**Show Broilers**

Let me begin by saying that there are endless ways to raise show broilers successfully. Furthermore, there are an endless number of Feeding Programs for Broilers as well.

I recommend that all birds be taken home for about a 1week before being raised at the farm.  Extreme heat and cold can be treacherous to your tender 1-day old hatchlings.  If kept in a climate controlled area (home, bathtub, garage) they have a chance to develop more body mass and true feathers, bettering your chances of a good poultry project.

**Supplies**

* At least 1 thermometer
* Enough shavings to make a 4 inch thick layer in your pen
* Pie pans
* Something to make a brooder ring (cardboard works great)
* Feed (you will need turkey starter very high protein, 20-30 percent protein, then move to Broiler Finisher – see timeline below)
* Water containers
* Feed containers
* Fluorescent light (Low watt)
* At least 1 heat lamp and tarps – if raising in winter
* Box Fan – if raising in the summer

For your new chicks, you should use a Brooder Ring made of any available material to keep the chicks centered in the pen about 3-4 feet in diameter. Keep chicks like this until they are about 7 days old. I also recommend you put a cloth sheet or similar material down, on top of the shaving before creating this ring. Chicks may pick at the shavings instead of the feed.

At 7-10 days old you will need to spread the wing bands. I can help teach you how to do this.

**Lighting**

Heat lights should be hung in the center to keep chicks warm. Lights should be positioned about 18-24 inches from the shavings, and will need to be raised as the chicks grow

You want to make sure that the temperature in the pens don’t get below 90 degrees for the 1st week, and is gradually lowered after that. Even at the end of your project you will not want the temperature to go below 68-70 degree. If you hang lights from chains with hooks they can be adjusted as the growing season progresses, and the temperature needs to be changed.

All-night lighting is recommended for Broilers. A 40 watt bulb @ top of pen should be used for the entire length of the project

**Feeders**

Feeders and waters should be placed at ground level on the first day. As the birds grow, you can block feeders and waterers off the ground with bricks, or hang from chains. For the first week, while in the Brooder Ring, chicks should be fed on cookie sheets or in pie pans so they have open access to feed in. Dump these every day! This will result in more wasted feed, and so you will want to change to feeders on the 7th day when the Brooder Ring is taken down.

Feeders and waters should be raised as the birds grow. After week 1, you want the birds to have to stand up in order to eat out of the feeders.

**Shavings**

You will need shavings to cover the bottom of the pen about **4 inches thick** these will need to be fully changed at lease every 2-3 weeks, but I would turn and sift through my shavings every day. If you are smelling ammonia smell you need to change the shavings! Ammonia is heavier than air, so if you can smell it at eye level, it is probably very strong at bird level.

**Other information**

If you are keeping your birds at the barn you will need to put up tarps in the winter to make sure that the temperature stays consistent. If you are raising them over the summer tarps/heat lamps are not needed but you will want fans.

You can water soluble Poultry electrolytes to their water for the 1st two days, and then again when you expand the wing bands

We run a risk of blowing breakers when using so many heat lamps. Depending on the number of poultry raisers you may be limited on the number of lights you may use.   Also please **do not run fans in the wintertime**, as it is unnecessary

**Week by Week**

Week 1: Feed 100% Turkey Starter Management: Maintain temperature at 95-90o F. You want to gradually lower the temperature after day 3

Week2: Feed 100% Turkey Starter Management: Maintain house temperature at 85-80o F

7-10 days of age - spread wing bands open, may cull birds depending on how many were purchased. Weather permitting allow fresh air into the house, but you want to avoid creating a cool draft on the birds

Week 3: Feed a mix Turkey Starter and Broiler Finisher or something similar. Maintain house temperature at 75o F. Weather permitting allow fresh air into the house, but you want to avoid creating a cool draft on the birds

See AST if you will need assistance during week 4 to cull birds. You will need to arrange additional people (2-3 plus you) to help hold your birds.

Look at litter condition - clean entire house out and replace with new shavings maintaining a minimal 4” base throughout the house

Week 4: Feed a mix Turkey Starter and Broiler Finisher. Maintain house temperature at 70o F. Weather permitting allow fresh air into the house, but you want to avoid creating a cool draft on the birds

You will want to cull your birds this week. This will allow the birds you want to keep for show more area to grow. There may not be additional pens in which to separate cull birds.  As you cull your options are: (1) keep cull birds at home, (2) dispose of cull birds in the appropriate areas, (3) have them processed.

Week 5: Feed Broiler Finisher. Maintain house temperature at 68o F. Weather permitting allow fresh air into the house, but you want to avoid creating a cool draft on the birds

See AST if you will need assistance during week 6 to cull birds. You will need to arrange additional people (2-4 plus you) to help hold your birds.

Week 6 till Show Day Feeding: Feed Broiler Finisher: Maintain house temperature at 68o F. Weather permitting allow fresh air into the house, but you want to avoid creating a cool draft on the birds

Evaluate shavings condition – Add 1-2 additional bags of shavings (depending on litter condition). You will want a bag of shavings for transporting your birds to the show (if not at SBFFA Show and Sale)

You will want to select your birds before show day. Please see AST if you need help. Also keep in mind that you will need 2 SBFFA students who are showing other animals to help you show your broilers.

If you have any question or need help please feel free to ask!