



Where does our food come from?

The holiday season is generally a time to gather around a table, enjoy time with family and friends, and to celebrate and give thanks. Do you ever think about how and where the food on your holiday tables is produced?

As agricultural technology has improved and populations have increased, the production of our food and fiber has changed to meet growing and changing demands of consumers. Many years ago the majority of the food in our diet was provided by our own gardens and farms, or from local farmers. Most consumers played some part in the production of their food.

In contrast today, only a very small portion of our population produces the food for our society as a whole. Fewer Americans have first hand experience with and knowledge of farms and the production of their food.

For some Americans, it is becoming more important to know more about how and where their food was produced. Recent growing demand for locally and regionally produced food has opened up new markets. Many efforts and programs have been started to increase this awareness and improve a farmer's ability to market their products locally.

Locavore is a term used to describe someone who chooses to only consume food that is produced within



a certain distance of their home, usually 100 miles. As a whole, consuming locally grown foods is good for local economies. Purchasing local foods can also increase agricultural literacy for consumers and help build a greater awareness for where their food comes from.

While there are benefits to purchasing local foods, educated consumers should also be aware of the limitations. In general, choosing to eat only locally grown foods will limit the variety of foods and nutrients you will have access to.

The climate of a particular region plays a huge role in determining what kind of foods can be grown there. Length of the growing season, soil fertility, access to resources and markets, water, and available open space are also key factors to be taken into consideration.

Technology does increase a farmer's ability to grow crops in less suitable conditions. For example, a greenhouse can be used to extend the growing season to successfully grow produce in a colder climate. However, growing crops in a greenhouse significantly increases the cost of production, which would then be passed on to the consumer.

For this and other reasons, farms are typically located in geographic locations that have the proper climate and resources to produce a commodity at the lowest cost. After the commodity is harvested it can be packaged and shipped by truck, plane, or train to locations near and far.

Sugar Beet Harvest

Sugar beets are a popular crop grown in Colorado. Did you know that one of the plants that sugar comes from is the sugar beet? Learn how farmers work together and around the clock to transform sugar beets fresh from the fields into the sugar products we find in our pantries. This is a *Special Episode* video from *America's Heartland*.

Watch this YouTube video: <http://bit.ly/2PMBOnL>



What's the difference between a sweet potato and a yam?

Some of you may buy sweet potatoes as part of your holiday dinners, some may buy yams. Have you ever wondered what is the difference between a sweet potato and a yam? Learn the difference in this video from *Off the Shelf - America's Heartland*.

Watch this YouTube video: <http://bit.ly/2TvmhXn>



Mapping the Holiday Meal Harvest

Source: *StoryMaps.ESRI.com*

Millions of Americans gather during the holidays to celebrate family solidarity and enjoy a calorie-laden feast. But have you ever contemplated the origins of the heaps of vegetables, fowl, and sweets that we pass around the table?

The maps presented here reveal a surprising diversity of patterns and concentrations. We hope that they'll elicit an appreciation for the farmers who nurture this food, and the

distribution systems that bring them to your table.

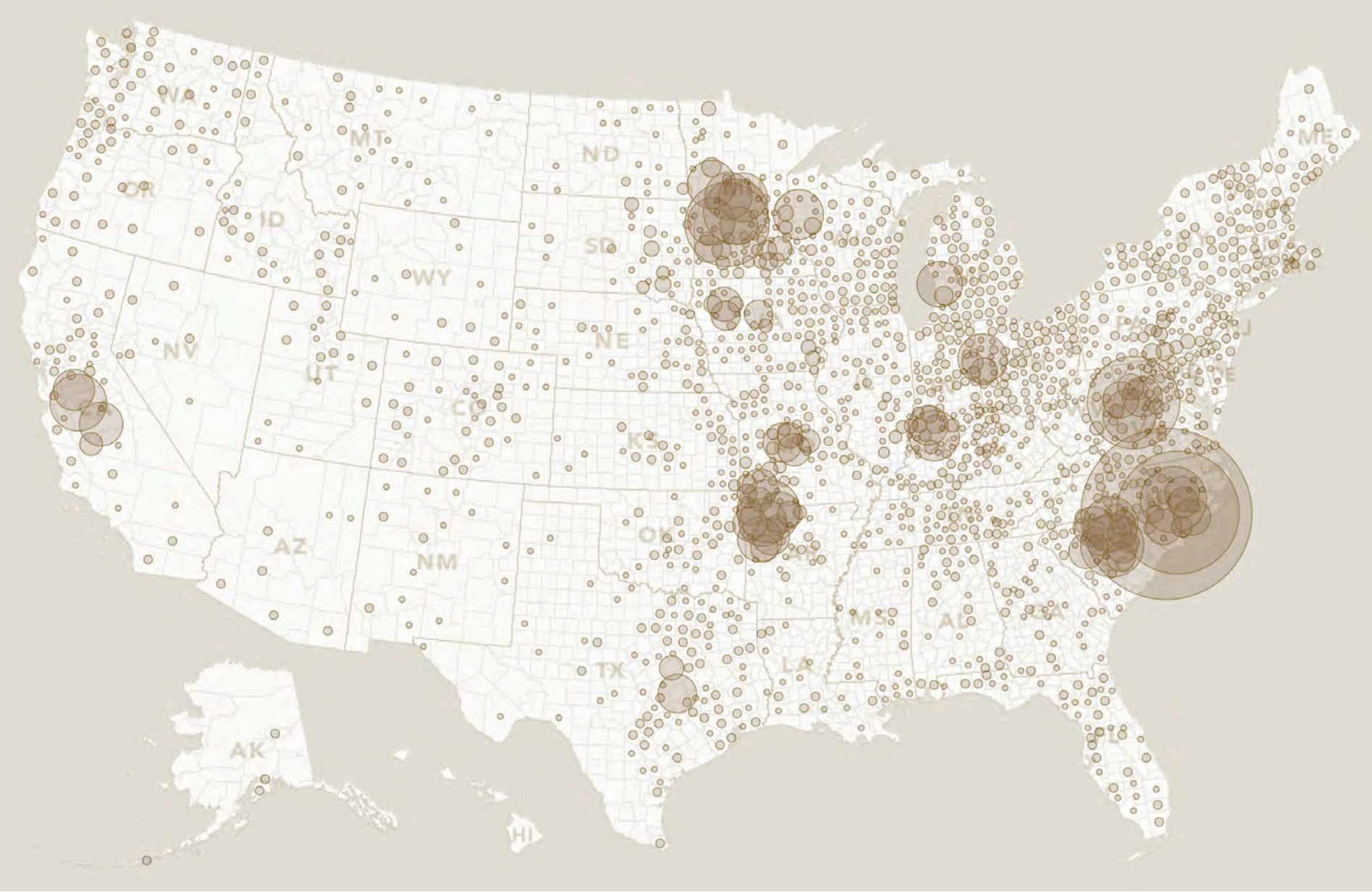
The data for these maps is from the 2012 USDA Census of Agriculture.

Learn more about the geography of where some of your favorite foods are grown in the United States using the ERSI Story Maps. This is an interactive map allowing you to click, zoom, and pan the map to explore. Check it out here: <http://bit.ly/2r0j4Ce>

Turkey

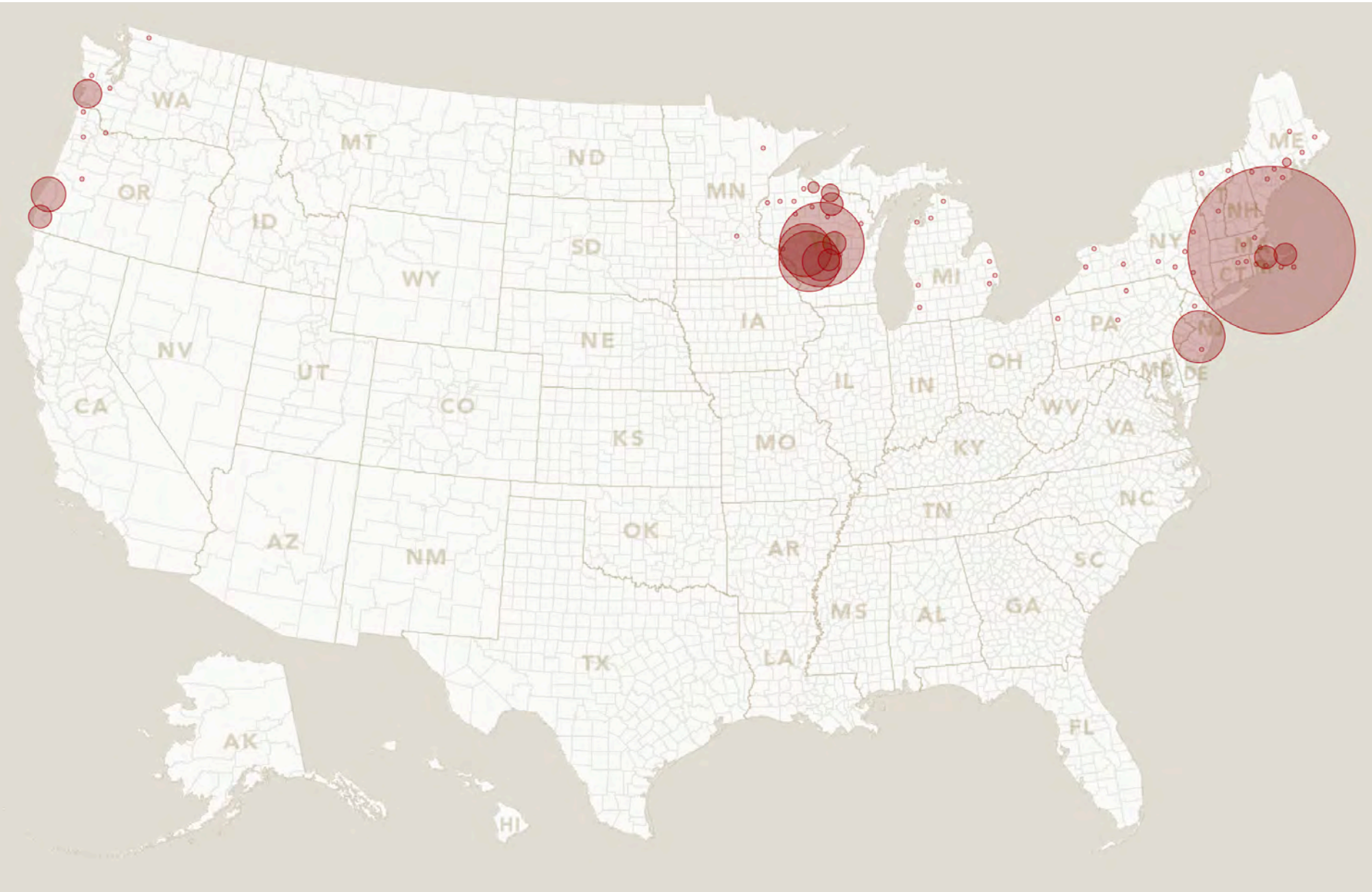
The U.S. Department of Agriculture estimates that nearly 250 million turkeys will be raised nationwide in 2017. Minnesota raises more turkeys than any other state, followed by North Carolina, Arkansas, and Indiana.

In Colorado, turkeys are raised on farms in 35 Colorado counties. The counties with the most farms producing turkeys are: Larimer County (20 farms); Elbert County (16 farms); Douglas County (15 farms); Weld County (15 farms); Adams County (11 farms); and Arapahoe County (11 farms).



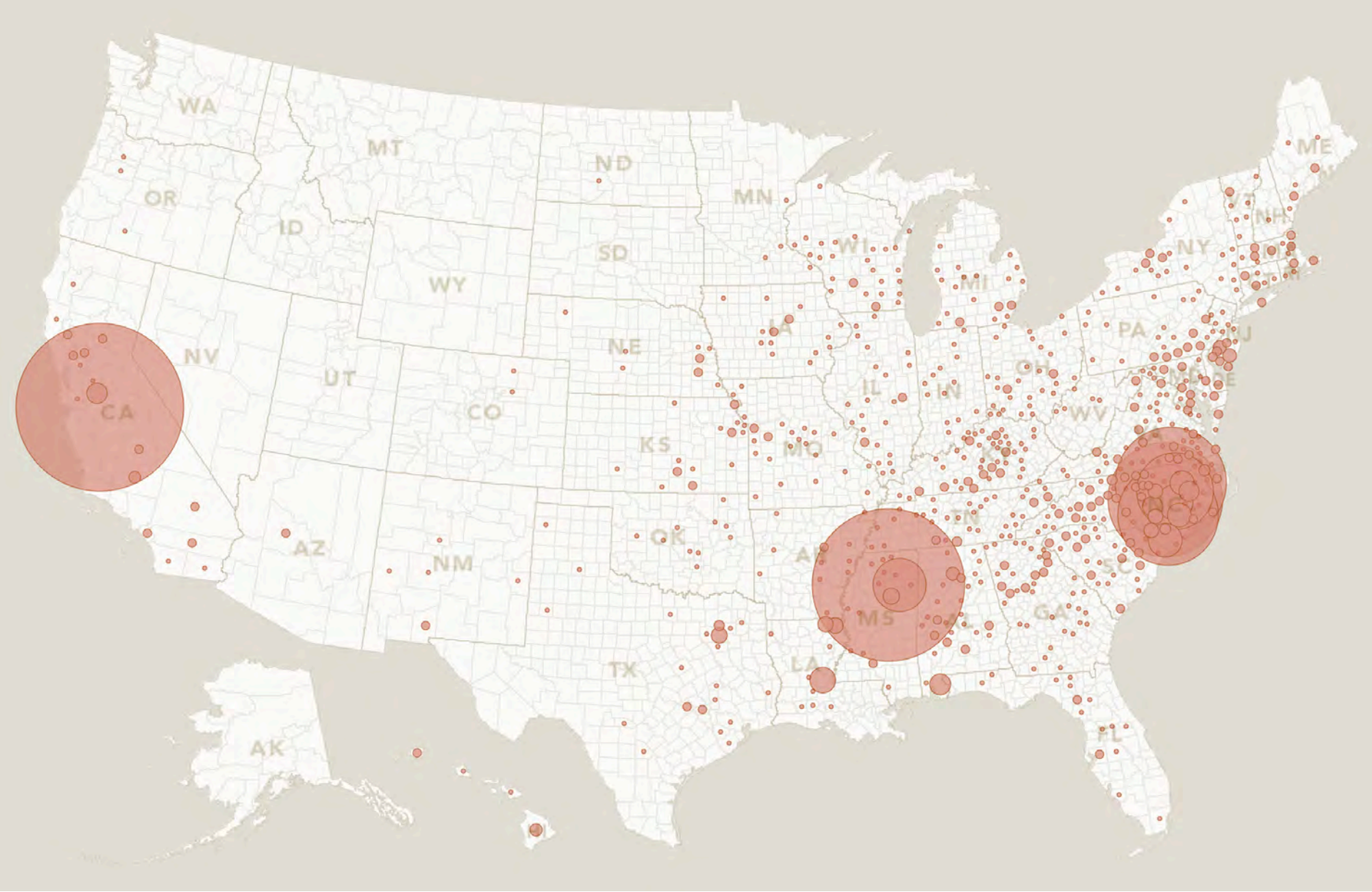
Cranberries

Cranberries are cool-weather wetland plants, which partially explains why Wisconsin, Massachusetts, New Jersey, and Oregon lead the pack. Overall, cranberry production is down 6 percent this year over last, but only because 2016 was a banner year for cranberry growers. There are no cranberries grown in Colorado due to our dry climate.



Sweet Potatoes

A single state—North Carolina—accounts for more than half of the sweet potato harvest in the United States. The state's sweet potato trade association credits a hot, moist climate and rich, fertile soil for such high crop yields. Sweet potatoes are only grown in two Colorado counties, with one farm each. The two counties are Adams County and Weld County.

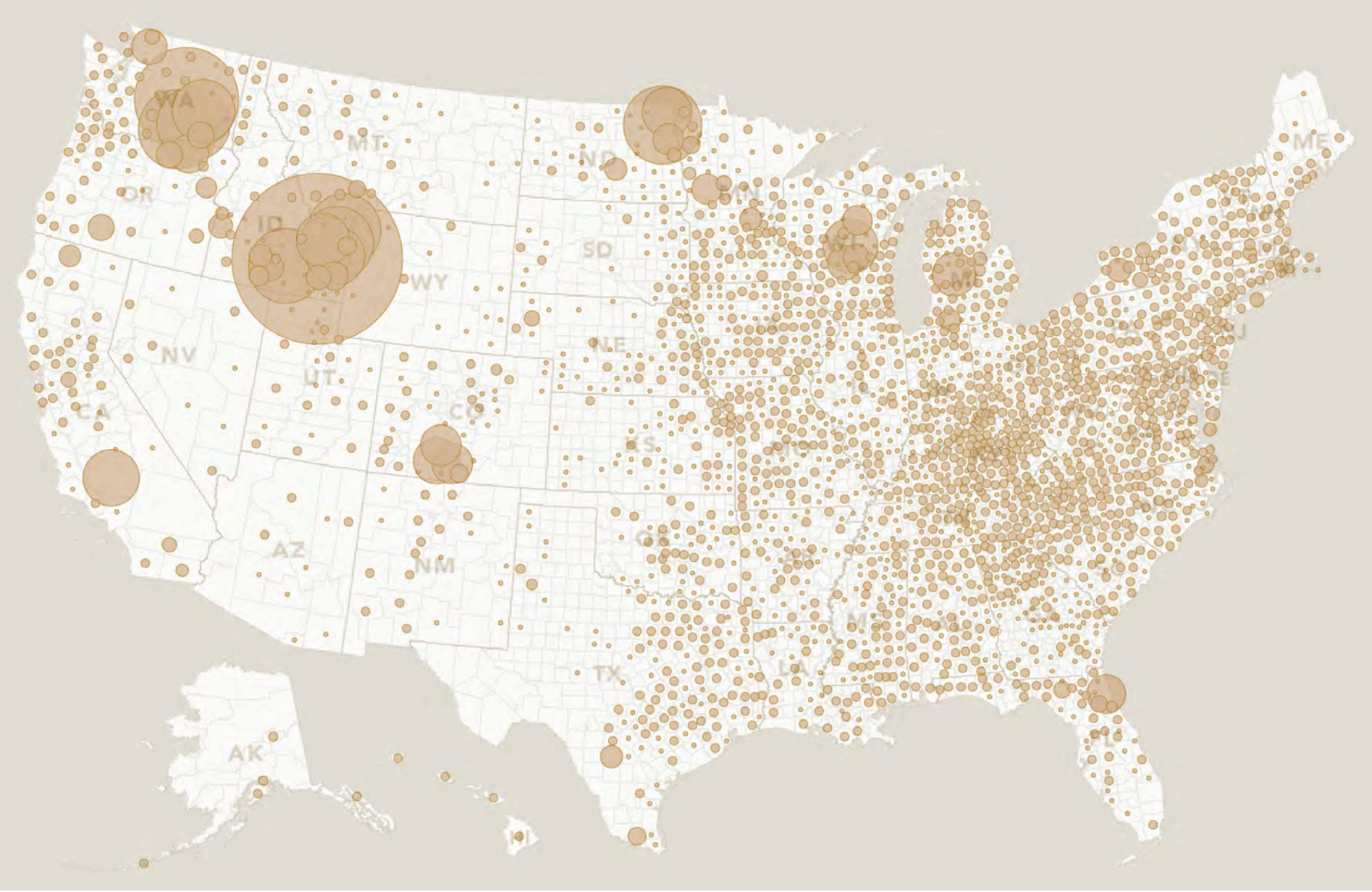
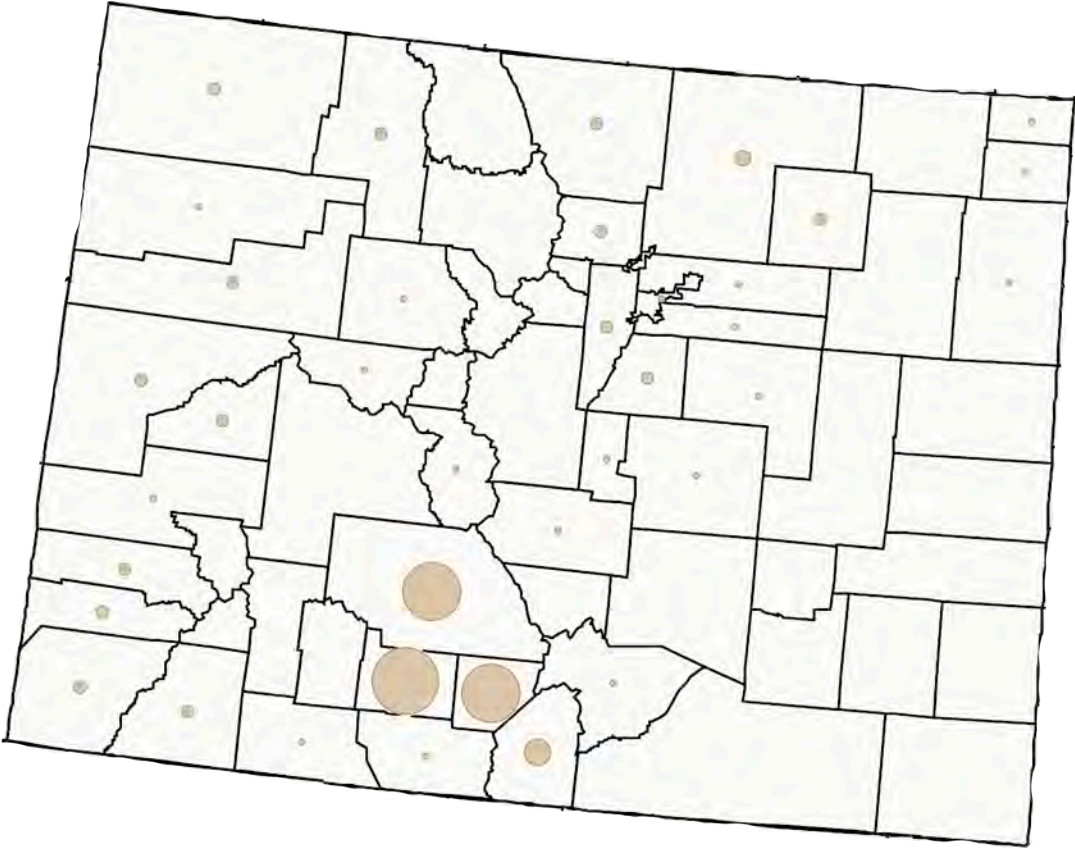


Potatoes

While the majority of harvested potatoes are destined for use in fries, chips, and the like, many end up on Thanksgiving dinner tables as steaming heaps of mashed spuds. Just two states—Idaho and Washington—provide more than half of the total U.S. crop.

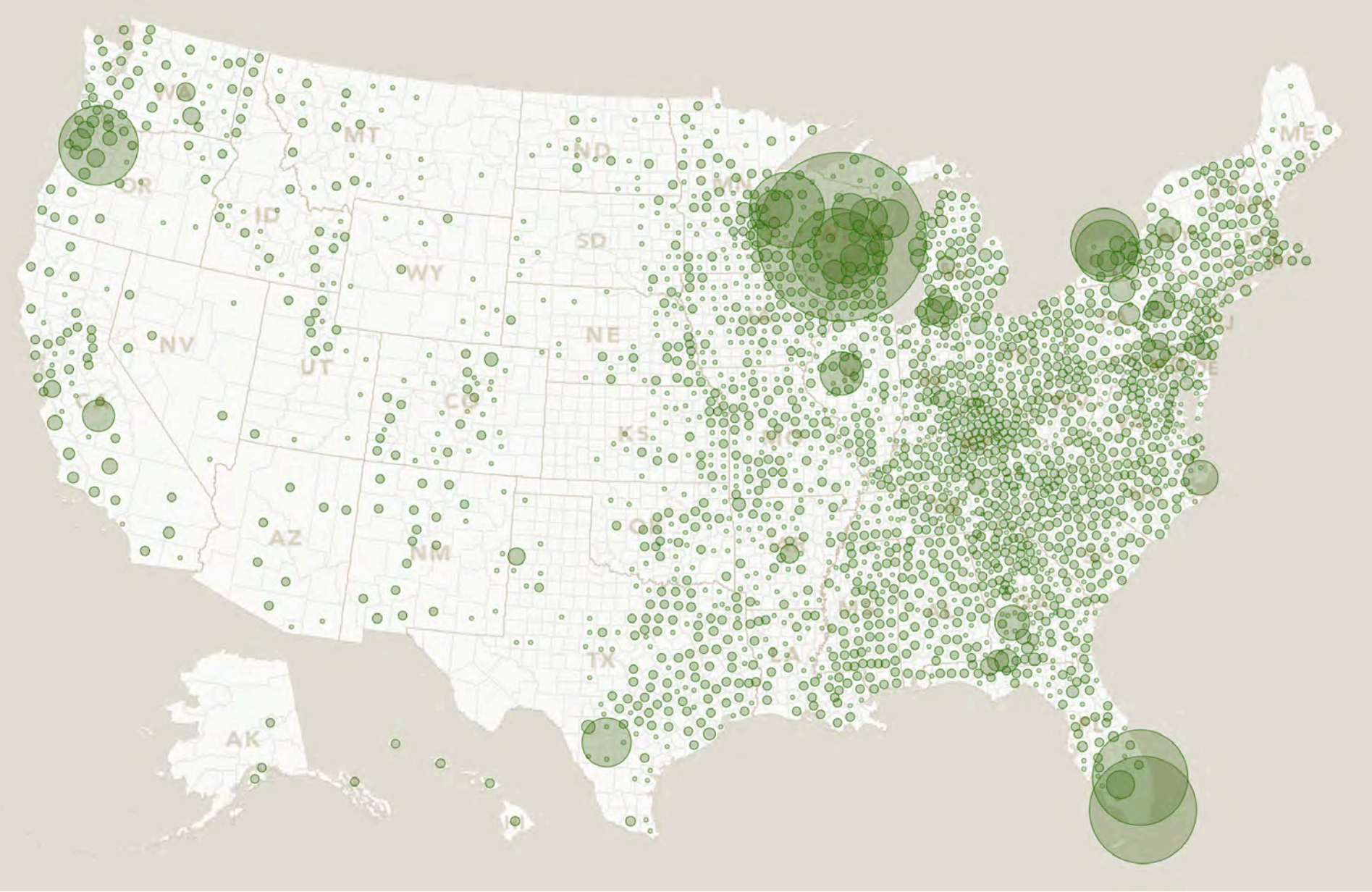
Colorado produces more than 2 billion pounds of potatoes annually, ranking the state fifth in the nation for potato production. There are 37 counties in Colorado that grow potatoes, the majority of which are grown in the San Luis Valley in southwestern Colorado. There are approximately 50,000 acres in the San Luis Valley dedicated to potato production. It is the largest and highest commercial agricultural valley in the world. Elevation in the Valley ranges from 7,400 to 8,000 feet above sea level. There are about 25 potato warehouses in Colorado, mostly in the San Luis Valley, that pack and ship potatoes to the nation's fresh market.

Colorado Potato Production



Green Beans

A relatively small number of farms account for a large proportion of green bean production. Florida and Wisconsin are the leading producers. Green beans are also called snap beans or string beans—although the latter is a misnomer, since the fibrous “string” has been largely bred out.



Pumpkins

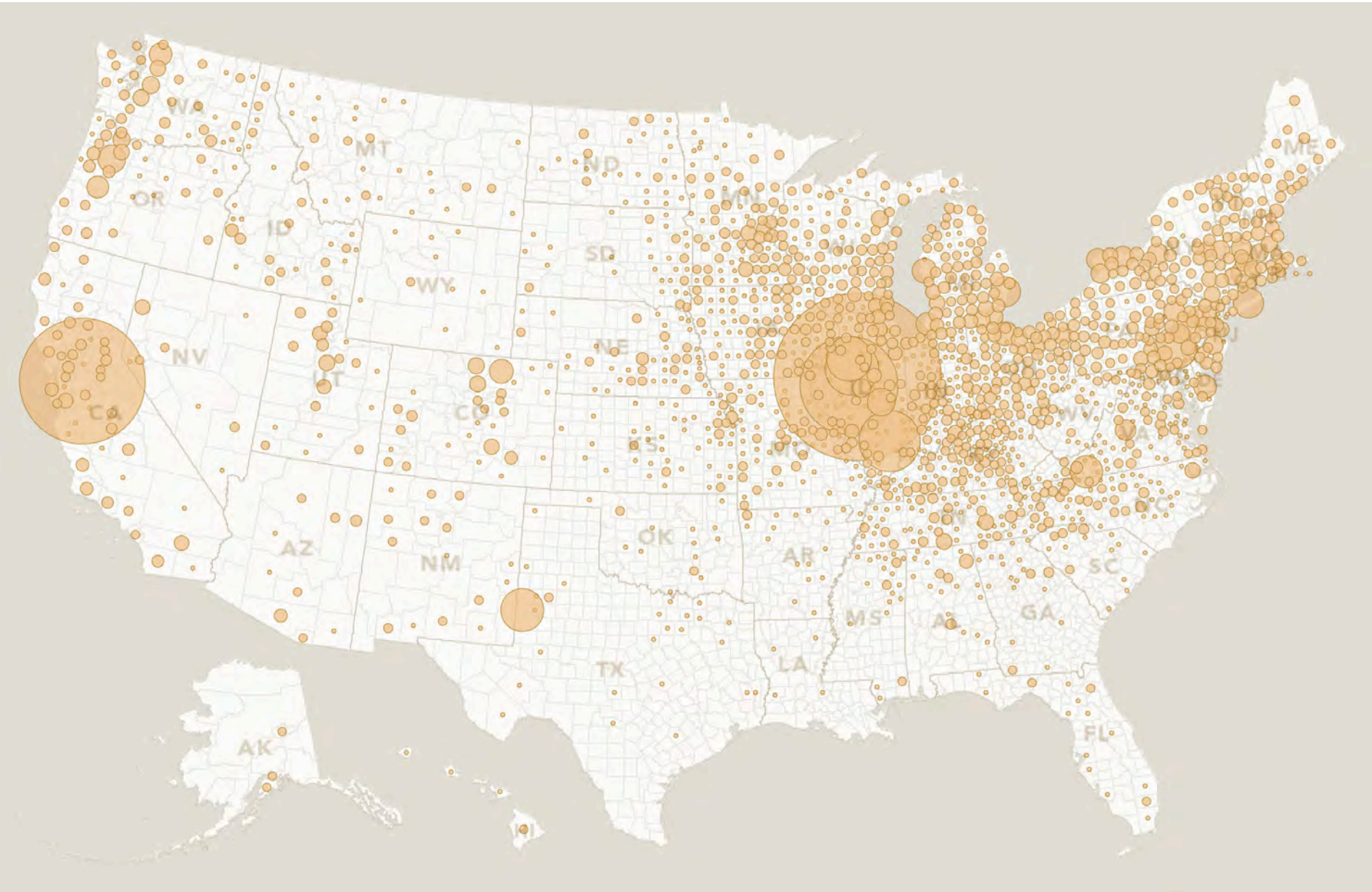
If you consumed pumpkin pie this Thanksgiving, chances are that its filling will have originated in Illinois. The state has at least twice as many acres in pumpkin production as any other, and nearly 80 percent of Illinois’ pumpkins are processed into pie fillings and other products.

In Colorado, pumpkins are grown on farms in 28 Colorado counties. Perhaps you have visited a pumpkin farm. The counties with the most farms growing pumpkins are: Boulder County (40 farms); Larimer County (27 farms); Weld County (21 farms); Montrose County (16 farms); Delta County (16 farms); Montezuma County (15 farms); Mesa County (11 farms); and Morgan County (10 farms).

Libby’s 100% Pure Pumpkin from farm to can

Have you ever wondered how that gorgeous pumpkin pie arrives perfectly baked on your tables throughout the holiday season? Or how that delicious orange puree is canned to perfection to make the thickest, tastiest chili for a Sunday game?

LIBBY’S® Pumpkin has been producing 100% pure, all-natural pumpkin for more than 100 years, thanks to a little town in Illinois, a handful of dedicated growers and our special Dickinson Pumpkins. See how it's made through this YouTube video: <http://bit.ly/2Ab2rrF>



The Farmer’s Share

Source: National Farmers Union

Did you know that farmers and ranchers receive only 14.8* cents of every dollar that consumers spend on food at home and away from home? According to United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), off-farm costs, including marketing, processing, wholesaling, distribution and retailing, account for more than 85 cents of every food dollar spent in the United States. Learn more at: <https://nfu.org/farmers-share/>



Turkey

11 pounds, Butterball

Retail: \$14.19

Farmer: \$0.69**



Mashed Potatoes

5 pounds, Russet

Retail: \$4.59

Farmer: \$0.47



Stuffing

15 ounces, Arnold Cubes

Retail: \$4.59

Farmer: \$0.08



Cranberries

12 ounce bag

Retail: \$2.99

Farmer: \$0.43



Apple Pie

21 ounce can, Lucky Leaf

Retail: \$5.69

Farmer: \$0.14

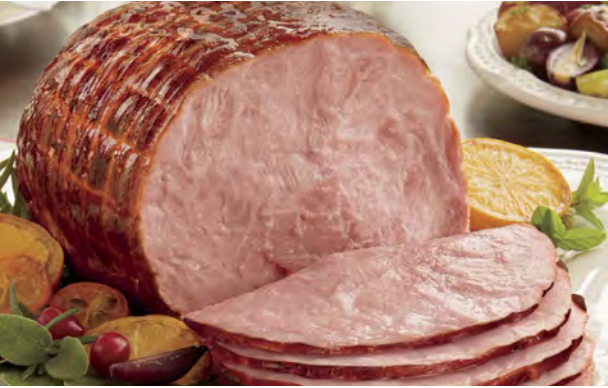


Dinner Rolls

12 rolls

Retail: \$2.29

Farmer: \$0.04



Boneless Ham

1 pound

Retail: \$3.79

Farmer: \$0.59



Sweet Corn

15.25 ounce can, Del Monte

Retail: \$1.99

Farmer: \$0.29



Milk

1 gallon, fat free

Retail: \$4.59

Farmer: \$1.44



Steak

1 pound

Retail: \$8.99

Farmer: \$1.74



Green Beans

1 pound

Retail: \$2.89

Farmer: \$0.55



Sweet Potatoes

1 pound

Retail: \$1.29

Farmer: \$0.18



Eggs

1 dozen

Retail: \$2.29

Farmer: \$0.92



Tomatoes

1 pound

Retail: \$2.29

Farmer: \$0.29



Carrots

5 pounds

Retail: \$4.59

Farmer: \$1.32

Farmer’s share derived from USDA, NASS “Agricultural Prices,” 2018 - Prices based on September 2018 data.

Retail prices based on Safeway (SE) brand, except where noted.

*Figure according to U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service - **Figure according to Contract Poultry Growers Association of the Virginias

November 21, 2018

Day in the life of a turkey farmer

Minnesota produces more turkeys than any other state. Did you know that all turkeys in the United States are raised without added hormones and steroids? It is illegal! Any brand of turkey (or chicken for that matter) in the U.S. doesn't have added hormones or steroids.

Visit K & B Turkeys in Minnesota to see how their family raises turkeys, from baby poults to market age.

Watch this YouTube video: <http://bit.ly/2PGBYGC>



The life cycle of a cranberry harvest

The peak season for the consumption of cranberries is during the Thanksgiving and Christmas holiday season. Cranberries are used in jams, jellies, and other toppings for traditional meals.

Preparing for a cranberry harvest is a year-round process. Cranberry grower--owners in Massachusetts take us behind the scenes and share their job.

Watch this YouTube video: <http://bit.ly/2FzW9rA>



Additional Resources

This issue of Colorado Kids was produced by the Colorado Foundation for Agriculture in cooperation with the Denver Post Educational Services. The Colorado Foundation for Agriculture works with community stakeholders to help meet our shared vision of advancing Colorado agricultural literacy. We provide Agriculture in the Classroom resources and programs to Colorado educators and students, many of which are FREE or at minimal cost. All of our resources reinforce Core Academic Standards making it easy for educators to teach about agriculture while teaching math, science, social studies, and reading, writing and communicating.

Food, Fiber, and More! Summer AgriCULTURE Institute

A five-day course designed for teachers who have little or no agricultural background. This is an opportunity to go “behind the scenes” of Colorado agriculture and learn innovative ways to incorporate food, fiber, fuel, and natural resource topics into academic curriculum. One highlight is the day spent one-on-one working with a producer, gaining hands-on experience on a farm or ranch. Continuing Education Units and CSU graduate level credits are available. Mark your calendars and plan to attend one of these 2019 Institutes: June 10-14 in Greeley; June 24-28 in Yuma; July 8-12 in Castle Rock. Registration will be open January 1 and available on our website GrowingYourFuture.com.

Curriculum Matrix

The Agricultural Literacy Curriculum Matrix is an online, searchable, standards-based database of classroom ready lesson plans and resources for K-12 educators. The Matrix contextualizes national education standards in science, social studies, and nutrition education with relevant instructional resources linked to Common Core Standards. Start searching the Matrix now on our website GrowingYourFuture.com.

Ideas for leftovers

Source: Bryn Mooth, IValueFood.com

Big, holiday meals often mean leftovers! From farms to supermarkets and then to consumers’ tables, approximately 30 percent of the food grown is never eaten. For all kinds of reasons - environmental, social, and financial - it makes sense for us to get smarter about fully using the food we purchase.

According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, roughly 70 billion pounds of food is lost in the United States each year. At the same time, about one in six Americans faces hunger, according to Feeding America. Getting into the habit of using up our leftovers is one way to have an impact on this important issue. Below are some tips for using those extras.

Store leftovers smartly. Glass storage containers are not only reusable and sustainable; they allow you to see what’s inside. That way, you’re less likely to lose track of leftovers. For freezing, use zip-top gallon bags (which can be washed and re-used), and label and date the contents on a piece of tape.

Think “ingredients,” not “leftovers.” Turn extra pasta or cooked vegetables into a frittata. Blend cooked vegetables with a can of whole tomatoes and create a veggie-packed sauce for pasta. Create burritos with leftover cooked rice, meat and vegetables, and top them with sour cream and salsa.

Make soup. The steamed, roasted or grilled vegetables that you served as a side dish one night can become soup on another day. In a blender, puree the vegetables with 3 or 4 cups of vegetable or chicken broth, then warm the soup in a pot. Season to taste with salt and pepper, and finish the soup with a bit of pesto, olive oil or croutons.

Salvage stale bread. If that loaf of good bakery bread loses its freshness after a day or two, do what the Italians do: Halve the loaf crosswise, drizzle it with good olive oil and rub it with the cut side of a halved ripe tomato. Season the bread with salt and pepper, wrap in foil and bake until warm.

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