

Wisconsin Turkey Donation 2017

An Information Packet for: **Administering the Wisconsin Turkey Donation Program**

New For 2017: Wisconsin's Turkey Donation Program.

2015 Wisconsin Act 31 expanded the venison donation program to also allow donation of wild turkeys. We will be running a limited release of the turkey donation program for the spring 2017 turkey seasons, focusing on a handful of southern counties with higher turkey harvest numbers. The program will return for the fall turkey season. A review of the program will be conducted at the conclusion of the 2017 fall turkey hunting season to consider future program implementation.

Getting started

1. General information about the program—which counties can participate & how the program works.
2. Outline of what you'll need to do to participate in the Wisconsin Turkey Donation Program.
3. Commonly asked questions about the Wisconsin Turkey Donation Program.
4. "Non-profit Organization Agreement to Implement Wisconsin Turkey Donation", to be used if you would like a non-profit organization to help implement the program in your county.

Setting up processors

5. A copy of the "Information Packet for meat processors who would like to participate in Wisconsin Turkey Donation", which includes complete instructions for what processors need to do to participate in the program as well as a copy of the "Meat Processor Agreement" to be used when signing up each processor.

Setting up pantries

6. A copy of the "Information Packet for Charitable Organizations who would like to participate in the Wisconsin Turkey Donation Program", which includes complete instructions for what food pantries need to do to participate in the program.

The financial end of things

7. Instructions on how to submit budget amendments to the WDACP for estimated turkey donation program costs, and quarterly reimbursement requests for venison processing fees and administrative costs. However, please sign and return the enclosed agreement to participate in the program.

Reporting Requirements

8. Final donation numbers should be sent in to the DNR by June 10th.
9. Blank form that you can use for reporting total donations by processor and pantry.

WHICH COUNTIES CAN PARTICIPATE

Wisconsin Turkey Donation at a glance

The Wisconsin Turkey Donation program was authorized by the state legislature in 2015 and is designed to use existing Wildlife Damage Abatement & Claims Program (WDACP) funds to pay for the processing of turkey harvested and donated by hunters in Wisconsin. The meat is processed and then distributed (free of charge) to needy people across the state of Wisconsin. Through the program, needy families will receive ground turkey meat, and hunters have the

opportunity to donate harvested turkeys to a worthwhile cause. For all involved, the program promotes a positive public image of turkey hunting, the organizations involved, and those who participate in and promote Wisconsin turkey hunting.

Which counties can participate?

Any county that participates in the WDACP can participate in the turkey donation program. Currently 70 of 72 counties are enrolled in the WDACP. Kenosha and Menominee counties are not currently enrolled in the WDACP, and thus are not eligible to participate in Wisconsin Turkey Donation.

A Quick Summary of How the Program Works

Counties: Counties must agree to participate and notify the WDNR of their intent to participate by submitting the enclosed agreement. The County (or their agents or a non-profit organization) is then responsible for setting up the program: this includes organizing and signing agreements with processors in their county to accept and process the turkey meat, and coordinating area food pantries to pick up and distribute the ground turkey meat. Counties are also responsible for submitting a list of participating processors to WDNR, paying the cost of processing, reporting program activities during the season and at the end of the 2017 spring turkey hunting season, and submitting reimbursements (through the WDACP financial database).

The costs of the program for this first year will be rolled into the amounts budgeted for the venison donation program. If these amounts will be exceeded, a budget amendment can be submitted through the WDACP database that would add additional funds. In 2017, the maximum cost the WDACP will pay for processing is \$15 per turkey. A county may accept a higher processing fee if they have other (non-WDACP) funds to pay the difference.

Hunters: Hunters need only do six things:

1. Legally harvest and tag a turkey.
2. Field-dress and keep the turkey in a cool location.
3. Register the turkey.
4. Call a participating processor to verify that the processor has space to accept the hunter's turkey.
5. Drop the turkey off at the participating processor, during regular business hours, by May 31st.
6. Sign a log-in sheet at the processor to verify their donation. Hunters must donate the entire turkey to receive the processing costs for free but the beard, feet, and feathers can be removed prior to donation.

Processors: Processors must be licensed (Meat Establishment License) by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and/or the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection. Processors must sign an agreement with a county WDACP representative in order to participate in the turkey donation program, and must agree to follow all of the terms of that agreement. The participating processor accepts donations, checks to ensure that the donated deer are from the approved donation area, and verifies that hunters log all deer on the "Hunter Turkey Donation Log Sheets."

The processors will then de-breast the turkey, grind the meat and package it into one-pound packages. The meat should then be frozen. One of the participating charitable organization representatives or volunteers picks up the meat and distributes it to the participating food pantries. The processor can arrange for a pick-up of the ground turkey with the contact person indicated on their agreement whenever it is mutually convenient.

Food pantries: Food pantries must contact counties or their representatives to let them know that they would like to participate in Wisconsin Turkey Donation Program. Counties or their representatives will coordinate which pantries will be picking up meat from specific processors in the county. The food pantry then distributes the frozen ground venison at no charge to needy individuals in Wisconsin.

Advertising the program

The WDNR will coordinate production of a statewide news release promoting the Wisconsin Turkey Donation Program. The WDNR will also promote the program through its Website and GovDelivery system which sends email and text message notifications to hunters. Counties or their agents may voluntarily conduct additional outreach.

Reimbursement: For counties that contract WDACP program services to USDA-Wildlife Services, processors will submit invoices directly to USDA-Wildlife Services, and they will arrange for payment with your county for all complete invoices. Processors will be paid within 3-6 weeks.

In all other counties, all processor invoices will come to the county for payment regardless of whether you implement the program directly or work with a non-profit organization. You can choose to have the processors send their invoices directly to you, or have the non-profit organization working with you collect and check invoices for accuracy before mailing a group of them to you for payment. In all cases, the county must pay the processor directly (i.e. processing fees must be paid directly to the individual processor that submitted the invoice). This supports WDNR financial policy that the county WDACP must reimburse vendors directly for their costs.

All invoices need to be checked to confirm the agreed upon processing fee and to confirm that Hunter Turkey Donation log sheets and Distribution of Processed Turkey Meat to Charitable Organization log sheets are attached confirming the number of donated turkey being invoiced.

Invoices should be paid within 3-6 weeks upon receipt of accurate invoices with attached log sheets. Please emphasize to processors that the reimbursement process may be long, so that they are prepared for this lengthy period before reimbursement. We know that most counties cannot pay an invoice until it is approved at the county board meeting. Please make every attempt to approve invoices at the first opportunity, so that processor invoices can be paid in a timely fashion (within 30 days).

Reporting: By **June 10, 2017**, we'll need a final report of the turkey meat processed and distributed in your county. For each participating processor in your county, please list the total number of turkeys processed and the total pounds of ground turkey processed. For each participating pantry in your county, please list the total pounds of ground turkey the pantry received from each processor. *We have enclosed a sheet for you to report total donations by processor and by pantry to the WDNR at the end of the year.* Please submit your turkey donation report with your reimbursement request for turkey processing costs.

COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Can Wisconsin Turkey Donation pay for processing fees for turkey not specifically donated to the program?

The Wisconsin Turkey Donation Program will not pay for the processing of:

- Turkeys killed in car-vehicle collisions.
- Turkeys removed under municipal removal programs
- Turkeys abandoned by hunters at the processing plant.
- Turkeys harvested in another state.
- Turkeys harvested at game farms

The Wisconsin Turkey Donation Program will pay for the processing of turkeys shot on agriculture damage or nuisance tags between April 19th and May 30th, 2017.

Would we be liable for any problems with tainted or unsafe meat?

Wisconsin Statutes, s. 895.51, makes food processors, charitable organizations, and those involved in the distribution of donated food immune from liability for injury or death caused by the donated food products. We ask everyone involved (particularly processors, who are the first ones to see the donated turkeys) to do everything possible to make sure that any turkeys of questionable quality are disposed of, and are not processed!

This is also the reason that we must require all processors participating in the program to be licensed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture or the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection. We want to take all possible precautions to ensure that the turkey meat we provide to needy people in the state is safe and wholesome.

Can taxpayers claim turkey donated to Wisconsin Turkey Donation as a charitable, tax-deductible contribution?

The best place to find out about this is directly from the Internal Revenue Service. Search their web site for "Charitable Contributions".

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COUNTY AGREEMENT TO PARTICIPATE

_____ County agrees to participate in the WDACP turkey donation program in 2017 and to administer the program as set forth in the Wisconsin Turkey Donation County Information Packet. The WDNR WDACP agrees to fully reimburse the county for all administrative and turkey processing costs associated with the turkey donation program.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Title: _____

State of Wisconsin
Department of Natural Resources
For the Secretary

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Director, Bureau of Wildlife Management

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FINAL REPORT OF DONATIONS BY PROCESSOR & PANTRY

Name of County: _____

Participating Processors:

Name of Business	Number of turkeys received	Pounds of ground turkey Processed	Price per turkey	Total Processing Fees
Total:				\$

Charitable Organizations:

Name of Organization	Pounds of ground turkey received
Total:	

Please submit this report with a county's reimbursement request to: Wisconsin DNR, Attn: Noah Balgooyen WM/6, P.O. Box 7921, Madison, WI 53707-7921

Thank you for participating in Wisconsin Turkey Donation!