

## YOUR AGRO-BUSINESS SOLUTION

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Like any community living near the American border, some of our fellow citizens in the Coaticook area tend to profit from that proximity in order to make some savings. A current good example: fuel. While we pay an average of \$1.29 per litre in Quebec, our Vermont friends pay \$3.53 per gallon, that is \$0.93 per litre, a saving of \$0.36 per litre!

Another common practice coming our way relies on the famous U.S. Thanksgiving Day, which is held the fourth Thursday of each November, this year on the 24th, exactly

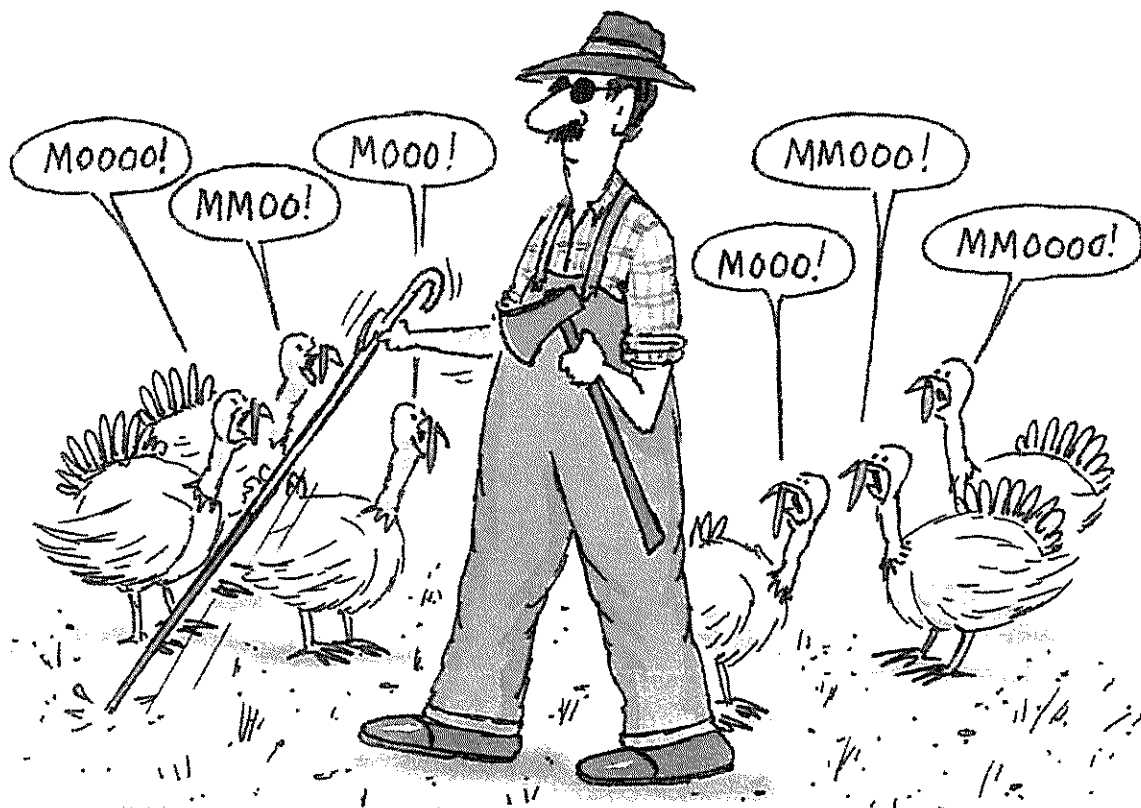
one month before Christmas. And while the turkey is the star of any American Thanksgiving dinner, on Quebec tables, it reaches its stardom only at Christmas. What great timing! Knowing that the retail prices of any frozen whole turkeys left behind after American Thanksgiving will be at their lowest, we head across the border to get our Christmas turkeys! Why pay \$20 for a 15 lb turkey when you can get it for \$6?

In the U.S., the Friday following Thanksgiving Day is known as "Black Friday" signifying that, having lost money and operated in the "red" from January through November, retailers will now start to be in the "black" and recuperate the entire year's profits during the run-up to Christmas.

Given that situation, we might wonder if there is any hope for Quebec turkey growers. Indeed, there is! Even though profitability in this production remains a daily challenge, on the other hand prices stay quite acceptable all year long. Of course, one major barrier to any development of

Rethink Your Farm Business

# Black Friday for the Turkey



Canadian turkey production rests on the high costs and lack of quota availability.

This is why we have to applaud the initiative of the producers of the *Fédération des producteurs d'oeufs de consommation du Québec* who, since 2007, grant a young farm owner (sometimes two) with a lifetime loan of a quota of 5,000 hens. The 'contest', as it were, relies on the solid farming background and financial capacity of the aspiring egg producers, thus insuring the

industry with promising new members, while giving access to an otherwise impossible dream: quota.

But what also makes a world of difference for any 'marginal' productions, such as turkey production, are aggressive marketing strategies combined with an offer of transformed products that demonstrate an appetizing creativity. Let us remember that, unlike turkey production, other productions, such as those of pork and even potatoes, had to first overcome

the negative perceptions of their 'rumored' nutritional flaws, while promoting the taste, diversity and real values of their products. So the "shot in the arm" that turkey production needs is really only a little "tap on the shoulder" to make it ramp up and really take its place among the overall consumption of poultry in Quebec and Canada.

If American turkeys have all the reasons to fear the day before Black Friday, then let's hope that, instead of slowing down the development of the turkey production, our supply management system will provide our turkey growers with a Thanksgiving-like consumer demand, with prices to match, that will last all year long. It might not discourage our border residents from a little trip to Vermont for a fill-up of gas and a turkey or two, but it could definitely change the way we fill up our grocery basket as we pass by the poultry counters of our grocery stores.

Having worked for over 16 years for various financial organizations, Robert Savage, founder of Solutions affaires experts-conseils, has established an innovated approach to farm consulting services. With the help of a multidisciplinary team of experts, Solutions affaires experts-conseils can get your farm on its way to greater profitability by working with your existing resources and by having access to a network of professionals involved in agri-business.

**ONE MAJOR BARRIER TO ANY DEVELOPMENT OF CANADIAN TURKEY PRODUCTION RESTS ON THE HIGH COSTS AND LACK OF QUOTA AVAILABILITY.**

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