

COOPER FARMS

TURKEY BROODING GUIDELINES

Preparing your brooding area

- BEFORE your turkey poults arrive you should have everything set and ready for your newly hatched poults.

Heat

- Temperatures should be approximately 105 degrees directly under your heat source.
- There must be an area for the poults to go where the temperature is around 85-88 degrees. For example, Picture a 3 foot circle under your heat where the temperature is 105 degrees. You should then have a decreasing temperature outside of that circle which gets down to 85-87 degrees. Poults need heat, but also must be able to get away from the 105 degree heat. Keep in mind, the temperature should be no cooler than 85 degrees at any location in the brooding area.
- Make sure there are no air drafts in your brooding area.
- After 5 days, slowly decrease temps so they are at 70 degrees at 5 weeks of age.

Bedding

- 3-4 inches of dry pine shavings should be used as bedding. Newly hatched poults are very weak, so be sure the shavings are level with no "hills or valleys" in your litter.

Feed

- Feed must be easily accessible to your poults. At day 1 they should almost have to run into it. Once the poults find the feed and as they get older, you can fill your feeders a little less and they will know where the feed is.
- Wherever you get your poultry feed, make sure that your starter feed has at least 28% protein. This should be fed for 6-8 weeks. You can back off to a 24% protein from 8 to 12 weeks and finish your birds out with a 18% protein.
- If needed, you can decrease your protein amounts just by mixing a starter and finisher turkey feed to the approximate levels.

Water

- As with feed, make sure your fresh water supply is very easily accessible for your birds. Make sure that you change it and keep it fresh. Water cleanliness is very important for turkey health. Waterers should be washed regularly and if a disinfectant is used make sure the waterers are rinsed thoroughly.

Placing the poults

- Place the poults ASAP in the brooding area. Give them time to get used to their new home. After a few hours, observe how they are sitting. If they are sitting huddled together directly under your heat source, you need to raise the temperature a couple degrees. If they are sitting in the outer area of your brooding space, you need to cool your temperature a couple degrees.
- Observe your turkeys and they will usually tell you what they need. But NEVER make extreme changes. Make 1-2 degree changes and give it a couple hours to see how the birds react.