

Unit E: Other Poultry

Lesson 3: Exploring the Turkey Industry

Terms

- airsacculitis
- blackhead organism
- coccidiosis



I. Like all other poultry, turkeys in Afghanistan range from common worldwide breeds to local breeds which are a result of cross breeding.

A. The turkey is native to America and all varieties and/or strains originated in the United States.

1. There are three turkey varieties or strains that are more or less readily available.
2. Six or eight varieties have been developed from the original wild Bronze turkey.

B. Some of the more common turkey breeds include:

1. Noorstani
2. Pakistani
3. China
4. Persian
5. Watani (local)
6. Leghorn

C. The most common local breeds are the Kolangi and the Khasak.

1. The Kolangi is quite large.

a. It has long wings and feathers

b. It is also very strong and energetic

2. The Khasak is smaller than Kolangi breed.

Raising turkeys at home can be a fun and rewarding process if simple practices are followed.

A. Provide the turkeys a suitable facility in which to grow.

1. Turkeys are best raised inside but should be allowed to roam.

B. Keep turkeys in a low-density environment (about 1 square meter per bird) and it will be easier to clean up the waste.

1. If turkeys are tightly confined, the area should be cleaned every day.

C. Turkeys are very curious.

1. Young turkeys have been known to drown in a half-filled pail of water—not just one bird, a bucket full of birds, one after the other.
2. However, turkeys need to be provided with food and water as soon as they hatch as most times they will not eat or drink and will die if they are not shown the food or water.

- D. You will need to provide at least three different feeds—starter, grower and finisher.
1. Frequently the grower feed can be made into a finisher by giving the birds access to grains (corn, oats, wheat, etc.).
 2. You should use the feeds as follows:
 - a. 0-6 weeks is the starter ration with 28-30% protein
 - b. 7-13 weeks is the grower ration with 21% protein.
 - c. 14-24 weeks is the finisher ration with 16-18% protein.

3. They will consume about 2 kilograms of starter feed, 9 kilograms of grower feed, and 22.5-25 kilograms of finisher feed.
4. The birds will average 9 kilograms each at 24 weeks of age, with the toms about 11 kilograms and the hens about 6.8 kilograms.

- E. The diseases that may bother the small grower are blackhead, coccidiosis and airsacculitis.
1. All of these diseases are caused by organisms that are specific for each disease.
 2. Keeping these organisms from coming into contact with your birds can be accomplished by isolation and sanitation.
 3. **Coccidiosis** is a disease that thrives in damp, warm litter.
 - a. Clean, fresh water is spilled and litter gets wet, coccidiosis organisms can grow.

4. Airsacculitis is a respiratory disease.

- a. As the name suggests, it is a disease that invades the air sacs: The lungs in the turkey are rigid and are imbedded in the rib area.
- b. The air sacs act as bellows, drawing air into and pushing it out of the lungs through the nasal openings.
- c. This is one of the very few diseases that is transmitted through the egg to the poults.
- d. There is no satisfactory treatment for airsacculitis.

F. Turkeys are very susceptible to the **blackhead organism.**

1. 100 percent mortality can result if they contract this disease and have not been protected with medication.
2. Many chickens carry blackhead organisms without apparent effect on the chicken.
 - a. Therefore, one of the cardinal principles is never raise chickens and turkeys together; turkeys must be completely isolated from chickens.

III. The equipment used for turkeys is similar to that of other poultry.

A. Keep very young poultts warm and dry.

1. Shavings, crushed corn cobs and straw make very good litter material.
2. Sawdust also works, but not as well because it tends to pack when wet.
3. Cover the litter material with cloth, burlap bags or rough paper for the first four or five days.
4. After about four or five days the birds will have located the food and water and will stop eating the litter.

- B. When poults are in the brooder, a fence of cardboard or similar material should be used to corral them underneath the heat source.
1. Turkeys are not smart enough to stay under the heat source so they will need to be directed to it.
 2. Also, they will burn themselves if left to roam freely around a heat source.

- C. A hanging feeder is a good type with which to start the birds.
1. It can be placed on the floor, which will allow day-old birds to eat from it.
 2. As the birds grow, the feeder should be raised.
 3. The birds' shoulders should always be higher than the rump when they are eating.

4. The birds should not reach down for feed after the first few weeks.
 - a. When they reach down for the feed, they frequently bill feed out of the feeder into the litter.
 - b. Feed is very expensive litter.
5. When the birds get older, a covered feeder can be built.
 - a. Mash in one end and grain (corn, oats and wheat) in the other end will do a satisfactory job of feeding the larger birds.
6. The feeder works very well for birds on range as the feed does not get wet and spoil.

Review/Summary

1. What breeds of turkeys are raised in Afghanistan?
2. What are some common turkey management practices?
3. What is some of the equipment used for raising turkeys?