



Poultry Show Projects: Convenient and Economical

Poultry Science Department
Texas A&M University



Common Questions

- **How Much?**
 - Depends.... For 25 chicks, complete project including **nearly** everything...\$380 estimated)
- **How Long?** 42 to 46 days
- **When do the chicks arrive????** Usually the first week of December
- **What is the date of the Show?**
 - Third weekend in January
- **What is the day of the auction?**
 - Third Saturday in January
 - You **MUST** be there
- **Do we have to kill them?** Yes and No

Types of Shows

- Market Broilers
 - Pullets - Females
 - Cockerels – Males

Local Show – Guadalupe County Youth Show

You can enter both cockerels and pullets
each pen having three birds.

Major Show – San Antonio, Houston

Keys to Raising Competitive Show Poultry

- Excellent Management Practices
 - Housing
 - Clean Environment
 - Fresh Water
- Balanced Nutritional Diet
 - Feeding Programs
- Efficient Culling and Selecting Practices

Rules and Regulations

- Understand and follow show regulations
- Birds legal for the show
- Identification method
- How many entries allowed per lot
- Disqualifications
- Time and place deadlines
- Sifting and culling rules



Bird Environment

- Is dependent on a number of important factors
 - Housing
 - Temperature
 - Ventilation
 - Litter
 - Feed and water
 - Cleanliness

Optimum Housing

- Housing design varies considerably
- Protects birds from adverse environmental conditions
- Ventilation is critical for control of humidity, air quality, and feed consumption
- Housing protects birds from predatory animals
- The following structures have proven adequate for producing market poultry



















Be Ready

- Brooder heat source operating several days before arrival of birds
 - Depends on time of year
- Pen set up with fresh feed & water in place
 - 12-24 hrs in advance
- Room and litter warm when chicks arrive

Feeders and Waterers

- Type and number
 - Tube and pan feeders are highly recommended
- Adjustment
 - Keep waterers and feeders adjusted to shoulder height
- Sanitation
 - Rinse waterers daily, scrub at least weekly to prevent health problems



Water

- Quantity
 - Fresh clean water must be continuously available at all times
- Quality
 - Waterers must be clean
 - Rinse waterers daily, scrub at least weekly to prevent health problems





Ventilation and Temperature

- First evidence of appropriate temperature is the behavior of the birds
 - Young chicks and poults should be checked frequently during periods of significant temperature change
 - Cold birds will crowd or pile
 - Hot birds will migrate away from the heat source to the walls of the brooder
 - Comfortable birds will scatter from the edge of the brooder and around the feed and water









Litter

- Use at least 4-6 inches of good quality litter
 - Stir litter daily after two weeks of age to prevent wet litter, breast blisters, scaly skin, and dirty feathers
1. Pine wood shavings
 2. Rice Hulls
 3. Crushed cane
 4. Coarse dry sawdust
 5. Washed builder's sand





Lighting Programs

- Broilers
 - Continuous lighting, intensity reduced after 3 days of age

Adequate air movement is necessary to:

- Supply fresh air
- Remove moisture
- Control ammonia and bacterial growth

Movement, NOT Exercise

- Birds are not exercised to build muscle
- Proper care of birds (stirring litter, cleaning waterers, attending to feed) will provide adequate exercise for optimal growth and development
- Birds are encouraged to move
 - To prevent abnormal growth (movement is necessary to prevent slab sidedness)
 - To promote feed consumption and growth

10 Basic Essentials of Management

1. Adequate floor space
2. Feed a good high quality show feed with adequate feeder space
3. Keep comfortable temperature for age
4. Provide plenty of ventilation
5. Good quality litter, stir daily

10 Basic Essentials of Management

6. Walk among birds as often as possible
7. Keep feeders and waterers properly adjusted, and clean waterers daily
8. Provide appropriate lighting
9. Cull deliberately
10. Be observant and alert to your birds' behaviors, pay attention, and read directions

Culling

- Culling should be a continuous process.
- Small birds will NOT catch up.
- Leg problems tend to get worse not better.
- Broilers
 - 1st cull ~ 3 - 4 weeks
 - 2nd cull ~ 5 weeks

Selection

- Broilers should be selected on
 - Breast meat yield
 - Conformation
 - Uniformity (Broilers)

Deadlines

- Sept 10th– Deadline to have a minimum of 25 birds ordered and paid for, Local birds \$1.50 each in lots of 25 up to 50 birds
- November 6th – Must complete a Seguin FFA entry form entering 2 pens of broilers
- Attend poultry meetings as scheduled
- First of December – Be here to receive and care for your birds.
- January 15th– Take your birds to GCYS and show
- Jan. 18th – Go to auction if you placed

- OTHER DATES will be added as deemed necessary for meetings on poultry management and care.

What to do.

- If you have questions...stick around.
- If you know you want to do this...complete the forms given to you and return them before Sept 10th to one of the advisors. (if you want to pay tonight you can pay me.)