

Guide:

The guide below is intended to assist you in your incubating techniques and does not guarantee the fertility or hatch rate of purchased eggs. There are way too many factors that can affect having a successful hatch rate and some that are just simply out of anyone's control. The guide below is the sole opinion and techniques in which SHPF uses, but other options may be available when hatching pheasant eggs. We use what works best on our farm and can be altered to fit customer's needs at any time.

Common causes of Poor Fertile/Hatch Rates:

Others may differ from this but if you are expecting a 100% hatch rate, that is not being realistic and you may want to reconsider from hatching your own eggs!!

Fertility and hatch rates will vary on many-many factors. Examples: Weather, courting of breeders, and time from the egg being layed to being placed in the incubator. In the beginning of the season sometimes a male or female may not be ready for courtship and outside temps can play a factor in fertility as well. Every week we log fertility on all of our breeding stalls. Any stall under 85% fertility will not ship!! Normally we have 85%-95% fertility rate and of the eggs that are fertile we have a 70%-80% hatch rate. Having realistic expectations from the start will save you from future let down and disappointment.

Handling of US Mail: All packages that leave our farm are hand delivered to our local post office. Once your package leaves our hands we have absolutely no control of what happens from that point to when you receive the package. We package each egg individually then in an egg carton and then secure the egg carton in a box and mark "fragile" all over the package for the postal workers to see. All packages are insured up to \$50 and must reported to USPS immediately.

Temperature of eggs during shipment: It is ideal that eggs be shipped between 50-72 degrees. Ordering eggs in the hot summer months can possibly be a bad idea. Your eggs may start to incubate during shipment based on geographic location and time of year of shipping, but the choice is yours so plan accordingly.

Delivering of eggs: If you are expecting a package in the mail we recommend that you track your package!! If your package is outside in the sun and its hot, your eggs may have already started the incubation process. If you are not going to be home you can request a "hold for pick-up" at post office when ordering. Some post offices are heated/air conditioned and may be a better idea for your situation.

Jarring of eggs during shipment: After receiving eggs from the mail, let them sit for 12-24 hours so the they can settle from there journey. Do not store in areas above 72 degrees.

Storing of Eggs: Eggs are shipped 6-30 hours from being layed. We store all our eggs in cooling rooms before shipment. Eggs start to lose fertility 8-10 days from being layed.

Cleaning of Eggs: We do not clean eggs before shipment. All breeders are indoors and away from the outside elements that can affect from having dirty eggs. Eggs are collected 3-4 times a day.

Incubator temperature: Not all incubators are the same!! Read your owners' manual for exact temperature specifications. A few degrees off does make a difference!!

Candling: We candle our eggs on the 7th and 21st day of incubation to check fertility. We take a flashlight made to see the growth of the chick. We look for blood vessels and air sac indicating the chick is forming. All eggs that do not have any growth are removed and destroyed.

Incubator Humidity: 45%-55% humidity for the incubation process and then 55%-65% for hatching.

Incubator Air Flow: Stay away from just “still air” incubators. Air circulation is a must for the incubation process. The heat needs to circulate around the whole egg, not part of it. If you can add an air circulator to your incubator, we recommend it!

Incubator Egg Turner: Auto egg turners help a lot! It minimizes the open and closing of your incubator. On the 21st day of incubation you want to take eggs out of your turner and get prepared for your hatch. If you don't have a turner you have to do it manually which can affect your hatch rate, but turn your eggs a minimum of twice a day.

Pipping: Normally Pheasants will start to pip through their shell 2-3 days after you stop turning the eggs. You will hear them chirping in their egg, this is normal.

Hatching: Normally on day 24 your chicks will start to hatch. Don't take them out of the incubator until they are dried puff balls!! If your chicks don't hatch on this day give it a couple more days as temps play a role in hatching. If you are over 28 even 30 days they most likely will not hatch.

Helping the Unhatched: Some chicks may have a difficult time getting out of their egg. We normally don't help them. If they aren't strong enough to get out of the egg, life for them will be a struggle. If you choose to help them with the hatching process results may vary.

The Unsaved: Some birds that hatch may have some type of malformation. Some examples are crooked toes or necks, being spastic, sprawled legs, pasty vents, and yolk not completely enclosed in chicks. Why this happens can be based on numerous factors and what you do with them are your choice. Some conditions can be treated others may be unfixable.

Power Outage: It's horrible when you hear thunder and you know your incubator is running or you wake up and your power is off. These are things you can't control. Fortunately, we have alarms and generators when the power goes off but what do you do when you don't? First off call the electric company immediately and report an outage. Do not open up your incubator. If the power is off for a few minutes you may be ok but if minutes turn into hours the fate of your birds may have been determined...

Overall keep in mind that patience is a virtue!! It's exciting to hatch your own eggs, but you can't let the anticipation get to you by opening and closing your incubator all the time. This should only be done when candling, taking eggs out of your turner, and adding water for humidity. Fluctuating temperatures can be catastrophic to your hatch!! Results will vary for everyone as you can now see there are so many factors that play a role in the incubation process. If you have any questions or concerns with that was not discussed feel free to contact us!