**Poultry Community Service Project**

**Raising Turkeys**

BROODING

Before you bring your poults (baby turkey) home you need to have a brooder box ready for them. The temperature inside the brooder box should be between 95 degrees to 100 degrees for the first week and then every week after you should drop the temperature by 5 degrees. Watch the poults and how they behave. If they are too cold, they will huddle together to stay warm. If they are too hot they will seem listless and may pant. Too hot or too cold poults will peep very loudly. Comfortable poults will stay relatively quiet and seem content. On the floor of the brooder box, puppy pads or paper towels work great for the first week. It allows the poults to work on their leg strength without causing splay leg. At the start of week 2 you can switch over to pine shavings. It is NOT recommended to start with pine shavings because the shavings can get caught in the poults crop. Make sure feeders and waterers are always full. During the first couple of days you may need to sprinkle some of the feed on the floor of the brooder so that the turkeys can find it easier. After the poults have been in the box for a few hours, watch them to make sure they are drinking and eating. If they are not drinking, it is a good idea to dip the tips of their beaks into the water. This will let them know there is water available to them. They can leave the brooder box between 6 and 8 weeks old.

FEEDING SCHEDULE

Day old to 8 weeks old feed a 28% protein gamebird feed

8 weeks old to 14 weeks a 20% to 22% protein feed (you can use flock raiser at this age)

14 weeks old feed them 18% to 20% protein feed (sometimes known as grower, but you can leave them on flock raiser if you prefer)

If you are allowing them to free range, then you can start them on the gamebird feed and then switch them to a basic feed once they are old enough to free range.

CLEANING

For the first week you want to make sure the brooder box stays clean. If you are raising a lot of poults at once you may need to clean the box daily. If you are only raising two, then you will probably only need to clean the box once or twice a week. After the first week or when you switch to pine shavings, clean the box as needed. Never allow the brooder box to get to dirty or wet.