax	36	6	42
	Fairfield	48	4	52
	Fletcher	22	2	24
	Franklin	28	2	30
	Georgia	31	3	34
	Highgate	61	0	61
	Montgomery	20	0	20
	Richford	18	1	19
	Saint Albans	18	2	20
	Sheldon	24	2	26
	Swanton	24	0	24
	<b>Total</b>		<b>421</b>	<b>26</b>
GRAND ISLE	Alburgh	30	1	31
	Grand Isle	24	1	25
	Isle La Motte	1	0	1
	North Hero	12	0	12
	South Hero	37	0	37
<b>Total</b>		<b>104</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>106</b>
LAMOILLE	Belvidere	1	0	1
	Cambridge	27	2	29
	Eden	13	0	13
	Elmore	9	1	10
	Hyde Park	17	5	22
	Johnson	25	1	26
	Morristown	30	7	37
	Stowe	26	3	29
	Waterville	6	0	6
	Wolcott	35	4	39
<b>Total</b>		<b>189</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>212</b>
ORANGE	Bradford	26	4	30
	Braintree	16	0	16
	Brookfield	38	2	40
	Chelsea	30	2	32
	Corinth	11	2	13
	Fairlee	12	0	12
	Newbury	53	17	70
	Orange	12	6	18
	Randolph	56	3	59
	Strafford	23	0	23
	Thetford	19	3	22

TABLE 7. 2011 LEGAL TURKEY HARVEST BY TOWN

COUNTY	Town	Spring 2011 Harvest	Fall 2011 Harvest	Town Total
ORANGE (cont.)	Topsham	0	1	1
	Tunbridge	27	3	30
	Vershire	13	7	20
	Washington	11	0	11
	West Fairlee	10	0	10
	Williamstown	62	0	62
	<b>Total</b>	<b>419</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>469</b>
ORLEANS	Albany	19	1	20
	Barton	24	3	27
	Brownington	16	5	21
	Charleston	17	0	17
	Coventry	15	3	18
	Craftsbury	28	7	35
	Derby	13	2	15
	Glover	11	0	11
	Greensboro	20	8	28
	Holland	16	6	22
	Irasburg	23	4	27
	Jay	4	1	5
	Lowell	9	0	9
	Morgan	11	7	18
	Newport	33	8	41
	Troy	29	1	30
	Westfield	4	0	4
	Westmore	1	0	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>349</b>
RUTLAND	Benson	37	8	45
	Brandon	23	3	26
	Castleton	22	0	22
	Chittenden	12	0	12
	Clarendon	29	0	29
	Danby	21	1	22
	Fair Haven	4	1	5
	Hubbardton	8	1	9
	Ira	14	0	14
	Killington	3	0	3
	Mendon	3	0	3
	Middletown Springs	22	1	23
	Mount Holly	8	2	10
	Mount Tabor	1	2	3
	Pawlet	45	2	47
	Pittsfield	2	0	2
	Pittsford	33	6	39
Poultney	33	6	39	

TABLE 7. 2011 LEGAL TURKEY HARVEST BY TOWN

COUNTY	Town	Spring 2011 Harvest	Fall 2011 Harvest	Town Total
RUTLAND (cont.)	Proctor	5	1	6
	Rutland	10	1	11
	Rutland City	0	3	3
	Shrewsbury	14	5	19
	Sudbury	12	2	14
	Tinmouth	16	2	18
	Unknown	6	1	7
	Wallingford	18	1	19
	Wells	17	3	20
	West Haven	21	2	23
	West Rutland	19	2	21
	<b>Total</b>	<b>458</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>514</b>
	Washington	Barre	37	10
Berlin		39	6	45
Cabot		22	5	27
Calais		20	1	21
Duxbury		5	0	5
East Montpelier		49	11	60
Fayston		2	1	3
Marshfield		34	0	34
Middlesex		12	4	16
Montpelier		5	0	5
Moretown		20	1	21
Northfield		16	3	19
Plainfield		22	1	23
Roxbury		6	0	6
Waitsfield		10	1	11
Warren		8	5	13
Waterbury		32	4	36
Woodbury		1	1	2
Worcester		6	3	9
<b>Total</b>		<b>346</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>403</b>
Windham	Athens	7	0	7
	Brattleboro	25	1	26
	Brookline	9	0	9
	Dover	14	0	14
	Dummerston	22	0	22
	Grafton	15	1	16
	Guilford	36	0	36
	Halifax	18	2	20
	Jamaica	15	0	15
	Londonderry	12	1	13
	Marlboro	12	0	12
	Newfane	27	0	27

TABLE 7. 2011 LEGAL TURKEY HARVEST BY TOWN

COUNTY	Town	Spring 2011 Harvest	Fall 2011 Harvest	Town Total	
Windham (cont.)	Putney	8	0	8	
	Rockingham	37	2	39	
	Stratton	2	0	2	
	Townshend	34	0	34	
	Vernon	17	0	17	
	Wardsboro	7	0	7	
	Westminster	11	0	11	
	Whitingham	22	0	22	
	Wilmington	26	2	28	
	Windham	12	1	13	
	<b>Total</b>		<b>388</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>398</b>
	Windsor	Andover	3	0	3
Baltimore		6	0	6	
Barnard		12	0	12	
Bethel		28	1	29	
Bridgewater		15	0	15	
Cavendish		22	1	23	
Chester		64	2	66	
Hartford		31	0	31	
Hartland		48	5	53	
Ludlow		13	0	13	
Norwich		25	1	26	
Plymouth		13	0	13	
Pomfret		36	0	36	
Reading		10	0	10	
Rochester		11	2	13	
Royalton		18	0	18	
Sharon		22	3	25	
Springfield		68	1	69	
Stockbridge		12	0	12	
Weathersfield		70	0	70	
West Windsor		27	0	27	
Weston		10	0	10	
Windsor		26	3	29	
Woodstock		42	3	45	
<b>Total</b>		<b>632</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>654</b>	
UNKNOWN		1			
<b>STATE TOTAL</b>		<b>4,755</b>	<b>476</b>	<b>5,231</b>	