

farm and home

POULTRY
NO. 17

FACT SHEET

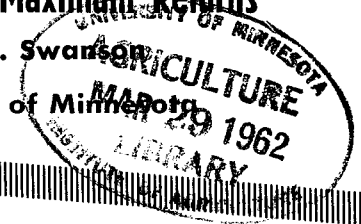
TURKEY FRYER-ROASTERS:

MARKETING:

Working for Maximum Returns

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FACTORS AFFECTING GRADE AND YIELD

Good management is essential to obtain a high grade and yield at market time. The following practices will help you achieve this goal.

1. Select a strain of turkeys capable of developing into top-quality, high-yielding birds.

The genetics of the bird has a direct influence on its rate of growth, body size, conformation and fleshing, rate of feathering, and ease of finishing. All of these are important in determining final grade and yield. Breeders continually strive to improve their stocks in these characteristics. In choosing a strain or cross, consider your past experiences, consult other growers, and study sample test results.

2. Feed well-balanced, growth-promoting rations. Using feeds deficient in any essential nutrients may result in poor fleshing, less finish, and more pinfeathers, adversely affecting grade and yield.

3. Maintain a sanitation and disease control program. Disease not only results in losses through death, but surviving birds may grade out poorly at the processing plant. Avoid marketing birds that have not completely recovered from a disease. Violation of this rule leads to a high condemnation rate and lower grades for passed birds. See Poultry Fact Sheet No. 15 for information on disease control.

4. Use properly designed equipment and correct management practices to minimize bruises, cuts, tears, and discolorations. These defects are major reasons for downgrading. Observe these precautions:

- When ranging turkeys, avoid rough, stony ground or land with brush and tree stumps.
- Avoid injuries by eliminating rough edges on feeders and roosts, low braces on shelters, and high perches.
- Control feather picking and other forms of cannibalism.
- Keep the birds free of external parasites that irritate and discolor the skin.

e) Separate the toms and hens on range, especially during the last half of the growing period, to avoid cuts and tears due to treading.

f) Load the birds carefully at market time to avoid bruises responsible for downgrading.

MARKETING GOALS

The following goals for Grade A birds are possible and can be surpassed with good management. When flocks do not meet these standards, make corrective measures at once.

Class	Percent Grade A
Fryer-roasters	90-92
Hens	92-96
Toms	86-90

Yields are calculated with this formula:

$$\text{Percent Yield} = \frac{\text{Pounds eviscerated (chilled)} \times 100}{\text{Pounds live weight}}$$

Flocks with a low grade generally will have a low yield. Processing procedures can affect yields, too, especially in moisture pickup during chilling. U. S. Department of Agriculture regulations now limit amount of gain in weight. The following yields are typical:

Class	Percent Yield
Fryer-roasters	80-81
Hens	81-85
Toms	81-83

SELLING YOUR TURKEYS

Processors normally call on owners to schedule arrival of birds at the plant before the season starts. The plant will operate more efficiently and the grower is sure of a market for his flock at the proper time.

The grower usually has a choice of selling procedures:

1. Grade and Yield Basis. Payment is based on the number of eviscerated pounds of each grade at a price per pound based on a standard quotation

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or otherwise agreed upon. This method of buying and selling has become increasingly popular and is believed by many to be the fairest to both grower and processor.

2. Live Weight Basis. The buyer inspects the flock at or just before marketing and a live weight price is agreed upon. Final settlement usually does not include weight of condemned birds. It is difficult to predict accurately grade and yield of a flock by a live inspection, so there may be a tendency for the buyer to overbid on poor quality flocks and underbid on high quality flocks. During seasons of low supply, it may be advantageous to sell on a live weight basis because of the competition of buyers.

3. Consignment Selling. A grower may negotiate directly with a volume buyer for the wholesale or retail market. He would have his birds processed at a standard processing charge and

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then shipped to the contracting buyer.

4. Pooling. A number of growers may place processed birds in a marketing pool (usually set up with the aid of the processor). Since birds are accumulated and sold gradually, the returns to individual growers are calculated on the basis of total returns for the pooling period. The grower is thus protected against selling on a day when prices are below average.

5. Direct Sales. Some growers, especially those with small flocks, have found it profitable to process birds and sell them directly to consumers. Premium prices are often obtained by catering to customers who want a fresh-dressed turkey rather than a frozen product. Other customers may want specialty items such as smoked turkey or turkey steaks. This helps increase gross receipts. However, the grower must decide whether the money and time spent in marketing might not be used more profitably in expanding production.

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