

The World's Largest Open Access Agricultural & Applied Economics Digital Library

# This document is discoverable and free to researchers across the globe due to the work of AgEcon Search.

Help ensure our sustainability.

Give to AgEcon Search

AgEcon Search
<a href="http://ageconsearch.umn.edu">http://ageconsearch.umn.edu</a>
aesearch@umn.edu

Papers downloaded from **AgEcon Search** may be used for non-commercial purposes and personal study only. No other use, including posting to another Internet site, is permitted without permission from the copyright owner (not AgEcon Search), or as allowed under the provisions of Fair Use, U.S. Copyright Act, Title 17 U.S.C.



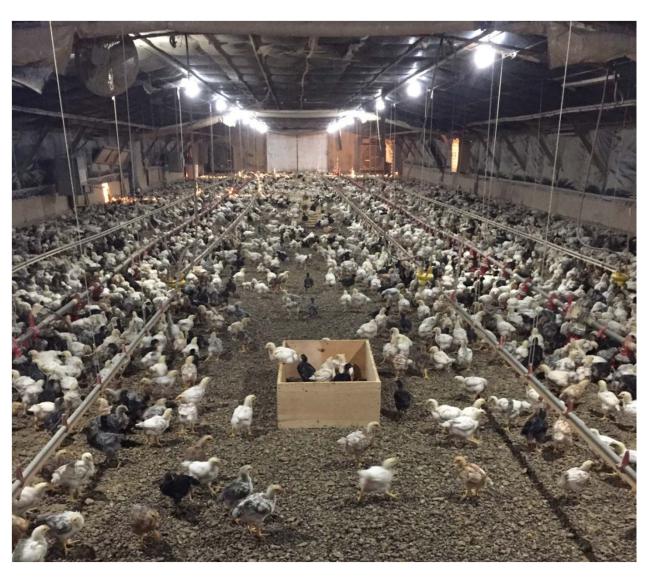
#### Presentation from the USDA Agricultural Outlook Forum 2017

United States Department of Agriculture 93<sup>rd</sup> Annual Agricultural Outlook Forum "A New Horizon: The Future of Agriculture"

February 23-24, 2017 Arlington, Virginia



# Slow Growth Broilers (Alternative Breeds)



#### How to Define?

- Heritage Breed or Cross?
- Daily Weight Gain? And at what age or weight?
- Feather Color?



# A Working Definition

- Working definition = no more than 50gms per day growth (0.11# per day)
- Current Average Growth Rates are about 60gms per day (0.13# per day)
- Large Birds can be well over 70 gms per day (0.16# per day)



#### Other Characteristics

- Colored Feathers
- Active
- Perch
- Hardy
- Farmers enjoy raising chickens like this!
- Older facilities are productive again?
- Love to go outside?
- Preferable meat quality?
- Benefits of a drier chicken house?



## Why?

- Because "we have gone too far" and the current fast growing broiler birds have too many "Growth Rate Related Issues"?
  - Leg Health
  - Feathering issues
  - High Moisture
  - Meat Quality has become an issue
- The Breeder Birds are pretty severely restricted to keep them production (and reproductive)



## What Determines Growth Rate for Broilers

- Feed Intake is the primary factor
  - More specifically protein/energy intake and retention.
- Modern broilers are selected for the high capacity for feed intake.
- Heritage strain broilers have a lower appetite.







#### Genetics

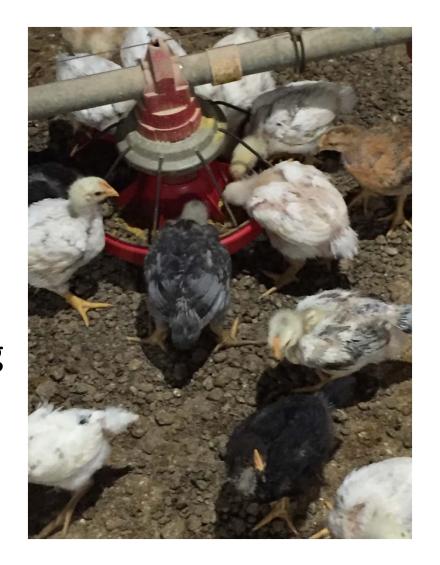
- A pure Heritage Breed or Cross with Commercial Breed
- Crosses will have lower appetites and consume less feed.

#### Nutrition

- Primarily strict Protein Intake
- Birds can partially compensate with higher intake
- Supplementing with whole grains and limit

#### This is a different business

- 7 or 8 more days to 6#s
- Poorer Feed Conversion
- Likely lower chick cost
- Much more active
- Drier litter
- Better Livability
- Less breast meat, more leg meat
- Processability



### **Parents**

#### Male



#### **Females**





## **Broilers**

**Current Modern Breed Cross** 



**Trial Cross 2016** 



Current Modern Breed Cross



• Trial Cross 2016



# They like perches....if they are designed right!





### These are different birds!

