

I also believe that the feed we used from Vermont Organic Grain was not of high quality. I had problems getting a consistent supply of grain from Vermont Organic. I did get several 'webby' bags of grain throughout the season that seemed old or of very poor quality. Feed conversion for Kosher Kings for Trial 1 was still very high even though this was the best birds of the 3 trials. My wife and I had already decided to seek an alternative source of feed for next season even before Vermont Organic folded in November.

Overall I believe that my findings can be used as a starting point for continued experimentation on my farm but do not prove anything concerning the two breeds. There was obviously some problem in the trials especially with the Cornish Cross results as compared to past batches raised on farm. I have never had such small birds raised for so long. I suspect that both the feed and the stock source are to blame but can't prove my supposition. Other growers in my area have complained to both Clearview and Vermont Organic but both claim not to be responsible.

### **Site Conditions**

We did have a drought for much of July, August and September in our area. This drought affected the quality of the second cut hay in our area. We do not hay our pastures as we are still bringing them back into useful production but the drought may have impacted the quality of the forage available to Trial 2 and especially Trial 3.

### **Economic Findings**

Inconclusive. We were hoping to provide a cost comparison for raising Kosher Kings to Cornish Cross birds.

### **New Ideas and the Future**

We are continuing to refine our poultry operation and will continue to raise poultry on pasture with mobile houses. At the local slaughterhouse our birds are always the most alert, the most healthy, and the cleanest. We are returning to using local sources for Cornish Cross birds but will probably order one batch of 30 Kosher Kings again in 2002. The Cornish Cross birds are great meat birds and make the best roasters, but we like the Kosher Kings as foragers and for chicken parts. Our entire approach to feed is changing in 2002. We have a new source of feed out of Pennsylvania and we are thinking of experimenting with mixing our own rangebird ration. I am convinced that Northeast organic growers have not been receiving consistent quality feed even though they were paying a premium price for the feed they were getting. We will be keeping data on our birds and will repeat the experiment. In a few years, we should have some good data comparing the two breeds on pasture.

### **Outreach**

I didn't write any articles for publication because my results were so bad and need to be repeated. I have discussed the results with local pastured poultry producers and as a whole we are questioning the source and quality of our organic feed.

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