

BEST ALTERNATIVES

Select the Best Alternative

Rank the following marketing, processing and poultry management options with a score of 1 to 3 where 1 = no, 2 = somewhat, and 3 = yes. Add the numbers up and look for the alternative with the highest score. That alternative may make the most sense for you and your family. Get input from others who will be involved in the growing, managing, processing, and marketing of your flock, so that the choice you make has the support of those around you. We recommend contacting ATTRA for a copy of *Growing Your Range Poultry Business: An Entrepreneur's Toolbox*. This publication offers a decision-making tree for poultry marketing and processing that can help you further evaluate opportunities.

MARKETING Rank the following with a score of 1 to 3 where: 1 = no 2 = somewhat 3 = yes	CONTRACT MARKETING (integrator)	INTERMEDIARY MARKETING (retailers, wholesalers)	DIRECT MARKETING (farmers' market, subscription, or CSA buyers)
Do you farm near buyers associated with this marketing alternative?			
Do you have the skills to market under this alternative?			
Can someone perform the labor/marketing work that may be required under this alternative?			
Can you satisfy legal obligations associated with this alternative?			
Do you have few competitors for this market?			
Will this alternative require little or no promotion/advertising?			
Does this alternative promise price premiums?			
Is this alternative compatible with your values?			
Will this alternative help you reach goals?			
Does your family support this alternative?			
TOTAL SCORE			

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PROCESSING

Rank the following with a score of 1 to 3 where:

1 = no 2 = somewhat 3 = yes

	ON-FARM MANUAL	ON-FARM MOBILE	OFF-FARM CUSTOM HIRE
Do you have the resources needed? (Nearby facility or own site, building, water, equipment, skills, finances)			
Can you satisfy the legal obligations (construction, health, licensing) associated with this processing alternative?			
Does this alternative create marketing flexibility (allow you to market off-farm or out-of-state)?			
Is this alternative financially feasible?			
Is this alternative compatible with your values?			
Does this alternative help you reach goals?			
Does your family support this alternative?			
TOTAL SCORE			

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MANAGEMENT Rank the following with a score of 1 to 3 where: 1 = no 2 = somewhat 3 = yes	INDUSTRIAL	TRADITIONAL	DAY-RANGE	DAILY MOVE PENS	ORGANIC
Do you have the resources? (land, building, water, equipment, skills, finances)					
Can you satisfy legal obligations (construction permits, licenses)?					
Does this alternative generate marketing flexibility?					
Does this alternative provide income security?					
Does this alternative complement other enterprises?					
Is this alternative compatible with your values?					
Does this alternative help you attain goals?					
Does your family support this alternative?					
Can you easily exit poultry production under this alternative if you choose to do so?					
Can you salvage equipment and other investments necessary under this alternative should you choose to exit poultry production?					
TOTAL SCORE					

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Enterprise plans can help make your idea a success. By mapping out your poultry enterprise ideas, explaining them on paper, and developing a budget, you and your family will be in a better position to make it really work. An enterprise plan will be invaluable if you intend to secure financing for new equipment or if you are interested in developing cooperative marketing and processing relationships. An enterprise plan can help you spot problems on paper before investing time, money, and other resources. Last, but not least, an enterprise plan is a permanent record of your goals, projected output, sales estimates, and financial returns. In other words, an enterprise plan serves as a monitoring tool from which to evaluate the enterprise once up and running. Are you meeting your goals? Are your birds performing as expected? Are sales materializing? If not, why not?

Below are some questions to help you develop a poultry enterprise plan. Answer these questions for the marketing, processing, and management alternatives you've chosen. Use your answers to these questions to begin writing a plan for your poultry enterprise. Be sure to look up CIAS' *Generic Poultry Enterprise Budget* and NCAT's *Growing Your Range Poultry Business: An Entrepreneur's Toolbox* in **Resources**.

Marketing

Who are your customers?

What do they want?

Where do your customers shop: farmers' market, retail outlet, other?

Do you have any competitors?

How will you advertise products and reach customers?

What are your legal handling obligations?

How will you deliver your products?

What will your products sell for (\$)?

How much do you expect to sell (sales volume)?

How much income do you expect to earn from poultry product sales (gross)?

Processing On-farm

How many eggs and birds will you process each season?

Will you process manually or mechanically?

Where will you set up your processing facilities?

What type of equipment and supplies will you need?

Where will you get your equipment and supplies?

What will equipment and supplies cost?

How much time will it take to process eggs and birds?

Will you have help?

How much will you spend on labor?

What type of permits and inspections will be required?

How will you store products?

Processing Off-farm

Is there a custom processor located near by?

Will this processor:

Handle the species you plan to market?

Use your recipes or labels?

Handle birds year-round?

Perform ethnic slaughter?

Processing Off-farm (continued)

Is the processor inspected at the federal or state level?

Is the processor custom exempt?

Is the processor certified organic?

Does the processor require a minimum?

What are the processor's fees?

What type of packaging is offered?

Production

What type of management system is compatible with your market?

Will this management system allow you to operate year-round or seasonally?

How will you control disease and manage mortalities?

Will you enjoy this type of management?

Does this management system complement other enterprises on the farm?

How much land is required?

What type of buildings will be needed?

What type of equipment and supplies will be needed?

Do you have the physical resources to manage your birds this way?

If not, how will you acquire these resources?

Finances

How much money do you want to generate from the poultry enterprise?

What will your total start-up expenses total for buildings, equipment, and supplies?

What will your annual operating expenses total for marketing, processing and production?

What is your expected gross income/sales revenue?

What is your expected net return/profit?

Do you have good financial records?

How much can you afford to invest in the enterprise?

How much price variability are you comfortable with?

Do you need to generate cash from the enterprise year-round?