

The Poultry Post

J A N U A R Y 2 0 0 9

TIPS FOR MANAGING POULTRY LITTER

- Raise water lines when needed. Water lines that are too low will cause water to leak onto the floors when birds are drinking. Birds should be able to walk under drinkers and lift beaks up to drink.
- Check water line pressure. High pressure will cause too much water to flow from nipples when birds drink.
- Maintain proper static pressure in houses so that cold air does not fall directly to floors. When fans are on, static pressure should be between .05 to .10.
- Use circulation fans to move warm air to the floor.
- Any litter that is affected by leaks should be removed from the house and replaced with clean, dry shavings.
- Using litter treatments before placement can help lower ammonia levels and reduce ventilation times.
- Prepare houses for brooding by turning on heat and ventilation systems 24 to 48 hours before placement.

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Why is Dry Litter Important?

Birds are in constant contact with litter, which significantly influences bird performance. High ammonia levels will cause blindness and respiratory issues resulting in higher mortality in the flock and a higher condemn rate at the plant.

Breast blisters and ammonia burns on the bottom of the birds' feet will be a result of wet litter. Breast blisters will cause birds to be downgraded at the plant. Footpad dermatitis (ammonia burns on the paws) is caused by excess moisture on the feet. Paws have become one of the biggest sellers in the poultry industry. There is a high demand for the product in foreign markets. Paws with ammonia burns cannot be sold or exported.

In summary, dry litter will help a grower's overall performance. In return, the poultry industry will profit from the selling of the third most demanded part of the chicken, the paws.

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