

DON'T PRAY TO THE CHICKEN GODS THEY WON'T LISTEN

Two days before the birds arrive, have the house ready. 10'x10 is a great size. Cover the floor with heavy plastic and cover with 4" of shavings. It is a good idea to apply seven-dust to the floor before covering. This will help with fire ants. Cover the shavings with burlap or cloth to keep the birds from ingesting wood shavings. Put out the feeders and water containers. Use a containment ring approximately 4' in diameter. Two heat lamps should be sufficient to heat this area. Cardboard is good because it can be disposed of easily. Pre-heat the area to a temperature of 87 to 90 degrees and have it warm when the birds arrive. Put on electrolytes for the first seven days.

Have on hand Teramycin and L.S.-50 for respiratory problems, quality feed that is medicated, and vitamins and electrolytes.

Ventilation is very important. Ammonia is heavier than air and must have an escape route. You should never smell ammonia. Proper ventilation will help prevent respiratory problems.

DAY ONE

Have the house ready and warm. Use gamebird or turkey starter for 7 to 21 days. Keep feeders and water clean enough that you would use them. Use electrolytes at the rate of ¼ teaspoon per gallon. Watch your temperature. If the birds are too hot, they will be at the farthest corners of the ring trying to cool off.

DAY FIVE

Remove the burlap from the shavings and enlarge the containment ring or remove altogether if the house is warm.

DAY SEVEN

Remove electrolytes from the water. Birds will consume lots of water. They need 10 lbs. of water for each 1 lb. of feed. Put the feed and water at breast height. Make sure ventilation is working. Lower the temperature 5 degrees.

DAY FOURTEEN

You can change over to an all in one feed or wait until day 21. I cull at day 17 by weight alone to at least half of the remaining birds. Lower the temperature by another 5 degrees. Divide house in $\frac{1}{2}$ if you have 2 children.

DAY TWENTY ONE

Birds must be culled for the first time by this date. Lower the temperature to 65 – 75 degrees but keep heat available since the birds are not fully feathered. Remove all smaller birds because they will not catch up. Make sure the birds are on all in one broiler feed by this time. 12 – 15 birds max.

DAY TWENTY FIVE

Second cull if you have culled at day 17. Introduce grease at this time. Use saturated animal fat. Bacon grease, hamburger, sausage, or any grease that the meat is fried or baked to obtain. 4 oz. Grease – $\frac{1}{2}$ gallon feed.

DAY TWENTY EIGHT

Grease should be fed two to three times per day. Cull second time if you culled at day 21. 12 to 15 birds max.

DAY THIRTY TWO

Add another grease feeding per day. (Bacon grease)

DAY THIRTY FIVE TO SHOW

Grease feed six to eight times per day or as much and they can consume and not scour. Thirty-six hours before the show start electrolytes at the rate of $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon per gallon. Don't over do the electrolytes.

SHOW DAY

Know the rules and pick out the best three for the show. Do not try to second guess the judge by trying to pick the meat instead of uniformity.

Roasters finish out 3 days later.

FEEDING POULTRY FOR SHOW

1. ENVIRONMENT

Space. At least 2 square foot per bird

Protect from wind and rain and sun. Control temperature. Add heat lamps early then be able to cool pen. Be able to cover or uncover sides to allow for temperature and weather changes. Birds are sensitive to temperature extremes.

Soft place to bed. 4 to 6 inches of wood shavings on the floor for bedding.

Lots of ventilation. Be able to move air at bird level – fans, raising sides.

Ease of access. Needs to be tall enough for you to get inside and work. Door big enough for a person.

2. FEED

Use a high quality ration designed for broiler production and feeding. Start with a gamebird or turkey (28% protein) starter for 14 days. Switch to a broiler starter (18-21% protein) and feed that the rest of the feeding period.

Start feeding the birds for the first few days in an aluminum pie plate. It is easy for them to find the feed. As the birds grow, put feed in your self feeders.

Shake feeders every day. Clean out old or clumpy feed as needed.

Start wet feeding about day 25. Start wet feeding 2 or 3 times a day. Increase to 7 or 8 times a day – every time you go to the pen. Continue wet feeding until show.

3. WATER

Have enough watering space so all chicks can drink at the same time. At least 2 full size waterers.

Clean water is just as important as good feed. Waterers must never be empty! Waterers must always be clean! Change water at least once a day. Scrub waterers at least once a day.

Add electrolytes to water for the 7 days. Start electrolytes 36 hours before the show to help with the stress of moving at a rate of ¼ teaspoon per gallon. Don't overuse electrolytes.

4. MANAGEMENT

Raising broilers is all about management. Since all the birds are the same age and genetically the same, whoever pays the most attention to detail and does the best job managing their birds usually wins the show.

When you get your chicks home the first day take each chick out one at a time. Dip their beak in the water and set the chick down in the food pan. Start your chicks with a cardboard containment ring about 4 feet in diameter. This will keep the chicks around the warm heat lamps. Have 2 heat lamps in case something happens to one. Preheat the area to 87 -90 degrees before the birds arrive. (Use a thermometer) Lower the temperature by 5 degrees every week. By week 4 they will be with full feathers and will not need heat. At that time just put a light in the top corner to light the pen 24 -7. Too hot late in the feeding period is much more of a problem for us than too cold.

Start the chicks where you are going to finish them. It removes the stress of getting used to a new pen.

Establish a routine – cleaning, checking feeders and waterers, stirring litter, and moving the birds. You should never run out of feed or water.

Raise feeders and waterers to the level of the birds breast as they grow.

Protect you birds from dogs, cats and varmints.

Stir litter every day.

Ventilation is very important. Make sure air is flowing through your pen. If you smell ammonia you need more ventilation.

Culling is important. Move cull birds to another place or pen (or give them away). You should cull any small birds or crippled birds as soon as you notice them. They will never catch up. Somewhere around 3 to 4 weeks you should cull birds by size. Cut your bird number in half.

The week before the show, select the birds you want to show. Select birds with lots of muscle – long full breasts. Select birds with no bruises or broken bones. If you want or need help with selection call Mr. Perez or Mr. Byrd to schedule.