

CONSIDERING THE CODES

FEATHER PECKING AND CANNIBALISM IN BROILER BREEDERS AND TURKEYS

Code Requirements

- Corrective action must be taken at the onset of an outbreak of feather pecking or cannibalism.
- Injured birds must be promptly segregated for assessment and provided with appropriate care and/or treatment, or euthanized.

REFERENCES

- National Farm Animal Care Council. 2016. Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Hatching Eggs, Breeders, Chickens and Turkeys. Available at: <https://www.nfacc.ca/codes-of-practice/chickens-turkeys-and-breeders>. Accessed: 10/07/19
- National Farm Animal Care Council. 2013. Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Hatching Eggs, Breeders, Chickens and Turkeys: Review of Scientific Research on Priority Issues. Available from: https://www.nfacc.ca/resources/codes-of-practice/chickens-turkeys-and-breeders/Poultry_SCReport_Nov2013.pdf. Accessed: 10/07/19
- National Farm Animal Care Council. 2013. Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Pullets, Layers, and Spent Fowl: Poultry (Layers): Review of Scientific Research on Priority Issues. Available from: https://www.nfacc.ca/resources/codes-of-practice/poultry-layers/Layer_SCReport_2013.pdf. Accessed: 10/07/19

How will the requirements improve my animals' care and strengthen my operation?

- Feather pecking can be normal exploratory behaviour, but can become serious. Feather pecking that results in bleeding can lead to cannibalism.
- Beak trimming can decrease damage from feather pecking and decrease cannibalism.
- Enrichment that encourages forage and perching behaviours may decrease feather pecking and cannibalism.
- Decreasing light intensity is another method to decrease feather pecking.
- Feather pecking and cannibalism may be a result of nutritional deficiencies and feed should be examined.
- Preventing feather pecking should be priority, as it is a difficult behaviour to stop.

