



*Photograph Courtesy of ANR  
Communication Services*

### Turkey Characteristics

In the wild, turkeys live in flocks where the birds instinctively establish a social hierarchy or “pecking order.” Female turkeys are called hens and males are called toms. Wild turkeys feed on green leaves, seeds, berries, and insects. They are also capable of flying at more than 50 miles per hour for short distances and roost in trees at night. Wild turkeys have longer legs and necks and typically weigh less than domesticated turkeys. Commercial turkeys are not able to fly and mainly fed a diet of corn and soybeans.

Federal law prohibits growers to feed growth hormones to

commercial turkeys. For additional information about how to safely care for and handle turkeys, go to the Clover Safe note at: <http://ucanr.org/cloversafe>.

Clover Safe Notes are prepared by the UC ANR Office of Environmental Health & Safety, in support of the Statewide 4-H Youth Development Program.

