Sweetgrass Turkeys

The Sweetgrass Turkey originated as a mutation in a flock of Broad Breasted Bronze Turkeys at Sweetgrass Farms in Big Timber, Montana in the mid 1990s. Some of the top breeders in the United States worked with the mutation guided by a serious breeding program. As a result, the color mutation was maintained while breeding them back to the Heritage Turkey body style which will breed naturally and have a high quality immune system as required in Heritage Turkeys.

According to information on Backyard Chickens a post by [http://www.porterturkeys.com/sweetgrass.htm](http://www.porterturkeys.com/sweetgrass.htm) "The Sweetgrass genotype is (b1b1cgcg) Black winged bronze based with Oregon Gray (aka Palm genes) They breed 100% true to the color/pattern. In Belgium, this color/pattern has existed for hundreds of years and is known as the Yellow-shouldered Ronquière. A clear example of one of these turkeys appears in an old painting from 1566, by the Flemish master Joachim Beuckelaars." (There are some good color pictures on the porterturkey link)

The writer went on to say, “I developed my strain from the Sweetgrass Farms’ line. These birds have a heavily marked Royal Palm pattern with chestnut red. My new strain has a heritage turkey body style; they are not a broad-breasted type like the ones developed at Sweetgrass Farms. As with all the broad-breasted type birds, you run into many other problems too like the need for artificial insemination and also health problems due to the massive body structure which leads to leg and heart problems. I have selectively bred this line down to a much trimmer body type which can breed naturally and are also very hardy. Mature toms weigh around 30 pounds and hens around 15 lbs. Yep, so they are a 'high-bred' cross of turkeys.”

The Sweetgrass has a color pattern similar to the Royal Palm with chestnut coloring. The tail is a rich chestnut reddish-brown with a band of black tipped with a cream colored edge. The tail coverts are chestnut with a cream colored band. The breast can vary from off-white to cream color with the exposed portion of each feather ending with a band of chestnut reddish-brown.