

# RAISING MEAT-TYPE CHICKENS



FROM THE HATCHERY  
TO THE FREEZER

# WHAT KIND OF BIRDS SHOULD I USE?

- Variety to use
  - Cornish Rock cross
  - Others ?
    - Probably nothing else close for carcass quality and quantity
    - Consider feed efficiency, too
  - Raising your own breeding stock?
    - Difficult to get parent stock
    - Very difficult to raise them correctly
    - Doubtful you'd gain much

# WHEN TO ORDER

- Broilers 6-8 weeks before fair
- Roasters 10-12 weeks before fair

\*\* If you're planning to restrict feed, you may want to add a week or two.

- Turkeys 14-18 weeks
- Ducks 7-9 weeks (comm. Pekins)
- Geese 15-18 weeks

STARTING CHICKS

FLAWS

# STARTING CHICKS



[www.gdaonline.com/](http://www.gdaonline.com/)

# STARTING CHICKS

## FEED

- 21-23% crude protein, usually
- Higher in other vitamins, minerals, etc.
- Usually given *ad libitum*

# STARTING CHICKS

## FEED

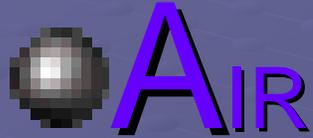
- Some people restrict feed
  - Remove feed in the afternoon
  - Only give a set amount each day
  - Believed to help reduce leg problems
  - Will take longer to get to market weight

# STARTING CHICKS

## LIGHTS

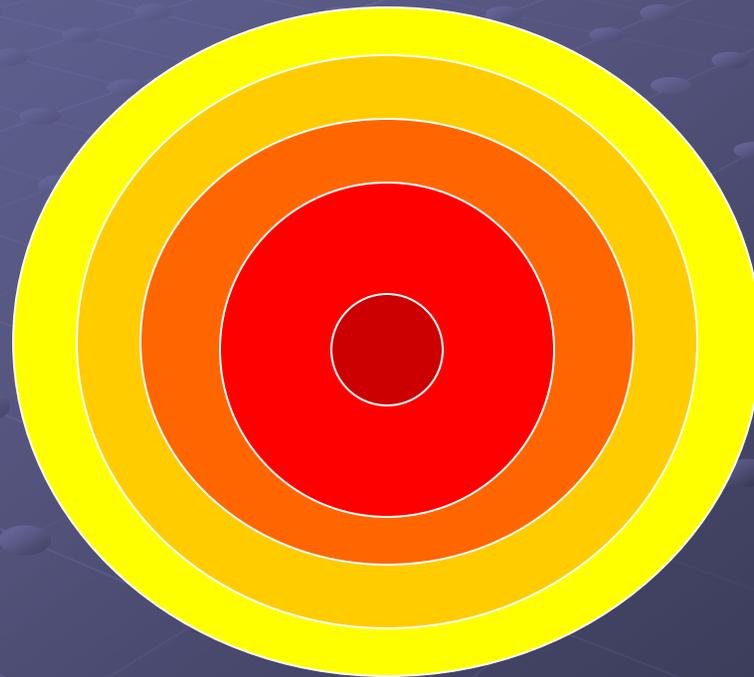
- 24 hours per day of light is okay
- Some will use 23 L:1 D
- Lights don't need to be very bright
- Can get by with natural light
  - May take longer to reach market weight

# STARTING CHICKS

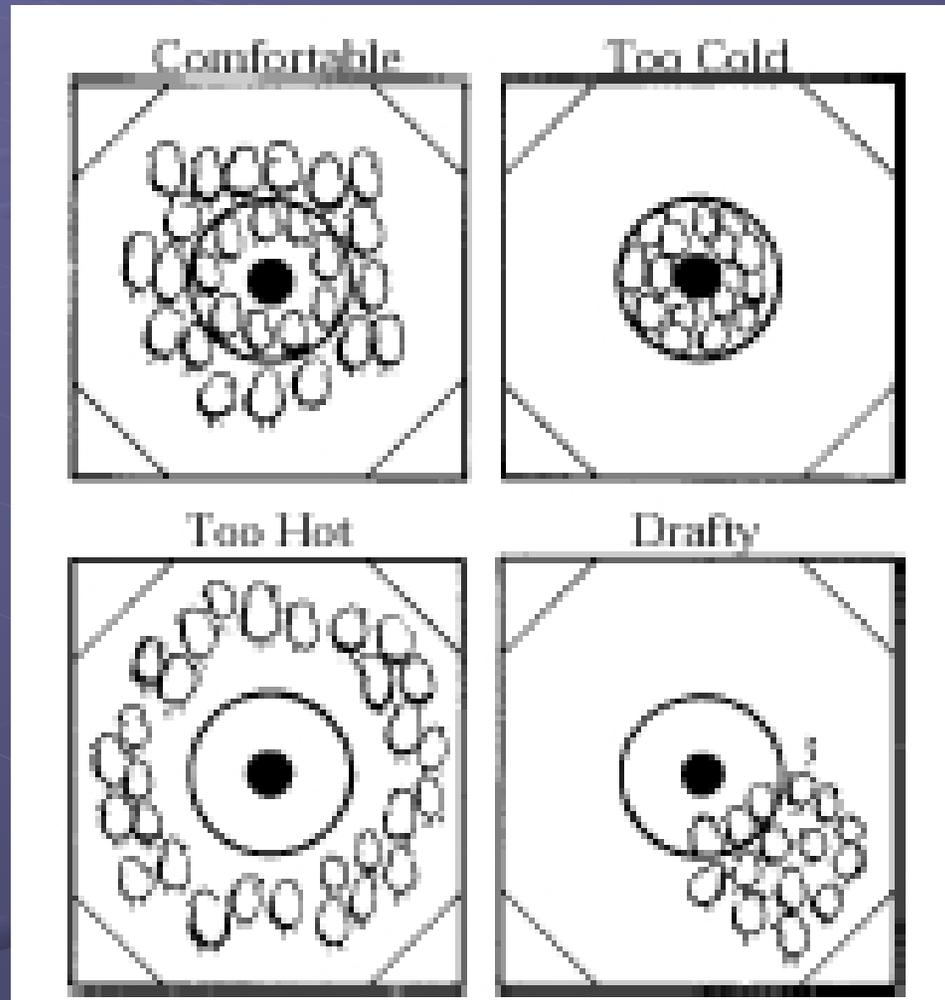


- Temperature
  - Maybe slightly cooler than other chicks
    - Start at 90° and decrease 5° per week
  - Temperature gradient is best
  - No drafts

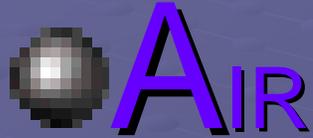
# TEMPERATURE GRADIENT



# STARTING CHICKS



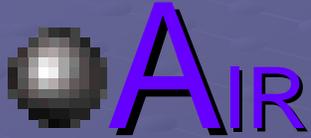
# STARTING CHICKS



- Ventilation

- Provide fresh air
- Remove CO<sub>2</sub>, ammonia, water vapor
- Poor ventilation
  - Respiratory problems
  - Can contribute to ascites
  - Poor litter quality

# STARTING CHICKS



- Litter quality
  - Wet litter can increase
    - Breast blisters
    - Foot infections
    - Coccidiosis
    - Ammonia production

# STARTING CHICKS

## WATER

- Constant supply
- Clean
- Room temperature is probably best



[www.feathersite.com](http://www.feathersite.com)

# STARTING CHICKS

## SPACE

- Usually not a problem with small numbers
- Meat-type birds grow very quickly, so you need to be prepared

# STARTING CHICKS

## SPACE

- Minimum requirements per bird
- Broilers .75 – 1 ft.<sup>2</sup>
- Roasters 1.5 – 2 ft.<sup>2</sup>
- Turkeys 3 – 4 ft.<sup>2</sup>

# STARTING CHICKS

Probably more than necessary



Nice setup, with comfortable chicks



Comfortable chicks supplied with warmth, feed and water.

# PROBLEMS YOU MAY ENCOUNTER

- Predation
  - Your responsibility to protect your birds
- Crooked toes
  - Often hatchery issue
  - Occasionally caused by injury
- Breast blisters or buttons
  - Poor litter quality
- Swollen hocks
  - Disease, usually (*Mycoplasma* or *Staph.*)
  - Occasionally caused by injury
- Ascites
  - “water belly”
  - Problem with circulation, followed by fluid retention

# PROBLEMS YOU MAY ENCOUNTER

- Heart attack
  - Less common than in the past
  - Limit stress
- Overheating
  - Try to keep them cool
  - Feed in evening on very hot days
- Cannibalism
  - Not usually a problem in broilers
  - Lights may be too bright
  - Crowding
  - Salt deficiency, more common with home-mixed diets
  - May start with some other injury

# JUDGING QUALITY

**BIGGEST IS NOT ALWAYS BEST**

ESPECIALLY SINCE THE JUDGE DOESN'T  
ALWAYS KNOW THE AGE OF THE BIRDS

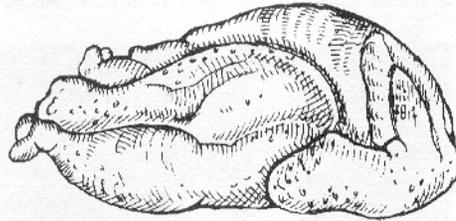


[www.ansci.umn.edu/poultry/youth/4h-statefair/2001/mkt-turkeys.jpg](http://www.ansci.umn.edu/poultry/youth/4h-statefair/2001/mkt-turkeys.jpg)

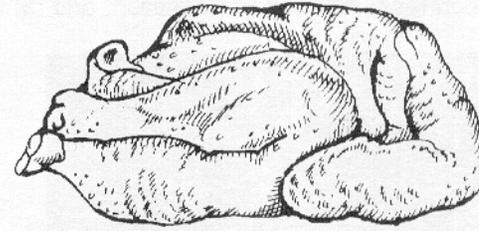
# JUDGING QUALITY

- Meat yield is VERY important
- Breast yield and conformation
  - Length
  - Width
  - Depth of muscling

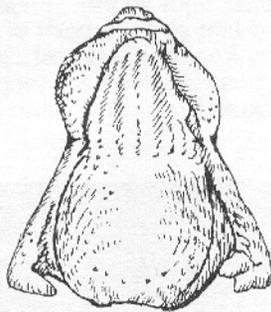
# BREAST CONFORMATION



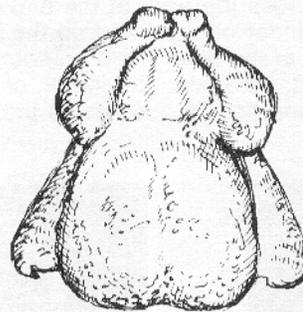
A shallow breast indicates poor depth of muscling. The illustration also shows the keel bone nonparallel to the backbone.



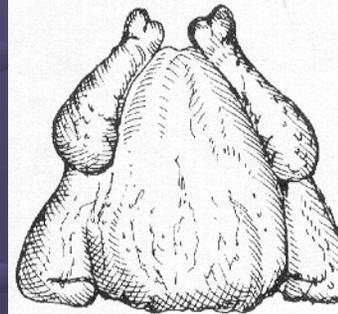
A deep breast indicates good depth of muscling. The illustration also shows the keel bone parallel to the backbone.



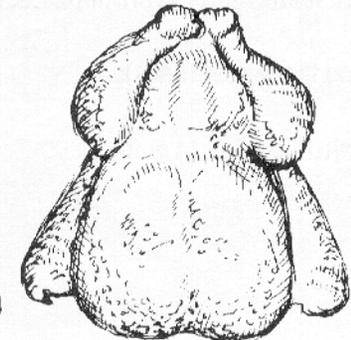
A narrow breast indicates poor width of muscling. The muscling is rounded and the width does not carry from the front to the rear of the bird. This is referred to as a "tapered breast".



A wide breast indicates good width of muscling. The muscling is flattened and the width carries well from the front to the rear of the bird.



A short breast indicates length of muscling almost equal width of muscling.



A long breast indicates length of muscling almost 1.5 times greater than width of muscling.

B - 3

(PHOTOS FROM FFA POULTRY SCIENCE MANUAL)

# JUDGING QUALITY

## ● Legs

- Should be “meaty” – filled out well
- No swollen joints
- Toes should be reasonably straight

# JUDGING QUALITY

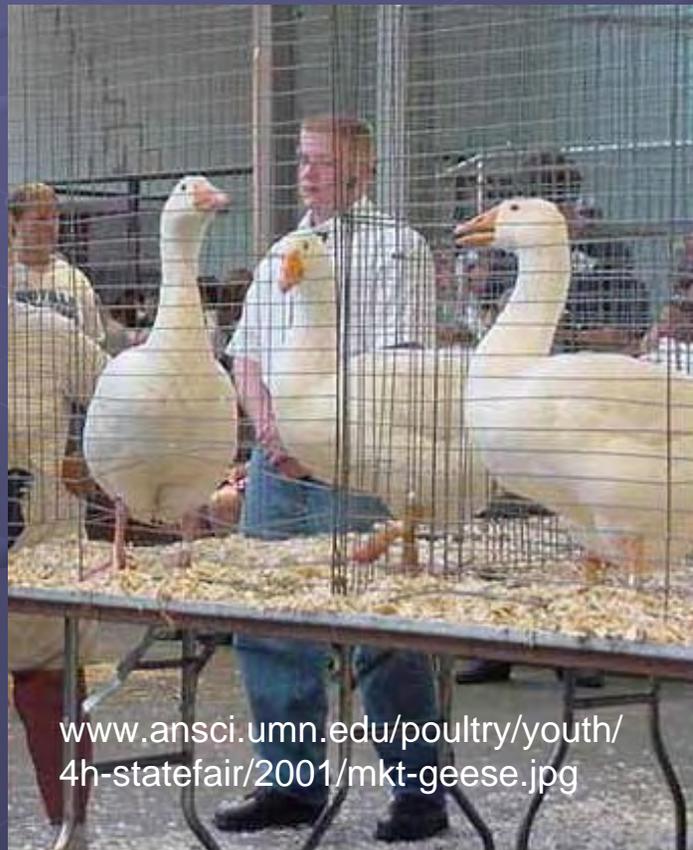
- Feather quality
  - Not quite as important as with “show birds”
  - Should be reasonably clean and complete



# JUDGING QUALITY

- Uniformity

- VERY important if showing two birds together



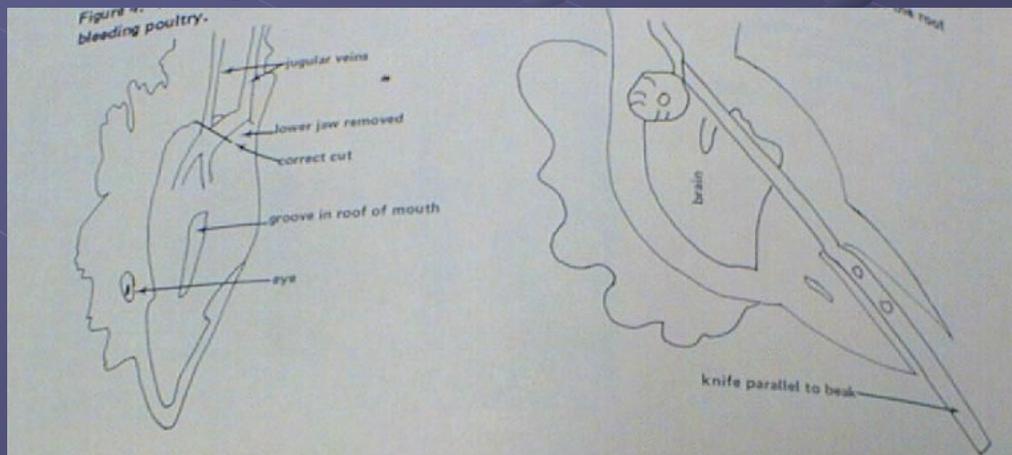


# AFTER THE SHOW

- Market birds are meant to be “marketed”
- Usually sold or eaten
- So, ...

# HOME PROCESSING

- Feed should be withheld for about 12 hours
- Killing and bleeding out
- Cone works well – can make your own
- Inside cut (?)
- Better not to cut head off
- Let bleed out well



# HOME PROCESSING

## ● Scalding

- Hard scald 160-180 F 30-60 sec
  - Sub scald 138-140 F 30-75 sec
  - Semi scald 123-130 F 30-75 sec
- 4 parts boiling water to 3 parts cold water gives about 135 F



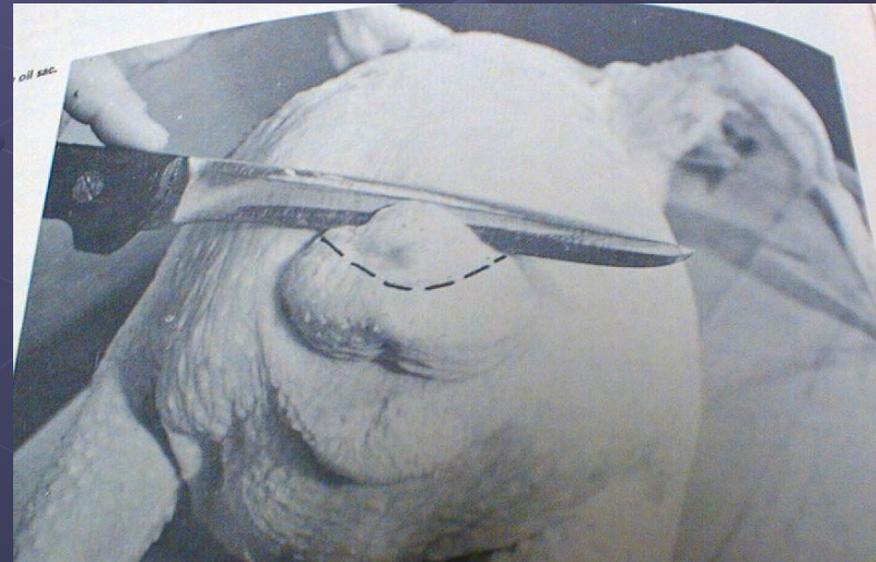
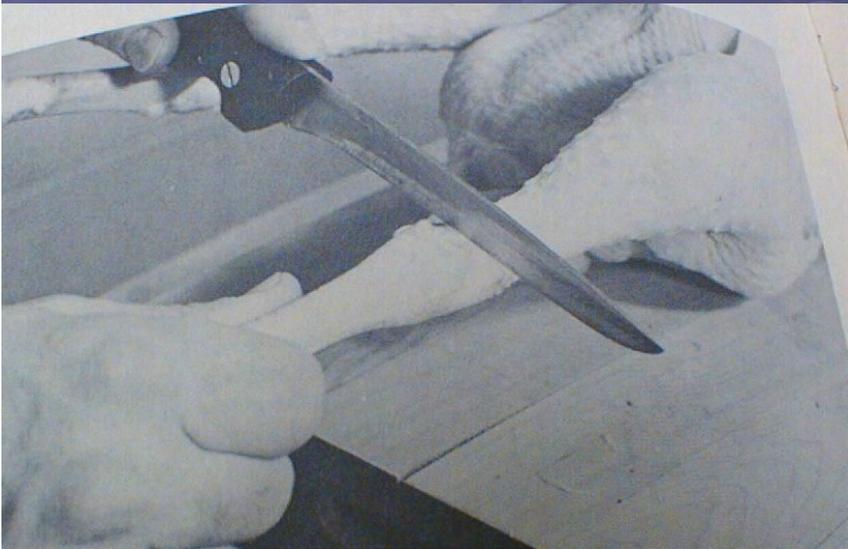
# HOME PROCESSING

- Picking
- Singeing
- May want to rinse in cool water



# HOME PROCESSING

- Cut off shanks, head, oil gland
- Slit skin down back of neck

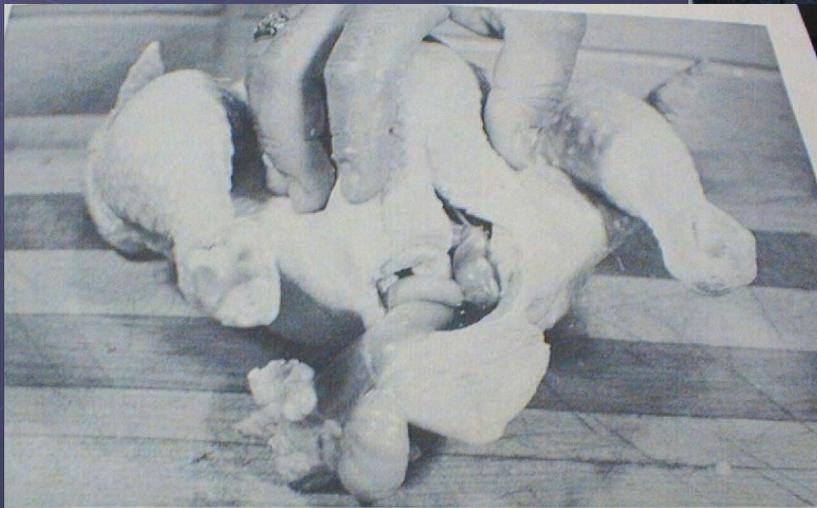


# HOME PROCESSING

- Remove tracheae, loosen crop, remove crop
- Remove neck
- Move to other end of bird!

# HOME PROCESSING

- Bar cut
  - Looks nicer for whole bird
- J-cut
  - Easier
  - Quicker
- For both, need to cut around vent without cutting intestine



# HOME PROCESSING

- Bring everything out!
- Intestines, gizzard, liver, heart, lungs, reproductive organs, (kidneys)
- Save gizzard, liver, heart, (neck)



# HOME PROCESSING

- Empty gizzard, remove lining
- Clean everything well
- Tuck legs if using bar cut
- Chill as soon as possible
- Best to chill for at least 12 hours before cooking



[www.utep.edu/museum/archive/birds/DDgizzard.htm](http://www.utep.edu/museum/archive/birds/DDgizzard.htm)



[www.graigfarm.co.uk](http://www.graigfarm.co.uk)

# COMMERCIAL PROCESSORS IN WISCONSIN

- Dowty Poultry Processing

N2434 Highway 47

Waldo, WI 53093

920-994-4758

- Twin Cities Packing

5607 County Road J

Clinton, WI 53525

608-676-4428

# EQUIPMENT SUPPLIERS

- **Jako, Inc.**

6003 E Eales Rd  
Hutchinson, KS 67501  
kenking@jakoinc.com  
877-JAKO-INC  
(877-525-6462)

- **Brower**

Highway 16 West  
P.O. Box 2000  
Houghton, IA 52631  
800-553-1791 or 319-469-4141  
<http://www.browerequip.com/>

# EQUIPMENT SUPPLIERS

- Kuhl Corporation  
PO Box 26  
39 Kuhl Road  
Flemington, NJ 08822  
(908) 782-5696  
<http://www.kuhlcorp.com>

# OTHER QUESTIONS?

