



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department Of Agriculture Rural Development
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Turkey Growers Approach New Markets with Help of USDA Rural Development

Gibbon, Neb., March 25, 2004 – Nebraska Turkey Growers (NTG) Cooperative received a symbolic funding check today for an USDA Rural Development \$120,000 grant to be used for working capital that will help NTG to create new sales opportunities for its products. Matching funds from NTG and Norbest, Inc. will assist in tapping new turkey product markets in St. Louis, Kansas City and Denver producing increased revenue for 21 NTG independent members. Nebraska Corn Board and Nebraska Soybean Board funds will also be utilized.

"Our marketing project will provide a two fold increased revenue benefit to member turkey growers," stated Deborah VanMatre, general manager, Nebraska Turkey Growers Cooperative. "The customer base will be broadened for turkey products as NTG emerges into new geographical markets thus generating incremental sales. Additionally a greater portion of the revenue derived from these sales will be returned to the growers because of lower freight costs. For example, the average freight cost of shipments to the Pacific Northwest, where a significant percentage of current Nebraska turkey products are sold, is \$.0575/lb. whereas the average rate to Kansas City is \$.012/lb."

The St. Louis, Kansas City and Denver marketing areas are emerging markets not traditionally supplied by NTG. Only a small amount of product has been sold there and the Norbest® brand is relatively unknown to consumers.

Turkey slaughtering and processing is completed at the Nebraska Turkey Growers Cooperative processing plant in Gibbon. All NTG products are sold under the Norbest® brand or other brands controlled by Norbest, Inc.

"USDA Rural Development is pleased to assist Nebraska Turkey Growers' in their proactive approach to exploring new markets," stated Vicki Ritterling, public affairs specialist for USDA Rural Development. "The marketing efforts will help NTG Cooperative members to retain a greater portion of the revenue derived from their value-added turkey products."

NTG, operating for over 65 years, is a wholly user-owned and controlled turkey grower cooperative. NTG is one of two members of Norbest, Inc., a 73 year old wholly owned federated turkey marketing cooperative which exclusively does all the sales and marketing for NTG and its sister turkey grower cooperative in Utah, Moroni Feed Company. The proposed marketing venture is 100 percent owned and controlled by NTG. The introductory events for this marketing project will require approximately 15 months to complete.

For information on the Value-Added Agricultural Product Market Development Grant program contact Deb Yocum at (402) 223-3125, debra.yocum@ne.usda.gov, 201 N. 25th Street Beatrice, Neb. 68310.

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