

# Turkey Care Sheet

## Recommended care for day-old birds:

### Feeding and watering

- Your turkey has just barely hatched and has not eaten or drunk any water. The fastest you can get your poults on feed and water, the better chance they have of surviving.

### Water

- Try dipping your turkey's beak in water very quickly right after you get them home.
  - This introduces your bird to water and they will be more willing to find it and start drinking.
  - You might want to start out with a small waterer that connects to a mason jar until they are a few weeks old. (available at Heber Ranch and Farm Supply Store).
  - Make sure they always have access to fresh clean water out of a bird waterer (available at Heber Ranch and Farm Supply Store).

### Feeding

- Get some turkey starter (available at Heber Ranch and Farm Supply Store), and fill up a bird feeder so that the bird will have full access to the feed whenever they desire.
- Place about a cup of feed on a shallow dish or plate and place it in the center of the cage. Keep it full for a few days.
  - These birds are very curious and will start scratching and eating the crumbs of turkey mash. Once they realize it tastes good, they will continue to eat.
  - After a few days, you can take the plate out and they will find the feed in the bird feeder.

### Keeping the birds warm

- In nature, these baby birds would have to depend on their mother's warm body to keep them warm. They would run around and eat and when they get cold they would go back to their mother for heat and protection.
  - Your birds will need a light that puts off a reasonable amount of heat. You can find hoods to go over the lamp (try Heber Ranch or a pet store) for best results, but this is not completely necessary.
  - Hang the light over the birds in a cage large enough that they can get away from the light if too hot and return when cold.
    - Watch the birds for a while. If they nestle together under the lamp for a long time without moving, they are probably cold. Try lowering the lamp. This should cause them to start moving about looking for food. They also may chirp excessively if they are too cold.
    - If the birds pant with their wings dropped down and never go under the light, they are probably too hot. Move the light up.

### Housing your birds.

- As your birds start to feather and get bigger, make sure they have adequate space to grow, shelter from rain and sun, and clean, dry bedding.
- Don't ever allow your birds to lie in their own filth or in mud. Their breasts will become dirty and they will be rejected at the processing plant.