PREPARING FOR WINTER

www.cyndilou6.com
BE PREPARED
BREED SELECTION

Think about

- Feathering (loose or hard)
BREED SELECTION

Think about
- Feathering (loose or hard)
- Feathered feet
  Positive or negative?

www.feathersite.com
BREED SELECTION

Think about
- Feathering (loose or hard)
- Feathered feet
- Crests

www.feathersite.com
BREED SELECTION

- Think about
  - Feathering (loose or hard)
  - Feathered feet
  - Crests
  - Comb type and size
Chantecler

- Selected in Canada for cold-hardiness
- Mix from Dark Cornish, White Leghorns, White Wyandottes, Rhode Island Reds and White Plymouth Rocks
- Some other breeds work well, too

www.fitchfarmandgardens.com
FROSTBITE OF COMBS, WATTLES, FEET

- Avoid it if possible
  - Vaseline
  - Massage
  - Dubbing
  - Keep the bird warmer

- Males are usually sterile for a period after suffering from this
OTHER THINGS TO CONSIDER

◆ Health
  – Get rid of parasites (internal and external)
  – May want to consider culling unthrifty, “free boarders”

◆ Age of birds
  – Plan ahead so you don’t have late chicks
  – Very old birds may have more problems
INDOOR BROODING

- The rest of the family may not be so willing to share!

photos.groups.yahoo.com/group/dom_bird
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OTHER THINGS TO CONSIDER

Feed
- Balanced ration should be good
- Extra cracked corn or scratch grain
  - Adds extra energy for heat
  - Don’t overdo it

Water
- Very important
- Typically drink twice as much as feed (by weight)
- Need heaters or multiple trips each day
WATERERS

- Rubber pans (if not using heater)
WATERERS

- Rubber pans (if not using heater)
- Heater methods
  - Base heaters
  - Light bulb over top
  - Submersible heater
**LITTER**

- Deep litter is good (6-12 inches is good)
  - Start it before cold sets in
  - Insulates floor
  - May compost some

- Need to keep it dry
  - Keeps diseases down
  - Decreases ammonia production
  - Hard-packed litter loses advantages
  - Damp and cold are not a good combination
HOUSING

- Easy to clean
- Biosecure
- Able to handle snow load
  - House itself
  - Outdoor pens
- Insulation
- Ventilation
- Heat
SNOW AND OUTDOOR PENS

Two choices
- Solid enough to hold up
- Collapsible

www.pheasant.com
INSULATION

- Good for summer and winter
- Walls and ceiling if possible
- Inaccessible to birds
  - Cover it with plastic, plywood, etc.
  - Make it something they won’t eat
STRAW OR HAY BALES

- Good insulative properties
- May help absorb moisture
- Rodents can be a problem
VENTILATION

- Balancing act
  - Keep heat in
  - Move gases out
    - Water vapor
    - Ammonia from waste
    - CO2
Natural ventilation

- Warm air rises so vents on top allow air out
- Cooler fresh air enters through inlets
- Need temperature difference (or wind) to make it work
VENTILATION

- In extreme cold
  - Don’t want draft blowing on birds
  - Baffle in front of inlet
  - May want to put cloth in front of inlet
  - Don’t want to lose too much heat
HEAT

- Using bird’s body heat is easiest
- Have a few thousand hens and this won’t be a problem!!
- Try to confine birds to a small area
  - Covered roost area
    - “Community nest” situation
    - Insulate this
    - Rodents may be a problem
    - May need to clean fairly often
- Use a heater
ADDITIONAL HEAT

- Most important is to keep it safe
  - Keep birds from contacting it
  - Keep litter from contacting it
  - Try to limit dust buildup
  - Watch out for exhaust gases

www.wsfc512.com
MORE ON ADDITIONAL HEAT

- Lights (i.e., heat lamps) will affect egg production
- Doesn’t need to be “toasty” warm
- Balancing act with ventilation again
- May have to give up optimal conditions to keep birds warm
WORST THING ABOUT GOING TO ALL OF THIS TROUBLE...