

# Alternative Species

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Waterfowl

By Marc Metzger

# Topics

- Commercial Breeds
- Water, water, water
- Bedding
- Housing & Space
- Nutrition
- Egg Washing
- Processing
- Marketing



# Commercial Waterfowl

- Ducks for meat production
  - Pekin @ 7&12wks
  - Muscovy @ 12wks
- Ducks for egg production
  - Khaki Campbell
  - White Layer
  - Golden 300
  - Pekin
- Geese for meat production
  - Embden @ 9&16+wks
  - Brown/White Chinese



# Water, water, water

1. Nipple
2. Bell Waterer
3. Trough
4. Pond





## Nipple Water Line

- Cleaner drinking water
- Less wasted water
- Hang above slats
- Make mobile
- Perception
- Bad with freezing temperatures
- Easy to add to water

# Bell Waterer

- Water is played with
- Mud
- Daily cleanout
- Freezing problems



# Pond or Trough

- Difficult to clean
- Wild birds
- Reduced weight gain
- Contamination w/ high population
- Cleaner feathers
- Perception



Photo: Paula Krum

# Bedding

1. Wood shavings
2. Peat Moss
3. Chopped straw
4. Rice hulls
5. Wood (sawdust) pellets
6. Chopped corn husks





Then



Now

# Best Bedding for You

- Locally sourced
- Price vs Absorption
- Top Dressing is Daily to Weekly
- Nest bedding for geese
  - straw/shavings/straw/shavings
- Daily coop moving

# Housing and Space

- BROODING!!!!
- Enclosed house
- Day range
- Mobile coop
- Mobile coop and range
- Full pasture



Brad Taylor



## Good Brooding is Vital

- LOTS of food access
- LOTS of water access
- Clean environment
- Warm (80F ambient, 90F under heater)
- Dry bedding/litter
- Lights
  - Day 1-7 days @ 24hrs light
  - Decrease 1 hour light daily
  - Until 17 hrs or natural

# Density

- Week 0-2
  - 15 ducklings per 10 square feet
- Week 3
  - 3x more space
  - 2 square feet per bird
- Higher density = More bedding
- Daily coop move allows tighter density



# Nutrition

- Starter (0-2 weeks)
  - 2920 calories
  - 22% protein
  - Crumble
- Grower (3-20 wks)
  - 3010
  - 17-19% protein
  - Crumble or pellet
- Layer
  - 2740
  - 17.5% protein
  - pellet

No mash for waterfowl - ever!





# Meat Processing

- 7 weeks or 12 weeks
- Farm or Facility
- Research before ducklings arrive



# MARKETING!!!

- Growing birds is the easy part
- Know your customer
- Demand a high price
- You're not free labor
- Budget your costs



Stahville Colony

# Resources

