



Farm News from May

28 days. That the amount of time it takes for a turkey egg to develop into a turkey. I've hatched thousands of them but that was 25 plus years ago. In those days, I raised wild turkeys and topped 1400 birds in one year. I had built elaborate outdoor pens to house them all. 4300 square feet each x seventeen pens. That was also the year the Turkey Marketing Board seized all my birds just before Christmas but that's a whole other story.



This time I'm raising Beltsville turkeys. According to the Livestock Conservancy, this breed of heritage turkey (there

are 8 of them) is considered to be the most "critically endangered". The Beltsville's claim to fame is that they are a smaller bird finishing around 12 - 20 pounds compared to the commercial varieties which can grow to monstrous weights. The world's record is 86 pounds.

In my hatching days I figured that anything over a 55% was good. This month I had my best hatch ever: 100% of the eggs I incubated turning into turkeys. There'll be lots of gobbling come Thanksgiving and Christmas!

News from the fish pond. Two new species of trout have arrived: brown trout and tiger trout. Now with the rainbows and brook trout, there's no telling what a fisherman could catch. Thomas (Belgium) shows off this nice rainbow he caught on his third cast. His first fish ever.



Raising pigs is a big job, especially in the spring time when we like to move all the pigs on to new pastures. Fences, houses, water systems, feed troughs, food boxes and of course pigs. But what a surprise to find an unexpected brand new litter of pigs in one of the houses. An even bigger surprise was the number of babies - sixteen! Unfortunately for numbers fifteen and sixteen, their mother only has fourteen nipples. Luckily



for them there was another sow who just had eleven. That sow now has two foster pigs.