Benefits of Native Warm Season Grasses as Poultry Bedding

1. Easier to clean out of coops than straw and hay. Straw and hay tend to mat or cake easily. Native warm season grass ground into poultry bedding, because of its shape, doesn't cling to itself like wood shavings. Unlike straw and hay, it isn't hard to pull dirty fibers out of the pen/nest.

2. Improves moisture control in coops. When the bedding is more finely ground, it can wick more moisture if there are wet spots in a pen or coop. It may not dry out as fast as straw or hay, but it will certainly get the moisture contained well. It can be left in the pen if the wetting isn't too severe or scooped out and either composted or used in another application.
3. Has the potential to reduce the incidence and/or severity of foot pad injuries. This is most significant in commercial or backyard broiler coops What happens here is that native warm season grass bedding, if processed such that the longest particles are less than 1.5 inches in length, tend to cake over less severely than soft wood shavings or longer bedding types such as straw and hay. This can prevent excess manure to footpad skin contact. That contact, if not managed properly, could cause ammonia burns to the foot pads, which could then lead to infection of the foot pad, causing the condition that backyard chicken owners know as "bumblefoot".
4. Does not stick to feathers as much as other products. This is most significant in "show bird" applications. Folks that were showing birds at the Bloomsburg Fair and the PA Farm Show liked this quality in our processed bedding.

In addition to the above, growing native warm season grasses and processing them into poultry bedding can lend itself to sustainable agriculture by promoting farming practices and methods that are profitable, environmentally sound and good for farm communities.

Environmental Benefits of Growing Native Warm Season grasses

1. Improves air quality be removing carbon from the atmosphere.
2. Improves water quality be reducing soil erosion due to a deep root system and by sequestering soil nitrogen and phosphorous.
3. Improves soil quality through reduced soil erosion.
4. Improves wildlife habitat for many species from insects to white tailed deer.