

SCHEFTER POULTRY

Newsletter Spring 2012

Positive remarks from our OMAFRA Inspectors regarding your poultry are great to hear! Having high quality birds to work with makes our jobs rewarding.

Growth rates again have been phenomenal. We continue to recommend processing of white rock chickens no longer than 10 weeks, with many 5-8 lb birds being processed at 8 weeks.

Busy: Unfortunate circumstances caused a poultry processing plant in the area to be destroyed by fire. Another plant to the south end of the province has decided to no longer continue back yard flock processing. We are receiving bookings from both of these areas. I can't thank you enough for booking your processing dates early! With early booking, and shuffling a day here or there, to maximize capacity, we are trying to accommodate timely processing. Regretfully, fresh turkey for Thanksgiving and Christmas will be very difficult to achieve. Please plan your chicken processing dates avoiding the busy 2 week period prior to these holidays, as we do try to only process turkeys for the holidays. Keeping chickens young and tender, under 10 weeks, helps us maximize production, and our rates reflect this efficiency. All packaging, pricing on label and cutting instructions are required in writing at time of drop off to reduce errors and increase production. Due to confusion which results in standing labour and mistakes needing correction, a \$20 fee may be charged for late changes to orders.

Turkeys: I eat as much as I can at Christmas out of spite for my sore muscles from handling the monsters! ☺ But seriously, these guys grow very fast! With proper feed rations, finished hens at 15 weeks will dress 15 to 18 lbs! Hens are what I recommend for roasting turkeys, as they are "finished" in that oven size of 12 to 20 lbs, depending on length of time kept;

Hen Turkeys		Feed Rations Approx	
Dressed Weights			
10 wks	10 to 12 lbs	Starter	28% Protein 4.5% Fat
12 wks	12 to 14 lbs	Grower	24% Protein 5.5% Fat
14 wks	14 to 16 lbs	Finisher	17% Protein 5.5% Fat
16 wks	16 to 20 lbs		

* Grower feed consumption is approx 10kg / 22lbs from 6 to 14 weeks

Notice the high feed values of turkey feed. In order to not have dry, skinny turkeys, they have to be fed! It's the fat in meat that makes it moist and flavourful. Because of the reduced production through the plant here, a charge of 60 cents per lb over 19lbs is added to the rate for turkey processing.

Feed Withdrawl: Contamination is the reason for proper feed withdrawl times. The digestive tract swells in size due to absorption of nutrients. A full balloon bursts easier than a slack one, comparable to bird's digestive system during processing. FYI digestive tracts are not full of air... Suggested feed withdrawl time is 12 noon, the day prior to day of processing, for birds on full feed access. Restricted feeding causes gorging of feed, stretching the crop to hold feed throughout the day, therefore only ½

morning ration should be fed to accomplish results. Water availability should be maintained.

Gizzards: Hard, labour intensive, work!!! This is how to sum up harvesting and cleaning gizzards. During cost efficiency analysis, losses in wages were calculated. Due to this, the cost of harvesting gizzards is rising to 75 cents. My intention is to keep Schefter Poultry's doors open to process your product. With the increased costs of regulations we cannot subsidize processing.

OMAFRA Audit:

Reference No:C9.13.02.02

Element: Shipping carcasses and meat products

Factor: Shipping

Area: Transportation Standards

Component: Food Safety

Authoritative Source: Food Safety and Quality Act: O.Reg. 31/05: s.133

133. (1) The plant operator of a meat plant shall ensure that carcasses and meat products are shipped from the plant in a manner that protects them from physical damage.

(2) The operator of a meat plant shall ensure that no carcass or meat product is shipped from the plant unless it is protected against deterioration and contamination.

This regulation was noted as a corrective action on our yearly audit. It is one of approximately 500 Meat Plant Guidelines, with subsections contained in each, to be followed in operating an abattoir. This particular regulation pertains to our obligation to ensure your vehicle is clean and sanitary when you pick up your birds. The audit of our plant and team proudly scored very well! With your help we hope to maintain our high ranking. Please have clean vehicles and containers to pick up your birds.

99 cent Turkey: Many discussions have been had regarding the 99 cent per lb turkey that the big grocery stores run. Loss leader is what it's called! This price gets you into the store, for turkey, you then buy other groceries, thereby making their profit. Everyone needs to make a profit to operate! Use your marketing skills to combat this practice!

Wild Game: Northern bobwhite, ruffed grouse, sharp-tailed grouse, spruce grouse, gray (Hungarian) partridge, ring-necked pheasant, rock ptarmigan, willow ptarmigan and wild turkey all fall under the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act (FWCA). A person needs a licence to keep game birds in captivity or to buy or sell them.

A full set of the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources fact sheets are available at the plant for viewing with more detailed information that is required to possess, propagate, buy and sell game birds. Or MNR at 1-800-667-1940

Migratory Game Birds: Geese, ducks, swans and mourning doves.

For information on these please contact Canadian Wild Service of Environment Canada at 905-336-4464

Dry Penning: This has got to be the coolest idea I have heard to fix this common problem! Under bird waterers place slats of some sorts, concrete, plastic or even home made wood and wire. Place so that moisture can escape. Cover your slats with your bedding material and voila!

Thank you

From everyone at Schefter Poultry Processing!