
AGRICULTURAL AND MECHANICAL COLLEGE
OF TEXAS

EXTENSION SERVICE

CHARLES H. ALVORD, Director

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION WORK IN AGRICULTURE AND HOME ECONOMICS

(The Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas and the United States Department of Agriculture Cooperating).

Distributed in furtherance of the Acts of Congress of
May 8th and June 30th, 1914

L-4

College Station, Texas

2-27-5M

Turkey Raising

The raising of turkeys in Texas is occupying a more important place in the general farming program each year. This is especially true in those sections where there is an abundance of insects to be found on the ranges and in the sections where there are plenty of acorns and wild fruits. Turkeys will secure practically all their food by foraging if they have the range, and this represents practically clear profit to the farmer, due to the fact that very little attention and feed are required in raising turkeys.

SELECTING AND MATING BREEDING STOCK

Select males that have large, deep, frames, broad full chests, long breast bones, broad backs, good sized heads, with bold, alert eyes and legs that are large, straight, and set well apart.

The male should not be mated to more than 8 or 10 hens and should not be related to them. Inbreeding cannot be practiced successfully with turkeys. Hens should have a type similar to that of the male, except they are smaller. Vigor and constitutional strength should always be stressed in both males and females. Each hen should be mated only once for each "clutch" of eggs. After she has gone broody and set, she should be remated to secure fertile eggs. It is better to use males and females for breeding stock that are over one year of age.

NESTS FOR THE HENS

Turkey hens like to lay their eggs in a quiet, out-of-the-way place and will often go a long distance from home to make a nest. They may be induced to lay closer home ordinarily by providing partially hidden barrels, brush tops, or some such place near the roosting place, or they may be

confined in the pen in the morning until they have laid.

It is a good idea to remove the eggs each day but care must be exercised in removing the eggs or the hen will quit her nest. Do not keep the eggs over ten days before setting them. If the turkey hen does not go broody by that time, the eggs may be hatched in an incubator or under a hen, either of which gives satisfactory results. It takes turkey eggs 28 to 30 days to incubate.

BROODING THE POULTS

Provide a good dry broody coop for the poults on new soil and **AWAY FROM CHICKENS**. Keep the mother hen confined for at least a week or ten days, allowing the poults to go in and out at will after the dew has dried off the grass.

FEEDING THE POULTS

AVOID OVER FEEDING! For the first few days, poults may be fed corn bread mixed to a crumbly consistency by the addition of clabber milk, seasoned with salt and pepper, or hard boiled eggs chopped fine and mixed with corn bread crumbs, or stale bread soaked in milk, squeezed dry. Finely chopped onion tops or lettuce may be added as green feed. Feed four

or five times daily, but feed only what they will eat in a few minutes. After the poults are a week or ten days old, they may be turned loose on the range and fed chick feed two or three times daily.

DANGERS TO AVOID

Inbreeding.

Mating males or females that are constitutionally weak.

Too close confinement.

Rearing young poults with chicks or on contaminated soil.

Damp, poorly ventilated roosting quarters.

Unclean, unsanitary brooding conditions for poults.

Lice, mites or blue bug infestation.

For further information refer to Farmers' Bulletin No. 1409, TURKEY RAISING, or write Extension Service, A. & M. College of Texas, College Station, Texas.