

Raising Show Turkeys

Dale Hyatt
 Texas A&M AgriLife Research Farm
 Manager & Instructor (retired)
 Department of Poultry Science
 Statewide Market Poultry Show Judge
 HLSR Poultry Show Superintendent (retired)



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Broiler vs Turkey: What's the Difference?

- ▶ Most of what we have said about raising show broilers applies to turkeys
- ▶ Key Differences
 - ▶ Timeline
 - ▶ Housing
 - ▶ Equipment
 - ▶ Feeding
 - ▶ Vaccination
 - ▶ Selection



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Turkey Age at Shows

Major Show Turkey Pickup

- Typically, the first week of November

SASSR

- ~13 weeks of age

HLSR

- ~17 weeks of age

Rodeo Austin

- ~18 weeks of age

County/Local Shows

- Varies based off date of show & rules



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Toe Trim on Major Poults

- ▶ Hens only for county/local shows if ordered from Poultry Science Extension
- ▶ Toms serviced for toe trim on major shows poult order
 - ▶ Can help exhibitor identify the sex early on




TOMS

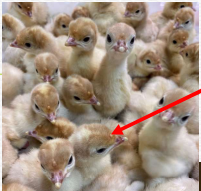



HENS

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Snood Removal - Optional

- ▶ What is desnooding?
- ▶ This is the removal of the snood, which is the fleshy appendage on top of the head of a turkey.
- ▶ Desnooding helps to prevent injury from picking and fighting.
- ▶ The snood can be removed on a day-old poult with the thumb nail and finger pressure or nail clippers.
 - ▶ Usually just done in males



Turkey snood at day of pick up



Snood

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Timeline for Turkeys

- ▶ Adjust equipment to bird size
- ▶ First cull (5 – 6 weeks if spacings an issue)
- ▶ Period between 8 – 10 weeks
 - ▶ Separate sexes
 - ▶ Begin light control on hens if needed
 - ▶ Vaccinate for fowl pox if not done earlier

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Determining if a Hen or Tom

- Look at Secondary Sex Characteristics (not toes)

Toe trim is a service we get by the hatchery for major show poultts

- Not always 100% accurate

When culling and separating sexes:

- Look at secondary sex characteristics!!
- DO NOT only look at toes



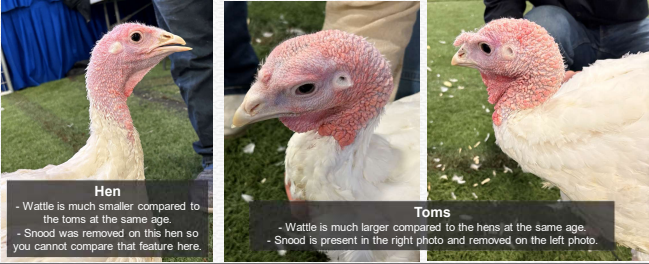
Few things to look at:

- Wattles: toms will be larger than hens
- Snood: hens are skinnier vs toms
- Beards: toms have longer beards than females
- Color: more red and blue on toms as they mature

When in doubt, ASK another turkey family for their opinion!

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Examples of 10-week-old Turkeys



Hen

- Wattle is much smaller compared to the toms at the same age.
- Snood was removed on this hen so you cannot compare that feature here.

Toms

- Wattle is much larger compared to the hens at the same age.
- Snood is present in the right photo and removed on the left photo.

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Why is it important to separate sexes?

- Aggression
- Space Needs
- Lighting Differences



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Housing must be more substantial and likely take up much more space

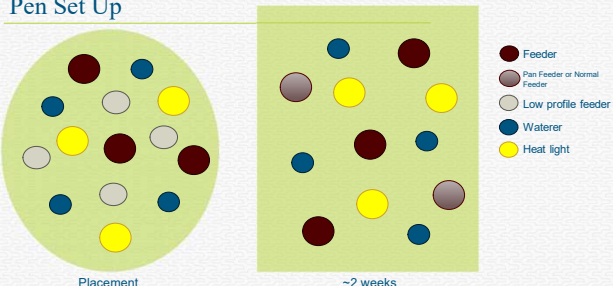
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Floor Space-Turkeys

	Up to 4 weeks of age	4 to 8 weeks of age	Starting at 9 to 12 weeks of age
HENS	2 ft ²	6 ft ²	7 ft ²
TOMS	2 ft ²	6 ft ²	10-12 ft ²

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Pen Set Up

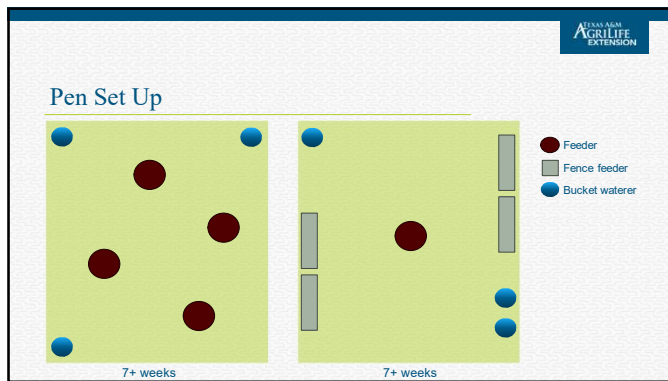


Placement

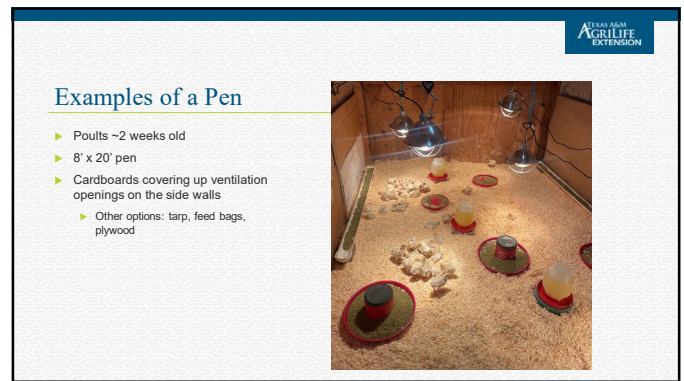
~2 weeks

- Feeder
- Pan Feeder or Normal Feeder
- Low profile feeder
- Waterer
- Heat light

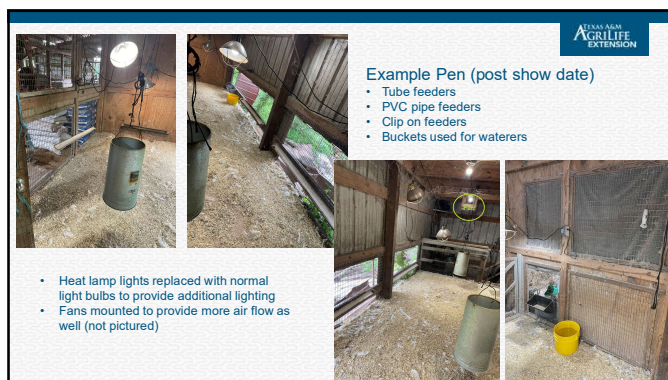
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Drinkers for Turkeys



\$4-5 each
Used early on

\$34 each
Can use

\$13 pan - \$7 bucket
Commonly used as turkeys age and get taller

\$14 pan - \$11 bucket

*can temporarily use marbles in gallon drinkers to prevent poults from drowning

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5-gallon Buckets with Big Birds

Bell Drinkers



Wider trough needed once turkeys get big

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Turkeys and Nipple Drinkers Do NOT Mix



Nipple Drinker

VS



Bell Drinker

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Lighting Programs-Turkeys

- Toms
 - Normal day length or continuous lighting
- Hens
 - If hens will be greater than 15 weeks of age at show time, a lighting program should be considered:
 - Limit day length after 9 - 10 weeks to maintain quality and prevent the onset of egg production (a.k.a. squatting)
 - Reduce day length from 24 hours a little each week until show to delay sexual maturity



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Vaccination of Show Turkeys

- Fowl pox: 8 - 10 weeks of age
 - Can be done as early as 4 to 6 weeks if it is mosquito season

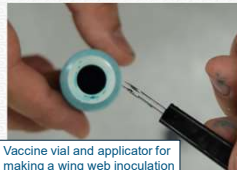



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How to Administer Fowl Pox Vaccine

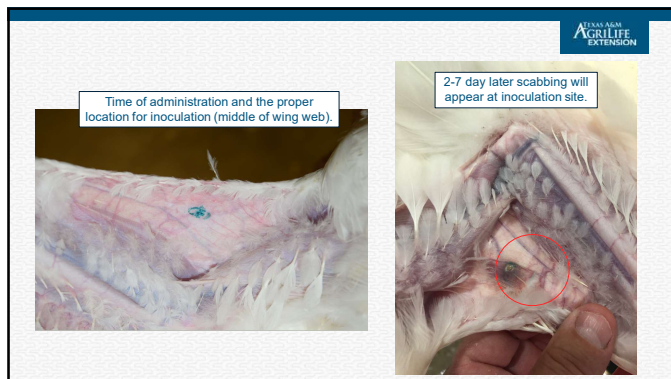
- Dip the applicator into the vial
- Quickly transfer it to the bird
- Insert 2 prong needle into the center of the wing web
- Stick it through and quickly pull it out



Vaccine vial and applicator for making a wing web inoculation



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Signs of Picking - Treatment



- Pick-No-More Lotion or Spray
 - Lotion easier to apply on younger birds (\$10.00)
 - Spray easier to apply on older birds (\$25.00)



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Lifting your turkey at the show

- Picking up a turkey can be hard
 - Especially for younger showers
 - Careful to not break wings



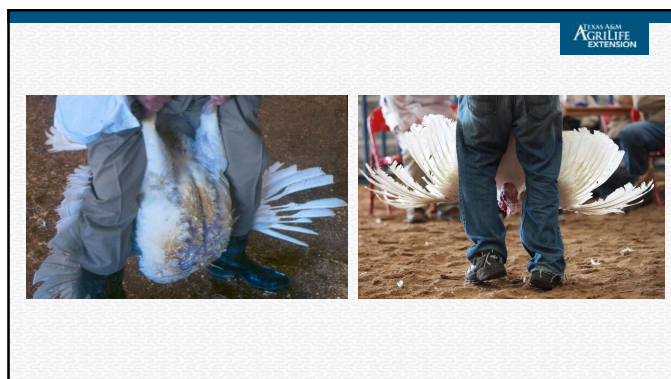
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Step by step pictures of picking up a turkey.

- You can practice on the live birds during the hands-on portion of the workshop too.



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Ideal Height for the Judge at Show



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Questions?



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