

## **PRODUCING TURKEYS FOR SHOW GUIDE FOR JUNIOR MARKET TURKEY SHOW**

### **A MUST**

- Observe and follow all show rules and regulations regarding the purchasing and showing of Turkeys
- Purchase Pullorum-Typhoid clean Turkey poults
- Use quality feed
- Follow recommended management practices during the entire brooding and growing period
- Keep records on all expenses and receipts
- Cull birds closely and select the show entry properly

### **House Set-up and Pre-brood**

- ◆ Inform the feed dealer 2 weeks prior to your needs
- ◆ It is best if you inform your dealer of your feed program/feed types and at which age you will need them. This allows the dealer to plan his order and ensure fresh, quality, feed throughout the grow-out period
- ◆ Allow two square feet per poult for the first four weeks of age
- ◆ Allow at least six square feet per poult from four to eight weeks of age
- ◆ Allow a minimum of seven square feet per **hen** from eight weeks to show
- ◆ Allow a minimum of ten square feet per **tom** from eight weeks to show
- ◆ Place at least 4 inches of litter (pine shavings) throughout the house
- ◆ Place a cardboard brooder guard around feed, water, and heat lamps for the first 5-7 days
- ◆ Adequate house lighting is needed - 24 hour light is necessary through 12 weeks
  - Hens - remove all artificial lights in houses - lighting will increase rate of sexual maturity.
  - Toms - continue to light houses - Tom turkeys will not sexually mature at the rate of hens
- ◆ Place 2-125 watt **RED** heat lamps per 50 poults
- ◆ Have house set-up complete and begin heating the house 3 days prior to receipt of the poults
- ◆ Brood temperature (litter temperature) should be 92° F - 95° F at floor level, 12" from the brooder lamp
- ◆ Water temperature should be 80° F for the first 3 days.
- ◆ Bird performance will be negatively impacted if the poults become too warm or cold
- ◆ Keep fresh air in the houses but avoid cold drafty air on the poults
- ◆ Time spent in the turkey house is a major key to the success of your project!!
- ◆ The more the birds are stimulated, the better performance you gain at the show
- ◆ Turkeys do not know they are supposed to eat as much as they can and grow as big as they can
- ◆ You (**along with the help of family members**) have to make them do it!!
- ◆ Each time someone enters the house, shake the feeders, and slowly walk around the house (stirring the litter), and making the birds get up and eat/drink/exercise. The more time spent in the house, the better the birds perform.

**It takes TIME, TIME TIME !!!!**

## **Pre-brood Dates**

- 2-Weeks Prior - Visit with your feed dealer about feeding plans and vitamin/electrolyte availability
- 1-Week Prior - Set-up and equip the broiler house with litter and all equipment.
- 1-Week Prior - Test all equipment including lights, heat lamps, feeders, waterers, etc.
- 3-Days Prior - Begin heating the broiler house - the key to a good start
- 2-Days Prior - Check progress of pre-brood temperatures. Make final adjustments if needed.  
**NOTE:** 12 hours prior to receiving birds, add feed to feeders
  - Prepare vitamin/electrolyte solution and place in waterer.
  - Remember water temperature needs to be 80° F
  - Receive birds and confirm band numbers at time of placement in the house. Call Ag Teacher/CEA within 24 hours of placing the birds if there are discrepancies with band numbers and/or bird health issues.
  - De-snood the poults at a day of age to help reduce future social and cannibalism pressures in the house.

Notes:

### **Week 1**

Maintain brood temperature at least 90° F

Feed Show Chow Turkey Starter that contains at least 28% protein.

Change water every 24 hours after placement of poults.

Add vitamin/electrolytes to water @ recommended dosage on package.

Run a broad spectrum antibiotic in water at recommended levels (optional)

### **Week 2**

Maintain brood temperature at 85° F

Feed Show Chow Turkey Starter

Keep fresh water available at all times

Add vitamin electrolytes to water at recommended dose. Discontinue vitamin use by 14 days of age

**10 days of age** - spread wing bands open.

Weather permitting allow fresh air into the house

May need to stir the air with fan if weather does not permit you to ventilate with fresh air.

Avoid creating a cool draft on the birds.

Run a broad spectrum antibiotic in water at recommended levels (optional)

### **Week 3**

Maintain house temperature at 80° F reducing to 75° F toward end of week.

Feed Show Chow Turkey Starter

Keep fresh water available at all times

Weather permitting, allow fresh air into the house.

If weather does not permit fresh air ventilation, stir air with fan. Avoid creating a cool draft on the birds.

Look at litter condition - Add 2-3 additional bags or clean entire house out and replace with minimal 4" deep throughout house.

**Vaccinate poults for Fowl Pox - contact CEA if you need help.**

#### Week 4

Maintain house temperature at 70° F

Feed Show Chow Turkey Starter

Keep fresh water available at all times

Weather permitting, allow fresh air ventilation. Stir the air with a fan. Avoid creating cool draft on the birds.

Cull or separate birds to allow for additional floor space (At least six square feet per bird)

#### Week 5

Maintain house temperature at 70° F

Feed Show Chow Turkey Starter

Keep fresh water available at all times

Weather permitting, allow fresh air ventilation. Stir the air with a fan. Avoid creating a cool draft on the birds.

#### Week 6

Maintain house temperature at 70° F

Feed Show Chow Turkey Starter

Keep fresh water available at all times

Weather permitting, allow fresh air ventilation. Stir the air with a fan. Avoid creating cool draft on the birds.

Look at litter condition - clean house completely out if not done at three weeks of age.

Add 3-4 additional bags of litter if the house was cleaned out at 3 weeks of age

(depending on litter condition). Use your best judgement.....**Make sure litter is always clean and dry!!!**

#### Week 7

Maintain house temperature at 70° F

Feed Show Chow Turkey Starter

Keep fresh water available at all times.

Weather permitting, allow fresh air ventilation. Stir the air with a fan. Avoid creating cool draft on the birds.

Monitor litter condition - the cleaner the house litter, the cleaner the birds will be at time of show.

#### Week 8

Maintain house temperature at 70° F

Feed Show Chow Turkey Starter

Keep fresh water available at all times.

Weather permitting, allow fresh air ventilation. Stir the air with a fan. Avoid creating cool draft on the birds.

Monitor litter condition - the cleaner the house litter, the cleaner the birds will be at time of show.

Cull birds or separate birds to allow for additional floor space requirement (continue through 12 weeks of age)

Hens - At least seven square feet per bird

Toms - At least ten square feet per bird

**Vaccinate Turkeys for Fowl Pox - contact CEA if you need help.**

### **Week 9**

Maintain house temperature at 70° F

Feed Show Chow Turkey Starter

Keep fresh water available at all times.

Weather permitting, allow fresh air ventilation. Stir the air with a fan. Avoid creating cool draft on the birds.

Monitor litter condition - the cleaner the house litter, the cleaner the birds will be at time of show.

Cull birds or separate birds to allow for additional floor space requirement (continue through 12 weeks of age)

Hens - At least seven square feet per bird

Toms - At least Ten square feet per bird

Begin your finish feeding program - There are too many programs to list!!! This is primarily an effort to increase the overall daily feed consumption of the birds.

### **Week 10**

Maintain house temperature at 70° F

Feed Show Chow Turkey Starter

Keep fresh water available at all times.

Weather permitting, allow fresh air ventilation. Stir the air with a fan. Avoid creating cool draft on the birds.

Monitor litter condition - the cleaner the house litter, the cleaner the birds will be at time of show.

Cull birds or separate birds to allow for additional floor space requirement (continue through 12 weeks of age)

Hens - At least seven square feet per bird

Toms - At least ten square feet per bird

**Read show rules, regulations and guidelines for showing your Turkey in the show. Contact your CEA if you have questions.**

### **Week 11**

Maintain house temperature at 70° F

Feed Show Chow Turkey Starter

Keep fresh water available at all times.

Weather permitting, allow fresh air ventilation. Stir the air with a fan. Avoid creating cool draft on the birds.

Monitor litter condition - the cleaner the house litter, the cleaner the birds will be at time of show.

Cull birds or separate birds to allow for additional floor space requirement (continue through 12 weeks of age)

Hens - At least seven square feet per bird

Toms - At least ten square feet per bird

### **Week 12**

Maintain house temperature at 70° F

Feed Show Chow Turkey Starter

Keep fresh water available at all times.

Weather permitting, allow fresh air ventilation. Stir the air with a fan. Avoid creating cool draft on the birds.

Monitor litter condition - the cleaner the house litter, the cleaner the birds will be at time of show.

Cull birds or separate birds to allow for additional floor space requirement (continue through 12 weeks of age)

Hens - At least seven square feet per bird

Toms - At least ten square feet per bird

Feed finish feeding program as supplemental 3 times per day - NOT as primary ration!!!

### **Week 13**

Maintain house temperature at 70° F

Feed 75% Show Chow Turkey Starter and 25% Show Chow Turkey Grow/Finish

Keep fresh water available at all times.

Weather permitting, allow fresh air ventilation. Stir the air with a fan. Avoid creating cool draft on the birds.

Monitor litter condition - the cleaner the house litter, the cleaner the birds will be at time of show.

Cull birds or separate birds to allow for additional floor space requirement

Hens - At least seven square feet per bird

Toms - At least ten square feet per bird

Feed finish feeding program as supplemental 3 times per day - NOT as primary ration!!!

### **Week 14**

Maintain house temperature at 70° F

Feed 75% Show Chow Turkey Starter and 25% Show Chow Turkey Grow/Finish

Keep fresh water available at all times.

Weather permitting, allow fresh air ventilation. Stir the air with a fan. Avoid creating cool draft on the birds.

Monitor litter condition - the cleaner the house litter, the cleaner the birds will be at time of show.

Cull birds or separate birds to allow for additional floor space requirement

Hens - At least seven square feet per bird

Toms - At least ten square feet per bird

Feed finish feeding program as supplemental 3 - 5 times per day - NOT as primary ration!!!

### **Week 15**

Maintain house temperature at 70° F

Feed 50% Show Chow Turkey Starter and 50% Show Chow Turkey Grow/Finish

Feed Turkey Starter

Keep fresh water available at all times.

Weather permitting, allow fresh air ventilation. Stir the air with a fan. Avoid creating cool draft on the birds.

Monitor litter condition - the cleaner the house litter, the cleaner the birds will be at time of show.

Cull birds or separate birds to allow for additional floor space requirement

Hens - At least seven square feet per bird

Toms - At least ten square feet per bird

Feed finish feeding program as supplemental 3 - 5 times per day - NOT as primary ration!!!

### **Week 16**

Maintain house temperature at 70° F

Feed 50% Show Chow Turkey Starter and 50% Show Chow Turkey Grow/Finish

Feed Turkey Starter

Keep fresh water available at all times.

Weather permitting, allow fresh air ventilation. Stir the air with a fan. Avoid creating cool draft on the birds.

Monitor litter condition - the cleaner the house litter, the cleaner the birds will be at time of show.

Cull birds or separate birds to allow for additional floor space requirement

Hens - At least seven square feet per bird

Toms - At least ten square feet per bird

Feed finish feeding program as supplemental 3 - 5 times per day - NOT as primary ration!!!

### **Week 17**

Maintain house temperature at 70° F

Feed 25% Show Chow Turkey Starter and 75% Show Chow Turkey Grow/Finish

Feed Turkey Starter

Keep fresh water available at all times.

Weather permitting, allow fresh air ventilation. Stir the air with a fan. Avoid creating cool draft on the birds.

Monitor litter condition - the cleaner the house litter, the cleaner the birds will be at time of show.

Cull birds or separate birds to allow for additional floor space requirement

Hens - At least seven square feet per bird

Toms - At least Ten square feet per bird

Feed finish feeding program as supplemental 3 - 5 times per day - NOT as primary ration!!!

### **Week 18**

Maintain house temperature at 70° F

Feed 25% Show Chow Turkey Starter and 75% Show Chow Turkey Grow/Finish

Keep fresh water available at all times.

Weather permitting, allow fresh air ventilation. Stir the air with a fan. Avoid creating cool draft on the birds.

Monitor litter condition - the cleaner the house litter, the cleaner the birds will be at time of show.

Cull birds or separate birds to allow for additional floor space requirement

Hens - At least seven square feet per bird

Toms - At least ten square feet per bird

Feed finish feeding program as supplemental 3 - 5 times per day - NOT as primary ration!!!

### **Week 19 (Continue through till Show date)**

Maintain house temperature at 70° F

Feed 100% Show Chow Turkey Grow/Finish

Keep fresh water available at all times.

Weather permitting, allow fresh air ventilation. Stir the air with a fan. Avoid creating cool draft on the birds.

Monitor litter condition - the cleaner the house litter, the cleaner the birds will be at time of show.

Cull birds or separate birds to allow for additional floor space requirement

Hens - At least seven square feet per bird

Toms - At least ten square feet per bird

Feed finish feeding program as supplemental 3 - 5 times per day - NOT as primary ration!!!

### **Day before Show**

You probably have a good idea of the bird you are taking to the show at this point!!!

Look at your show quality birds one last time and make a decision based on overall frame size (length, width, depth), fleshing, conformation, and breast taper of the turkey.

Be sure to eliminate birds from your options with defects that will cause you to be disqualified from the show.

### **Pen Selection**

Do not over handle the birds.

Too much feeling, squeezing, and hanging upside down creates stress on the birds and causes birds to soften and possibly die.

Remember, prior to pen selection look for defects that would result in disqualification.

Remove those birds if any and select the top turkey in your pen to take to show.

Mark your first choice Turkey on the leg with magic/paint marker. Mark your alternate Turkey with a different color or mark for quick identification.

Avoid tie wraps, string or leg bands for identification purposes.