Happy Turkey Day!

Jeudi Gras means"Fat Thursday" in English. It would probably be a better name for the holiday than the current one. Let's face it: for most of us, the day involves a bit of giving thanks and a much larger amount of pigging out like there's no tomorrow. As the NY Times points out, this wouldn't be great cause for concern except that we have such a large obesity problem to begin with:

> All told, more than one in three Americans is obese, a fact that as of five years ago was estimated to cost $147 billion annually in medical costs. Rates are highest for non-Hispanic blacks (49 percent), followed by Mexican Americans (40 percent) and all Hispanics (39 percent).

The Times also has a state by state breakdown– state obesity rates range from 20% to 35%.

Obesity is primarily an issue because of the health impacts. But there are also environmental concerns. Eating more foods increases the environmental footprint of the food system, which includes everything from the farm through the supermarket to the dinner table. And large people need larger vehicles consuming more gasoline. And there are probably environmental burdens associated with all of the extra medical care as well.

So have fun today! But remember that Jeudi Gras's companion holiday. Mardi Gras, is followed by forty days of Lent. We may need a similar custom to go along with Fat Thursday.