

PREFACE:

As a farmer, you are responsible for the food supply of your neighbors, your children, and your community. Some of you may plan on processing your poultry without inspection. Personally, I would not eat a chicken that hasn't been inspected and I certainly would never sell one. You expose yourself to the risk of being responsible for causing someone's serious illness or even death. I repeat, you would be responsible both on a practical level and on a legal level. It is very risky, without any real rewards, to not have your poultry inspected by a licensed and trained meat inspector. The inspector inspects each carcass, each heart, and each liver to ensure that the bird is fit for human consumption. He guards against foodborne illnesses the untrained person may not readily identify.

GROWING: What you can't see will cost you.

1. choose chicks that are from a proven hatchery.
diseased or poor performers will cost you money
2. begin and end with clean, dry litter. Why?
Breast Blisters
Foot problems lead to breast blisters
ie. daily maintenance is required
3. have enough room.
damaged wings, bruises, bruised or scratched skin
4. Know what size chicken you want to grow
estimate -- live weight * 70 % = dressed weight.

TRANSPORTATION: You grew a perfect bird. Now let's keep it that way. Don't kill what you just grew.

1. Discontinue the use of any medications, antibiotics, etc. for prescribed time. It is your responsibility to bring unadulterated poultry to be processed.
2. Remove feed, not water from the birds for 12 hrs.
limits amount of contamination by ingesta, feces
3. use care when catching.
disjointed legs, bruised wings, crowding, death
4. place in a well ventilated box, not over crowded.
keep cool, in the shade, allow airflow
avoid heat stress, suffocation
ex. unacceptable means of transportation: pillow cases, grain sacks, trailers, non ventilated boxes
6. know how many chickens you brought for inspection

LABELING:

All Processor's should have a generic label for your birds. ie. young chicken

If you want to say anything else; Free Range, no Antibiotics, your name, From Vermont, all natural,

Call in advance: 1 month is typical turnaround time for labels, including approval, printing, and shipping

MOST COMMON REASONS FOR CONDEMNING A BIRD

1. Airsacculitis-pneumonia
2. septicemia/toxemia-systemic change
3. leukosis-skin lesions