

GROWING POULTRY FOR MEAT

Broilers and Broiler/Breeders

History of Broiler Industry

- ▣ 1800s – 1950 – Chickens were considered an extension of the egg industry. Chicken meat was considered a secondary use for chickens.
- ▣ 1950s – Demand for chicken increased, farmers went into debt to raise chickens. The market became saturated and farmers couldn't pay bills, went bankrupt. In 1958 growers created the BC Broiler Grower's Association.



History of Broiler Industry

- ▣ 1960s – Instability in the market. Growers would go through cycles of high and low demand. There was no consistency in prices, leaving many on the brink of bankruptcy. In 1961 growers voted to create a B.C. Chicken Marketing Board ([BCCMB](#)).



History of Broiler Industry

- ▣ BCCMB – Purpose: to provide stability to the industry.
- ▣ Quota: like the egg industry, quota was created that allows farmers to have a certain number of chicken at a time. In 1961 you were given enough quota to raise 1 chicken for every square foot of space in your barn. In total they issued 2,866,850 birds per 12 week cycle.

History of Broiler Industry

- ▣ Starting in 1969, the BCCMB limited the amount of quota any one person could hold. In 2010 the most that single person can have is 250,000 birds.
- ▣ In 1979, the board changed quota so that it allowed a certain amount of weight, as opposed to a certain number of birds.
- ▣ Today one unit of quota equals 1.929 kilograms live weight.

Supply Management

- ▣ Farmers must buy quota before buying chickens (approx \$11/kg).
- ▣ The BCCMB decides how much quota to issue depending on demand. They also help to keep the price of chicken constant.
- ▣ The BCCMB also controls how much chicken is imported and exported.

The Journey

- ▣ Broiler breeders are chickens that lay eggs that will hatch into broilers (eating birds). Farmers have broiler breeders living in a free run situation with both roosters and hens.
- ▣ Eggs are collected twice per day and sent to a hatchery.
- ▣ Broiler breeders will lay between 100 and 150 eggs and then are slaughtered.
- ▣ Broiler/Breeder Video

The Journey

- ▣ The eggs are incubated for 18 days in a tray that rotates them constantly. They are then moved to a “hatcher” for the last 3 days of incubation.
- ▣ Once hatched, the chicks are vaccinated against diseases.
- ▣ They are then sorted, counted and placed into crates for easy transport in a heated truck to the farm.

The Journey

- ▣ The chicks are then carried into the warm, clean barns full of fresh bedding and placed on the floor. There is plenty of feed and water close to the ground so the chicks can find and reach it with ease. The chicks will stay in the barn for 5 to 6 weeks until they are about 2.2 kgs (fryer) or 4.0 kg (roaster). At this time, they will be loaded into crates and sent to the processing plant.

The Journey

- ▣ Before the next chicks arrive, the farmer must clean all manure and dust from the barn and check all feed and water lines.

Feed

- ▣ Chicks are given medicated starter crumble with 22% protein for 3 weeks. This is a blend of premium grains, vitamins, minerals and enzymes for growth and disease resistance.
- ▣ For the next 3 weeks they are fed 19% (protein) grower crumble.
- ▣ Birds are “finished” on a non-medicated 16% (protein) finisher crumble.