

# PRODUCING BROILERS FOR SHOW

*BY KEITH STAGGS*

## **A MUST**

- Observe and follow all show rules and regulations regarding the purchasing and showing of Broilers
- Purchase Pullorum-Typhoid clean broiler chicks
- 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 bird
- ◆ Supply one feeder for every 25 broilers
- ◆ Supply one waterer for every 15 broilers
- ◆ 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
- ◆ A 10' X 12' building should have a minimum of four 40 watt bulbs
- ◆ Place 2-125 watt heat lamps per 50 broilers
- ◆ Have house set-up complete and begin heating the house 3 days prior to receipt of the broilers
- ◆ Brood temperature (litter temperature) should be 90° F at floor level, 10" from the brooder lamp
- ◆ Water temperature should be 85° F for the first 3 days.
- ◆ Bird performance will be negatively impacted if the broilers become too warm or cold
- ◆ Keep fresh air in the houses but avoid cold drafty air on the broilers
- ◆ Time spent in the broiler 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
- ◆ Broilers 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**

- Visit with your Purina Mills® brand feed dealer about feeding plans and vitamin/electrolyte availability
- Set-up and equip the broiler house with litter and all equipment. Test all equipment including lights, heat lamps, feeders, waterers, etc.
- Begin heating the broiler house - the key to a good start
- 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 85° 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.
- Notes:

### **Week 1**

- Maintain brood temperature at 90° F
- Feed Show Chow® Turkey Starter or Purina Mills® Game Bird Startena®.
- Change water 48 hours after placement of birds and every 24 hours after that.
- Add vitamin/electrolytes to water @ recommended dosage on package.
- Notes:

### **Week 2**

Maintain brood temperature at 85° F

Feed Show Chow® Turkey Starter or Purina Mills® Game Bird Startena®

Keep fresh water available at all times

Add vitamin electrolytes to water at recommended dose. Discontinue vitamin use at 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.

Notes:

### **Week 3**

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

Mix 50% Show Chow® Turkey Starter/Game Bird Startena® with 50% Show Chow® Broiler and full feed.

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.

Plan a day for week 4 to cull birds. Ensure the availability of additional people to help.

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

Notes:

#### **Week 4**

Maintain house temperature at 75° F

Mix 25% Show Chow® Turkey Starter/Game Bird Startena® with 75% Show Chow® Broiler and full feed.

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.

On or before 28 days of age, cull birds down to approximately 3 birds for every bird that will be entered in the show. Example: 1 pen of 3 birds shown - Cull down to 9-15 birds.

Notes:

#### **Week 5**

Maintain house temperature at 70° F

Feed Show Chow® Broiler

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.

Begin finish feeding no sooner than 33 days of age

33 days of age for 49 days of age broilers at time of show

35-37 days of age for all broilers older than 50 days of age at time of show

Note: Watch birds for scouring if cooked grease is used during finish feeding. If scouring is evident, discontinue the grease.

Read show rules, regulations and guidelines to showing broilers.

Notes:

#### **Week 6**

Maintain house temperature at 70° F

Feed Show Chow® Broiler

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.

Finish feeding - watch birds for scouring if cooked grease is used during finish feeding. If scouring is evident, discontinue grease.

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).

Begin to prepare for transport of birds to the show.

Locate card board box and purchase fresh shavings (shavings from house not recommended unless they are exceptionally clean)

Ensure availability of additional people to assist in holding birds for pen selection. If it is a morning show, select birds the night before. If it is an afternoon/evening show, select birds the morning of the show in cool weather only. If hot weather persists, select birds after 9:00 p.m. prior to show.

Notes:

### **Week 7**

Maintain house temperature at 70° F

Feed Show Chow® Broiler

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.

Finish feeding - watch birds for scouring if cooked grease is used during finish feeding.

If scouring is evident, discontinue grease.

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

Notes:

### **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 birds for a pen to show.

Mark bird on the leg with magic/paint marker. Mark the first choice pen of birds all the same. Mark alternate birds with a different color or mark for quick identification.

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

Notes:

### **Week 8**

SHOW TIME - GOOD LUCK

Remember not everyone can win a trophy/ribbon but you did have a great learning experience. Absorb what you do this year and return next year with a desire to improve.

Do not give up!