

## Ella Calling Bourbon Red Turkeys

I wanted to get a photo of the Bourbon Red turkeys in display.

I was unable to do so.

Each time I approached them with a camera they were distracted hoping for food.

Then Granddaughter Ella simply gobbled to them.

The Tom turkeys thought they heard a female turkey.

They immediately went into display.

Gail took the photos.

I asked Ella how she knew such a fine turkey call.

She replied, "Grandpa, I have been around this farm all my life."

All seven years.

Tom



## Bourbon Red Turkeys

Bourbon Reds are a heritage breed of turkey developed in Bourbon County Kentucky in the late 1800's.

Bourbon Reds are known for superior flavor and the ability to do well under "free range" conditions.

They are much smaller and less meaty than the common "broad breasted" turkeys.

They can fly reasonably well and prefer to roost in trees as wild turkeys do.

The great majority of turkeys sold in grocery stores are of the broad breasted type.

Broad breasted turkeys, as their name implies, were selectively bred for incredible meatiness.

Their breasts, formerly flight muscles, are so enormous that they can neither fly nor breed normally.

Broad breasted turkeys exist in two colors, "bronze" and "white."

Bronze turkeys are essentially the same plumage as wild turkeys.

Broad Breasted "Whites" have white feathers and fewer feathers to ease machine plucking.

This year we raised 20 Bourbon Red turkeys.

They will be harvested in mid-November.

In time to help with Thanksgiving dinners.

The bourbons are significantly smaller than broad breasted turkeys at harvest time.

Five to 10 pounds versus 15 to 30 pounds for the broad breasted.

By the way, Bourbon whiskey, a corn-based liquor, was named after Bourbon County where it was originally produced.



## **Bourbon Red Turkeys Roosting for the Night.**

These heritage turkeys prefer to roost in trees and are good fliers.

There are 13 in this oak. How many can you find?

The Bourbon Reds are also much nicer to have around the farm than Broad Breasted turkeys. Both Broad Breasted Bronze and White varieties are noisy. They are also aggressive and overly possessive of the yard.

We see none of that behavior in the Bourbon Reds.

Tom

