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DAILY WATER CONSUMPTION OF TURKEYS RAISED IN UTAH

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Administration of vaccine and medication by way of drinking water is an important management procedure in turkey production. Most medications and vaccines are calculated on a daily volume of drinking water intake. Proper dosage is critical, and knowledge of water consumption pattern will help assure optimal vaccination and treatment response. Although average national water intake figures are available for turkeys, a guideline based on Utah growing conditions would serve as a more precise health management tool. The consumption pattern in this fact sheet is taken from results obtained at the USU Turkey Research Center in totally confined flocks raised from 1998 to 2000.

The graph on the next page illustrates average daily water consumption for toms and hens. Table 1 lists the daily consumption (numbers have been rounded to nearest 5 gallons). After 14 weeks, daily water consumption in toms varies from less than 200 to over 230 gallons/1000 birds depending on environmental temperature. Ideally, flock water consumption should be monitored for two to three days immediately prior to administering vaccine or medication. This can be done by way of an inline water meter or by shunting water through a pre-measured water storage tank and observing beginning and ending water levels. In reality, however, there is rarely enough time to find out exactly how much water the flock is drinking before treating or vaccinating. The guidelines in this publication may serve as an estimate when actual water consumption cannot be measured. Water consumption varies considerably depending on temperature, feed consumption, and type of waterer. As a rule of thumb, expect less water intake during cool weather (below 60°F) and slightly greater intake with higher



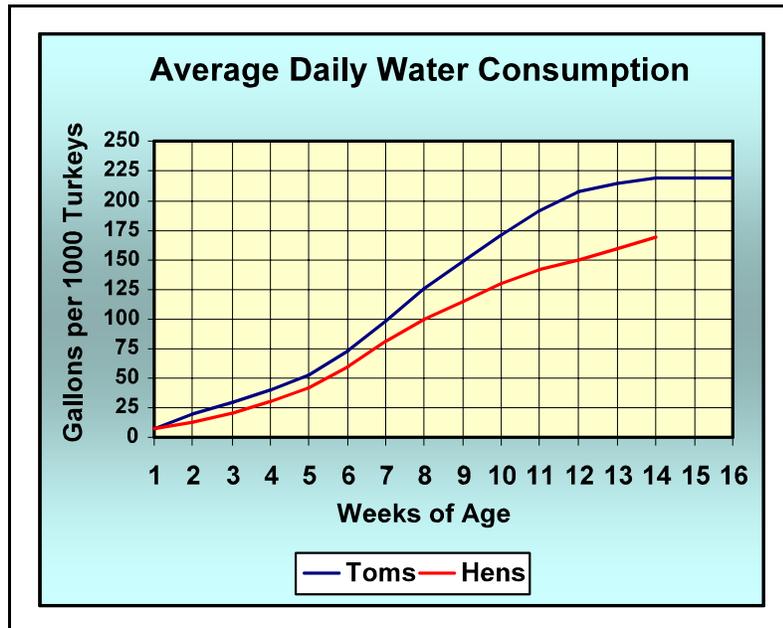


Table 1. Daily water consumption (gallons) per 1000 turkeys.

Week	Toms	Hens	Week	Toms	Hens
1	10	10	9	150	115
2	20	15	10	170	130
3	30	20	11	190	140
4	40	30	12	210	150
5	55	40	13	215	160
6	75	60	14	220*	170
7	100	80	15	220	-
8	125	100	16	220	-

*consumption varies from 200 to 230 gallons depending on environmental temperature

temperatures (75°F and above) than the figures in Table 1.

Vaccines and medication must be administered correctly in order to achieve desired results. Accurate estimation of water intake will help increase the chance of delivering the proper dosage to each turkey for the proper length of time.

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