

Spend a second per bird with your flock

MAYTOWN — The flock manager should spend about one second per bird each day observing each bird in the

flock or handling birds, freeing caught birds, removing dead birds or improving ventilation, en-

vironment, caring for heat, feed or water and grit

Let's look at cost and returns of spending one second of time per bird per day in the flock, says Penn State Poultry Specialist Herbert Jordan

If you pay a person \$4 per hour to manage a flock of birds, then this payment of 66 cents a minute, managers cost, and .11 cent per second of time spent. So if you spend one second a day for 365 days for one layer-type bird you then spend 365 seconds per year at a cost of 41 cents per year per layer just to observe and manage the flock.

Last year poorly managed layer flocks earned 20 cents per layer per year net income to labor and management, while well managed flocks earned \$1.00 per layer per year, net income to labor and management. We therefore see an 80 cent per bird improvement in income between poor flocks and profitable flocks. So the question is, will you spend 41

cents per layer per year with the risk of earning 80 cents more per layer per year?

Let's look at pullets which grow for 20 weeks or 140 days at one second for flock observation per bird per day or 140 seconds at 11 cent per second cost of manager or a total of 15 cents per pullet in the flock as management cost to look at birds, free caught birds, pull dead birds, care for needs of the bird in environment and nutrition and disease prevention or control.

Net income to labor and management per pullet can be 25 cents per pullet so the question is, can you spend 15 cents to earn 25 cents per pullet per batch? Jordan asks

Let's look at meat birds like roasters which grow to 10 weeks of age or 70 days at one second per day or 70 seconds per roaster as observation time of the flock manager

This means if you observe each and every bird for one second per day during the growing period this costs you

eight cents per roaster to observe the birds, examine them for health, disease or parasites

Pick up dead birds, weigh live birds, post dead birds so that you keep in touch with disease or health disorders

The real question is, can you afford to spend eight cents per bird to receive a better income when birds are sold? If you hire it done, this one second per bird per day will cost eight cents per roaster sold at 10 weeks of age if you pay \$4.00 per hour for a person to manage this flock

If the manager does this himself or herself, then the cost is not eight cents per bird, it is a question of where else can you place your time to earn more or less?

In looking at turkeys, the profit goes up

Let's say you are growing turkeys to 20 weeks or age or 140 days at one second to observe every bird for a

second every day. Thus we see we spend 140 seconds observing a 20 week old turkey, we therefore hire someone at \$4.00 per hour or 11 cents per second or we spend 15 cents more on every turkey on observation time

So the question is, can you spend 15 cents per turkey to improve bird performance, to pick up and post dead birds, to keep feeders, waterers, environment and bird health perfect or as good as you can keep it?

Remember, the birds' performance pays the bills, the farmer only writes the checks

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