

# Setup And Care For A Delivery of Adult Birds

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# Getting Ready for Delivery

- **Have pens ready before your expected delivery**
  - Make sure feeders and waterers are full
  - Plow any snow found around pens/barns for easy access before bird delivery arrives
  - Clean up all clutter – have a clear path for unloading
  - Have overhead lighting
  - Place a path of gravel for driveway and up to pens
- **Have plenty of space to pull up to pens to make unloading much easier**
  - 55 feet is the suggested space to provide ample room for our larger trucks
- **For larger loads, please consider providing our drivers with assistance unloading\***



*\*Pictured is one of our Kenworth trucks connected to the trailer. We send full loads of birds across the country and into Canada.*

## Types of Crates

*The big crate, shown below on left, can fit up to 10 roosters. Used in colder months, these crates help our roosters keep their tails.*



**608-757-7881**

*The small crate, on right, can fit up to 5 roosters, 10 hens, or 15 partridges. Used more commonly warmer months, this crate allows for increased airflow. Please contact us if interested in the in the blue prints for either design.*



**800-345-8348**

## *Indoor Holding Facilities*

## *Outdoor Holding Facilities*



### **ADVANTAGES**

- Less square footage needed per bird
- Less chance of fighting during spring months' breeding cycles
- Waterers won't freeze (if barn is warm enough)
- Birds will be dry for next day's release
- Can easily catch bird without the need for overnight crating

### **DISADVANTAGES**

- Need to continuously monitor water
- No opportunity for birds to eat snow, if the weather permits.
- Possibility of overheating in warmer months
- Can become dusty

### **ADVANTAGES**

- Birds will stay acclimated to weather conditions
- Birds will be aware of the natural surroundings when released
- In the northern United States, no need to water when snow is on the ground

### **DISADVANTAGES**

- Birds exposed to all elements
- Birds need some type of shelter, such as huts, during extremely cold months, especially along the fence line
- Predator issues
- If choosing outdoor, it is still a good idea to have some sort of shelter, so the birds will be dry for the next day's release

## *Similarities Between the 2 Holding Facilities*

- **Feeders-** .7 linear inches per bird is recommended. For example, A feeder that is 140 inches in circumference will be sufficient for 200 birds
- **Feed to maintain an active and healthy gamebird, give them a 14% pelleted maintenance gamebird feed. We recommend against using a higher protein percentage, as it will sugar and the birds will gain weight quickly. We also recommend against using whole grains for an extended period of time.**
- **Waterers – Make sure birds have water 24 hours a day**
- **Entrance – Should be at least 6 ½ ft tall with a 3 ft wide door for unloading crates**



## Outside Holding Facility

- **Density**

- Based on hens, roosters, or a combination, 10 square feet per bird is best\*
- 5 square feet per bird is allowed for **short** periods of time
- \* *with or without blinders*

- **Cover**

- A clear path is recommended around the entire pen, with a path down the center

*For example, a 12,000 square foot pen, (80ft X 150 ft.), we recommend at 5 ft. path around the perimeter with a 5 ft. path down the center of the long way*

- **Benefits**

- Decreases fighting between birds
- Allows birds a place to hide
- Birds will be better acclimated for releasing into the wild because they are used to the cover and will even learn to eat from it

- **Protecting from the cold elements**

- Provide wind breaks along the North and West side of your pen, this can be done using shay cloth or plywood

- **Protecting from the cold elements (Continued...)**
  - Provide a shelter or huts with straw for warm bedding, as the primary reason for birds getting cold comes from the ground
- **Inclement delivery**
  - Extra care is needed when birds arrive
    - Water and feed should be placed at the point of unloading, and on all fence lines for the first day
    - Cracked corn should be sprinkled on ground leading to permanent sources
  - If pens are muddy due to excessive rain, or spring thaw, spread straw around the most-used locations, such as feeders and waterers, (corners and low spots in the pens are the last to drain)
  - If posts are frozen in the ground, free them before delivery
- **Drop nets will keep mortality down by preventing birds from flying across the pen, and into posts**
  - If able, simply take down the prop posts that hold up the top
- **Predator control**
  - We recommend electric wire fencing around pens and traps, they can be buried around the perimeter and flared one foot out
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# Indoor Holding Facility

- **Density** – should be determined by length of time you are keeping the birds
  - Minimum recommendation is 2 square feet per bird—up to 10 days
  - 5 square feet per bird is best if holding for longer than 10 days\*
    - \* *based on hens or roosters combined, with or without blinders*
- **False ceiling**
  - Hang netting on the inside of barn several feet below light fixtures, roof, and away from the walls, this will protect the birds from running into these items and dying
- **Light control**– should be determined by length of time you are keeping the birds
  - Advantages of light control, either with dimmer, or natural
  - Less square footage needed per bird
  - Ease in upkeep of birds
  - Can trick birds from going into mating season to keep down aggression
  - Use either a dimmer switch or cover windows if necessary
- **Bedding**
  - Birds should not be on direct cement or dirt, whichever your floor type is in your facility
  - Chopped straw or wood chips is recommended
  - Hay should not be used as bedding as it quickly becomes matted
  - Adding a bale of hay to the building is recommended
  - 1 small bale for each 500 pheasants, strings broken but not spread\*
    - \**Leave no wire or twine in the holding area*
- **Exhaust fan**-is a must
  - Circulates out the ammonia smell in bedding
  - Circulates the air
  - Moves the air in warmer
- **Divider wall**- helps differentiate between birds that have been in the pen longer and new birds that have just been delivered
  - First in/first out
  - Develop a system to keep the last birds separate from new arrivals

- **Clean out pens immediately when the season ends**
  - This step will keep next year's birds healthy
- **Sanitation must be done prior to receiving the first load of birds**
  - Clean and wash facility and all equipment with hot water before sanitizing
  - Allow area to completely dry
  - Lightly spray a mixture of 3 parts water and 1 part bleach over all cleaned surfaces
  - Allow to air dry

*Pictured below are examples of indoor facilities*

*Indoor holding facility  
—notice no windows.*

*Entryway into holding pen—walking through 2 sets of doors to get outside helps prevent birds from escaping. Avoid doors that open directly to the outside.*

*A pulley system, with a counter-weight will help keep your entryway door secure.*



*A small catch area, on the other side of the entryway door, makes it easier to catch the birds. Birds are driven from the larger holding pen into this area.*

*2" netting above the birds will prevent birds from roosting on the rafters and flying into the ceiling. Make sure netting is tight as to prevent the birds from wrapping up in it. Also note the blue and green lights on the ceiling. Blue and green lights are known to keep the birds calm and less aggressive.*

*Use boards in the corner to prevent loss due to piling, this is much more critical for partridges than pheasants.*

*Exhaust fans keep the air fresh. Use light traps on the outside of the building to keep the sun light from entering the building.*

# *Special Care for Chukars, Redlegs & French Redleg Partridge*

**At MacFarlane Pheasants, Inc.** Chukars and Chukar/Redlegs are raised on wire in barns. As they get older, they are allowed to go outside. Even in the coldest of temperatures, they have access to a building, where they spend their nights. They are an arid bird. During the winter months, we will hold them in an unheated barn to keep away from the severe cold, wind, and deep snow.

***If at all possible, Chukars and Chukar/Redlegs should be put in an inside holding facility.***

- If holding birds inside- 1 square foot per bird is adequate
- If holding birds outside- 4 to 5 square feet per bird is recommended
- Birds should have at least .5 linear inches of feeder space per bird to reduce feed competition
- Birds should have 1 Plasson for every 300 to 350 birds.

**Take the following precautions if bird must go outside:**

- Make sure birds have shelter
- Put a layer of straw down under the shelter to keep them off the cold ground
- Put feed and water under the shelters  
(these birds don't eat snow like other gamebirds)
- Make sure there are adequate wind breaks in the pen
- Under extreme temperatures, feed a little bit of cracked corn  
(this will give them some quick energy).
- De-worm birds every 30 days

# *Special Care for Hungarian Partridge*

Hungarian partridge are raised much like pheasants, transitioning from the brooder barns to outside flight pens. Like pheasants, these birds can be aggressive, and are raised with an anti-pick device called a bit. Keeping bits on can prevent picking problems. These birds come into production in early February, and hens and roosters **must be** separated around this time. Holding these birds inside is usually best, but if they do go outside, follow the same precautions as used for Chukars, French, and Chukar/Redlegs.

- If holding these birds inside, 2 square feet is adequate
- If holding birds outside, 6 to 7 square feet per bird is recommended
- Birds should have at least .6 linear inches of feeder space per bird to reduce feed competition
- Birds should have 1 Plasson for every 300 to 350 birds.

## *In a Nutshell*

- On average, 100 full grown pheasants will drink 3 gallons of water per day
- Water consumption increases markedly with each 10 degree temperature increase over 25° F
- On average, 1 pheasant will eat 1 pound of feed per week, increasing amounts as the temperature decreases
- Clean out all birds from pens before putting in new ones
- If being kept outside, keep hens and roosters separate after March 1
- Keep the top net from sagging on both indoor and outdoor facilities to prevent birds from getting caught in it

*When in doubt, call MacFarlane Pheasants, Inc.*