

eyes and ears open and be conscious of what those needs are now and how they might grow or change in future. The palliative care at home issue is a good example of Helen listening to the hospital and what their plans and needs are. We are open to ideas, but we don't want to duplicate. We're not trying to build an empire or take from anyone else.

Helen: We certainly wouldn't jump into something without consultation.

Are you meeting all your aims at the moment?

Helen: I'm quite excited at the moment, I think we're on the cusp. I'm excited about the pastoral care and being involved in the community in a bigger way. And gaining tax-deductible gift status. We're developing a website and we're looking at getting a credit facility. That all excites me that by becoming better known our support grows and we're able to provide more services to the people who need it most.

Would there be a point where you'd be swamped?

Peter: From a financial perspective, that happened a couple of months ago. We just ran out of money. We had to have the honest discussion with clients that we just couldn't help financially at that point, but was there anything else we could do for them. It was the first time and the wonderful thing was the community rallied and gave more donations.

Is there anything you would like to say to the Braidwood community?

Peter: Just how really, really grateful we are to the Braidwood community, because all our money comes from the community and they've really supported us.

Helen: And especially the Braidwood Community Bank, the Lions and Lodge of Truth.

To contact Braidwood Life Centre, please drop into the Anglican Hall, Wilson Street, on Thursdays between 10.00am and 12 noon, or call the BLC phone on 0437 989 993, or Peter Malone on 0438 461 333.

Donations can be made via the BLC donation tins in various locations around town or by making a deposit into the Braidwood Life Centre Inc. account at the Braidwood Community Bank (BSB: 633-000, Account: 142477629)

To become a member of the BLC, it costs only one dollar and you can help your community for a lifetime! What a bargain!



Talking turkey

If you're interested in raising your own Christmas dinner you should have started before now. Bronwyn provides the tips for next year if you want to raise your own

SERIOUS PLANNING to ensure you have all the ingredients, has to start early. The turkey poults need to be ordered by the end of July for delivery by the end of August. These are delivered or picked up as day olds and as they are babies (and very cute I might add) they have of course to be kept warm and cosy. You will need a heat source and a secure space. Ideally you should set up the brooder area 48 hours before the poults arrive. This is particularly important in cooler areas like Braidwood. This gives a chance for the bedding material to warm up and to

ensure that the heat source is operating properly. You are now ready for their arrival. All poultry brought in this way is transported in the first 24 hours from hatching as they do not need to eat or drink during this time.

There are three important aspects to raising young turkeys:

- Keeping them warm
- Feeding
- Keeping them healthy

Of course these aspects are part of the basic tenets of animal husbandry. Our animals are raised with loving care. This does not mean that they are

treated as pets but it does mean that we treat them with respect. We care about what they eat, their health, their housing and their environment. They live happy lives and this is very important to us. An animal that lives a happy health life will provide quality food. So just as with organic gardening you need vigorous health soil so that you have vigorous health plants, we believe you need vigorous, healthy, happy animals to raise healthy meat.

So the poults have arrived and are ensconced in their brooder space. Turkey poults look about the same size as chickens when they hatch however they are nowhere near as robust. In the first few days they often need encouragement to eat and drink. Placing bright sparkly objects in their water and food bowls can help greatly. While poults may not be as robust as chickens, or as smart at this stage, they are incredibly curious. Bright shiny things really get their attention and rouse their curiosity.

The feeding schedule becomes the most important aspect of raising turkeys and for that matter all poultry for meat. It starts from the day of their arrival until the day they leave for the abattoir in 16 to 20 weeks time.

We mainly feed the turkeys a home-made mash. We don't rely on prepared pellets. We consider pellets as a convenience food. That is, it is mass-produced, homogenized and quantified into a one size fits all. We use pellets when we are busy etc but not as a staple diet. By feeding mash we can individualize, adjust and modify specifically to the animals needs. So as I have already said, organic gardening relies on the principle of healthy soils to create health plants likewise to sustain health animals resistant to disease they need to be raised on healthy soils and good food. All animals require healthy gut activity to maintain the balance of parasites and resist disease. By feeding our turkeys a homemade mash we can add mineral and herbal supplements to maintain their health. So just as Kentucky Fried Chicken is cooked with a blend of secret herbs and spices Wynlen House turkeys eat a blend of herbs and minerals.

As poults they will get fed up to six times a day and by the time they are a month old this will have reduced to four times a day and will continue at four times a day until they are ready for processing. Feeding turkeys is a major activity.

Keeping turkeys healthy has its own challenges. Turkeys do not build up immunity to the poultry disease called

BRONWYN'S POULTS IN



THE OVEN

blackhead that is present wherever you keep chooks. Up until recently a blackhead preventative medication was included in all pelleted turkey food. However this product was withdrawn from the market and has not been replaced. All the books on raising turkeys will tell you not to raise turkeys on the same property with chooks but if you are producing on a small scale this is not really practicable. Blackhead is a protozoa carried by worms. Once the protozoa has been ingested it will work its way through the gut wall and into the liver. It causes death quite quickly. A key aspect to managing blackhead is to manage intestinal worm infestations. However as the blackhead protozoa can also be carried by earthworms other preventative measures need to be taken. This can include removing all soil from your property to a depth of 2 feet. I kid you not this is one of the solutions offered. But on a more realistic basis we have been using herbs with reasonable success. So apart from the mineral supplements of seaweed, dolomite, sulphur and copper given to maintain healthy gut

activity and reduce intestinal worms we also feed the turkeys garlic, oregano and St Mary's Thistle.

Garlic is an all round antibacterial and health giving herb.

St Mary's Thistle is used to support the liver and maintain liver health and oregano maintains stomach health. More particularly oregano contains plant phenols that stimulates the shedding of the stomach lining that occurs naturally in poultry and by this process will also assist with the expulsion of worms especially if given at the time of a full moon when worm gut activity is at its highest.

The recipe

In late September early October you need to ensure that the herbs and veggies you plan to use are growing well. Turkey thyme – great with turkey and other poultry, sage, oregano. We tend to go for salads made from what's in the garden. Possibilities include:

- Broad bean, garlic and coriander
- Cabbage and khol rabi coleslaw with a garlic and mint mayonnaise
- Green salad with fresh beetroot and shelling peas.
- Broccoli with pine nuts and garlic

In November harvest the garlic that was planted in April. In December take the turkeys to the small farm abattoir at Bega.

Finally — you are ready to cook the turkey.

Turkeys grow rapidly and are delightful creatures to raise. They are very human focused, much more so than any other poultry and it is very easy to flock and herd them. They will listen to what you have to say and like to participate in many farms activities and will chatter away in a melodious dtldlltejtjt. Happy eating.



SLOW FOOD

Slow food is a movement that started in Europe essentially as an opposing force to fast food. Fast food being massed produced, sourced world wide, homogenized, synthesized, quantified and packaged in a sesame seed bun in three minutes while you wait. Slow food on the other hand is local food grown where it is consumed, full of flavour, seasonal and distinctly individual. If you want to eat it, then you should grow it or try to locate it from the local region. It's about caring where your food comes from, how and where it is grown, and how it is processed, prepared and shared. Slow food offers opportunities to put meaning and productivity into your life. Participating in the cycle of life keeps you grounded, provides focus and gives immense joy.