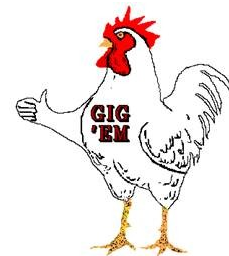




Youth Poultry Newsletter



Department of Poultry Science

Texas A&M University

Summer 2011

Important Date Changes and Announcements

The pick-up date for turkeys that can be shown at the Houston, San Antonio and Star of Texas shows has been set for Tuesday, **November 1, 2011** at 9 am. When the rules and order forms were made available online this spring, it was not possible at that time to know the exact day we would be able to get turkeys. It is important to remember that we at Texas A&M cannot hatch the large number of birds needed to fill the orders in one day, so we must rely on the commercial turkey industry to supply the birds. It is only through their generosity and willingness to help that we can provide the turkeys needed for the major livestock shows. As a result, we must work around their hatch schedules, which

cannot always be determined many months in advance.

In addition, it was recently announced that the poultry show at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo will now be on Thursday, March 8 instead of the day we anticipated based on previous years. This has necessitated a change in the hatch and pick-up date for broilers in order to maintain the proper age bird for the show. The new pick-up date for Houston broilers is now Friday, **January 27, 2012**. The poultry show in Houston will once again be a one day show as it was last year. Be sure to check our website and the shows' websites for updates. Mark your calendars!

- Dr. Craig Coufal

Livestock Show Contact Information

State Fair of Texas

Phone: (214) 421-8723
<http://www.bigtex.com>

San Antonio Stock Show and Rodeo

Phone: (210) 225-0575
<http://www.sarodeo.com>

Star of Texas Fair & Rodeo

Phone: (512) 919-3006
<http://www.rodeoaustin.com>

Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo

Phone: (832) 667-1000
<http://www.hlsr.com>

Upcoming Events and Deadlines

August

- 25 State Fair of Texas Broiler Show entries due to show office in Dallas
- 26 State Fair of Texas broiler pick-up at Texas A&M Poultry Research Center in College Station, 9 am - 3 pm

October

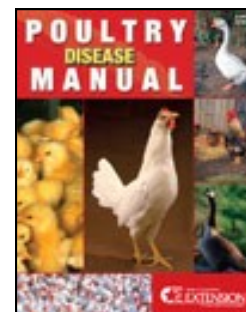
- 6 State Fair of Texas Broiler Show in Dallas
- 14 Houston/San Antonio/Star of Texas broiler orders due to the Poultry Science Extension office

November

- 1 Houston/San Antonio/Star of Texas turkey pick-up at Louis Pearce Pavilion in College Station, 9 am - 3 pm

The AgriLife Extension *Poultry Disease Manual* is available from the Texas AgriLife Extension Bookstore, <http://agrilifebookstore.org>.

Publication
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Basic guidelines for raising show broilers

By Dale Hyatt

Many exhibitors start feeding with a turkey or game bird starter that will likely range from 28 to 32% protein. However, a good quality show broiler starter at 23 to 26% protein is considered to be adequate. If you choose to begin with the higher protein starters, be sure to switch your chicks to the show broiler starter after the first 7 to 10 days. A show broiler chick will consume approximately 1 pound of feed during the first 7 to 10 days. As the birds age, protein requirements decrease while energy requirements increase, and even though the turkey starter has a higher protein level, the broiler starter is typically higher in energy. The important issue here is that this feed change will provide the increased energy level required at this age.

Somewhere around 4 weeks of age, you may choose to switch to a show broiler finisher (18 to 22% pro-

tein) which will also provide another increase in energy level. However, it is acceptable to continue feeding the show broiler starter, occasionally supplementing with a feed and fat mixture. This can be done by mixing small amounts of fat or grease with the feed until you reach the consistency of a "crumbly paste". Spoon the mixture on top of the regular feed in the feeders. Remove and discard all of the supplemental feed that is not consumed within a 30 to 45 minute period. Begin doing this once daily and gradually increase the number of daily supplemental feedings as you approach the show date (4 to 5 times a day the last week is common).

Another vitally important factor to growing good birds is water. It is a good idea to provide the chicks with clean, tempered tap water for the first 24 hours so they can rehydrate after their long trip from the hatchery. Vitamins and electrolytes can then be given the next 3 or 4 days. Always mix according to the manufac-

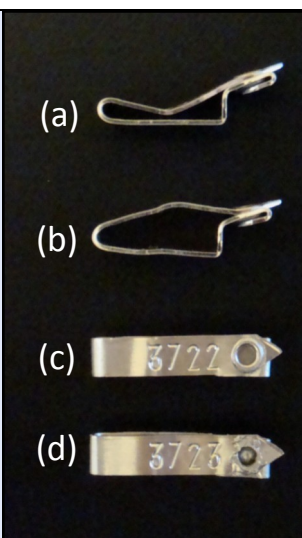
turer's directions. If the chicks were vaccinated for respiratory diseases at the hatchery (most are), you may want to add a broad-spectrum antibiotic with the vitamins to help minimize the possibility of secondary bacterial infections due to the symptoms caused by the vaccine reaction (sneezing, coughing, etc.).

Keep the lights on 24 hours and walk around in the pen as often as you can for the entire growing period. This will create activity and stimulate feeding. The bottom line is this: exhibitors who are able to maximize the amount of feed (the correct feed of course) consumed by genetically sound birds throughout the growing period will be competitive in the show!

A word about wing bands

Wing bands for show birds are necessary to identify which birds belong to each student and keep the show as honest and fair as possible. However, wing bands are important to keep in mind during the entire growing period, not just on day 1 and at the show.

The most important thing to remember is to spread the wing bands at 5 to 7 days of age. Wing bands should be "pinched" in the middle at banding time as depicted in (a) to prevent the wing band from wrapping around the end of the wing. However, the band must be spread apart as the wing grows to prevent the band from becoming ingrown into the wing skin. By 5 to 7 days of age, the wing will have grown enough that the wing band can no longer wrap around the wingtip. To spread the band, insert a flat head screwdriver in the middle and gently twist. The band should then look like (b). Be careful not to pull the wing band out, as that bird will then be ineligible for the show. If a band falls out, do not attempt to replace it. Bands that appear tampered with (d) will be culled from the show. A normal wing band rivet is depicted in (c).



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