

PIG AND POULTRY SPECIAL



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FEEDING THE TRADITIONAL CHRISTMAS TURKEY



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It may still only be June but farmers looking to exploit the Christmas turkey market need to start planning now to maximise returns.

The main priority for Christmas turkey producers is to get birds in the right weight ranges at the right time for orders. Birds need to have good conformation and be well finished with a degree of sub-cutaneous fat. This doesn't happen by accident and requires close attention to the strain of bird, nutrition and general management.

The aim must be to exploit the tremendous capacity for growth. The key driver for growth is protein or more specifically the key amino acids; lysine, methionine, cysteine and threonine. Energy levels are also important with increasing levels in later diets to produce better feed conversions and improved finish on the bird.

Massey Turkey Feeds are formulated from high quality ingredients to produce a premium well grown and well finished bird. Good physical quality ensures minimal dust to maximise palatability, feed intake and growth rate with

minimal waste.

Each diet is specially formulated by our own in-house nutritionist to provide a well-balanced supply of energy, protein, minerals and vitamins to meet the nutritional demands of the modern Christmas turkey. We have developed three feeding programmes which can be adapted to suit your specific production system. The quantity of feed required will vary depending on factors including age at kill, breed, temperature, health and management.

Both Turkey Starter and Grower include a coccidiostat, but Turkey finisher is medicine free, so there is no withdrawal period.

Cheshire farmer Francis Goodwin produces 1700 turkeys for the Christmas market which are processed on the farm and sold in the local area. He is pleased he changed to the Massey Feeds turkey range.

He says: "We were getting extremely frustrated with the service from our previous feed supplier which resulted in us running out of feed on more than one occasion. This had a negative effect on the birds which started to peck and gave them scours which affected growth rate.

"Christmas 2020 was the first year on Massey's turkey feed and we couldn't have wished for better birds with good weights and excellent finish.

"Ordering feed was simple; deliveries were made on the day requested and we never ran out of feed. The result was top quality birds and a lot less stress for us"

See our new leaflet for full information on the range or contact our Poultry Specialists.



The Goodwin family



Ian Mackinson
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A WORD OF CAUTION

With feed accounting for well over 60% of the input costs for most poultry producers, high feed prices continue to put pressure on production costs and margins.

There has been some respite for independent broiler growers with increases in the live weight price. Egg producers, however, continue to face challenges due to COVID-19 restrictions closing food service outlets resulting in an oversupplied egg market.

It may be tempting to consider switching to a cheaper diet but this can be false economy. Lower price feeds are invariably lower in energy, protein and amino acids and chickens will adjust their feed intake to try to maintain a relatively constant energy intake, provided that there are no limitations such as restricted feeder space. For layers, a 2% reduction in diet energy will result in an increase in feed intake of around 2.5g per bird per day. For broilers a similar energy reduction will increase feed conversion ratio (FCR) by between 0.03 – 0.04.



Based on current feed prices for layers, a £10/t reduction in feed price is negated by an increase in feed intake of 4-5g/b/d. For broilers a £10 per/t reduction in feed price is negated by an increase in FCR of 0.04-0.05.

A saving on feed cost can soon be lost due to a higher feed intake and poorer FCR. This also assumes that there is no negative impact on performance (egg production/size or growth rate) from feeding a lower specification diet.

A cheaper diet will not necessarily translate into lower costs of production and increased margin. Feed inputs should be tailored to suit the specific circumstances and requirements of a business.

For further advice contact one of our poultry specialists.

SEASONAL TRENDS IN FEED CONVERSION OF FINISHING PIGS

The feed conversion ratio (FCR) of finishing pigs from 35kg can show strong seasonal trends, according to John Murphy from Premier Nutrition.

Pigs housed in non-environmentally controlled or draughty accommodation may often be below or above their comfort temperature. Performance trends show higher intakes and poorer feed conversion in early 2021, most likely caused by a combination of cold weather and poor straw availability – simply pigs were cold.

Group housed pigs weighing 100kg will require an extra 30g of feed for each degree below their comfort temperature. For example, if they are on average 10 degrees too cold then as intake increases the FCR will deteriorate by about 0.3.

The comfort temperature in ideal conditions is around 18°C for pigs weighing 30-60kg and 16°C from 60-120kg. This ideal comfort temperature is heavily influenced by factors within the producers' control. For example straw depth and wetness, draughty buildings, building insulation and the floor type have a huge effect. The apparent environmental temperature experienced by the pig can range from 8-25°C.

This is further influenced by feed intake as high intakes result in more heat production by the pig.

In commercial farms where the environment is very well controlled we do not see any obvious trends when corrected for weight, suggesting that the trends in feed conversion seen in straw-based finishing is largely environmental.

Outdoor Sows and High Temperatures

As the average temperature increases into the summer it is important to try and keep breeding sows in their comfort temperature. The main mechanisms for pigs to lose heat are through evaporative heat loss and rooting in cool earth.

For sows kept outdoors, there are some practical measures that can be taken including providing muddy wallows and shade and painting farrowing arcs white. A layer of mud can help protect a sow from dangers of sunburn but a stagnant wallow could be a source of infections so it is important that it is well maintained. A good supply of fresh, clean water is always important for healthy livestock.

TRAINEE PIG & POULTRY FEED SALES SPECIALIST REQUIRED

We have an exciting opportunity for someone to join our highly successful monogastric team to help support and develop our business.



We are looking for someone who is keen to develop a career in the animal feed sector, who is highly motivated with strong interpersonal skills. Full training and support will be provided.

If you are interested in more information, please contact Stuart Hinchly at stuart.hinchly@masseyfeeds.co.uk for an initial discussion.

RED MITE CONTROL

In the UK, 87% of hens are affected by red mites with an estimated cost of 50p per hen per year.

Red mites cause anaemia, weight loss, agitation and can spread pathogens. High infestations can cause a reduction in egg production, egg quality, an increase in injurious hen pecking and mortality. For laying farm workers red mites can cause allergic reactions.

Massey Feeds can supply D-Mite®; an in feed natural product claimed to help control red mite in poultry flocks. D-Mite® has been developed by Cargill to support hens during red mite infestations and to help restore feed intake. In powder form, it can be added to feed at the mill.

Recently, a number of Massey customers have been evaluating D-Mite®. While it has helped control and reduce infestations, it does not eliminate them. The best control has been found if D-Mite® is used alongside other red mite treatments, where D-Mite® may be a means of lowering the level of red mite on your farm without the need for awkward spraying with nasty chemicals.

For more information please contact your Feed Specialist.



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