

*Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2024*

**Remarks at the Thanksgiving Turkey Presentation Ceremony**  
*November 25, 2024*

*The President.* Well, good morning.

*Audience members.* Good morning!

*The President.* They tell me there's 2,500 people here today—[*applause*]*—*looking for a pardon. [*Laughter*]

Well, good morning and welcome to a wonderful White House tradition. We've got a lot of folks joining us today. Members of my Cabinet, members of the White House staff and their families. We've got students from 4-H programs and Future Farmers of America. Where are you?

And of course, a special thanks to everyone at the National Turkey Federation. Leslee Oden, president of the Federation. Where—Leslee, where are you? There you are. And John Zimmerman, chairman of the Federation, and his family from Northfield, Minnesota. John.

I was in Northfield last year with our—last year with my Secretary of Agriculture, Tom Vilsack, and our great friend, the Minnesota Governor, Tim Walz, talking about our historic investment in transforming rural America.

Back in Minnesota, John's been a turkey grower for 35 years. He's raised over 4 million turkeys. Whoa! [*Laughter*] And with the help of his 9-year-old son Grant, they've raised two special guests we're honoring today: Peach and Blossom. Let's bring Peach up to join us.

They tell me Peach weighs about 42 pounds.

What do you say, Peach? Peach is making a last-minute plea here. [*Laughter*]

The two turkeys are named after Delaware State flower, the peach blossom. And by the way, Delaware has a long history of growing peaches. In fact, the peach pie in our State is one of my favorite. It's a State dessert. And peach blossom flower is—also symbolizes the resilience, which is, quite frankly, fitting for today. [*Laughter*]

This White House tradition began when turkey was presented to President Truman. And that President—then President George H.W. Bush began pardoning turkeys.

In the last 4 years, I've had the honor to continue that tradition by pardoning Peanut Butter and Jelly—[*laughter*]*—*Chocolate and Chip, Liberty and Bell. And today Peach and Blossom will join the free birds of the United States of America.

Born this past July at the Zimmerman family farm, raised by the—

[*At this point, Peach gobbled.*]

Yes, I hear you. [*Laughter*] Peach wants to speak a little bit here. [*Laughter*]

Raised by the family with the help of neighboring—neighborhood children, who helped the turkey get ready for this very moment.

According the experts, Peach weighs 41 pounds and loves to eat hotdish and teeter tots—tater tots and cross-country skis. [*Laughter*] You know, dreams to see—but his—the real dream he has is to see the Northern Lights, I'm told. He lives by the motto, "Keep calm and gobble on." [*Laughter*]

Meanwhile, Blossom weighs 40 pounds, loves to eat cheese curds and watch boxing—*[laughter]*—dreams of visit—to visit each one of Minnesota's 10,000 lakes; lives by the motto, "No fowl play, just Minnesota nice." *[Laughter]*

They just finished a 2-day road trip from Minnesota to Washington, DC.

By the way, do you have chairs? Sit down. *[Laughter]* I forgot you had chairs. I'm sorry. *[Laughter]* Started thinking about the arduous trip they made, and you guys are still standing. *[Laughter]*

Well, that trip is 1,100 miles.

*[A turkey gobbled.]*

It takes 16.5 hours. Through it all, they stayed calm, and they gobbled on and are still gobbling. They were——

*[A turkey gobbled.]*

They—*[laughter]*—they were—stayed nice, listening to their favorite music, which apparently includes the song "Living on a Prayer." *[Laughter]* Well, fellas, your prayer is going to be answered today.

Based on your temperament and commitment to being productive members of society, I hereby pardon Peach and Blossom.

They will now head back to Farmamerica, Minnesota's center for agricultural interpretation, to serve as educational ambassadors of America's top turkey-growing State and inspire the next generation of agricultural students.

Congratulations.

Let me close on a more serious note. This event marks the official start of the holiday season here in Washington. It's also my last time to speak here as your President during this season and give thanks and gratitude.

So let me say to you: It's been the honor of my life. I'm forever grateful.

Later today my wife Jill and I will travel to Staten Island, New York, for a "friendsgiving" with members of the Coast Guard and their families to demonstrate our gratitude for their service and sacrifice, like my son.

We also keep in our hearts those who have lost so much, who will have an empty seat at the—at the Thanksgiving dinner table tonight—or, excuse me, Thursday night.

May we use this moment to take time from our busy lives and focus on what matters most: our families—my dad used to have an expression; he'd say, "Family is the beginning, the middle, and the end"—our friends and our neighbors, and the fact that we blessed these—to live in America, the greatest country on Earth. And that's not hyperbole. We are.

No matter what, in America, we never give up. We keep going. We keep the faith. We just have to remember who we are. We're the United States of America. And there's nothing, nothing, nothing beyond our capacity when we do it together.

So happy Thanksgiving, America. God bless you all, and may God protect our troops.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:07 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House.

*Categories:* Addresses and Remarks : Thanksgiving turkey presentation.

*Locations:* Washington, DC.

*Names:* Biden, Jill T.; Oden, Leslee; Vilsack, Thomas J.; Walz, Timothy J.; Zimmerman, Grant; Zimmerman, John.

*Subjects:* Agricultural production, strengthening efforts; Coast Guard, U.S.; Minnesota, Governor; Secretary of Agriculture; Thanksgiving; U.S. servicemembers, service and dedication.

*DCPD Number:* DCPD202401028.