



rio grande
FARM PARK
PRESERVING & CREATING

Pastured Poultry Pilot Project

Program Description:

The Pastured Poultry Pilot Project is an endeavor taking place at the Rio Grande Farm Park the summer of 2021. In collaboration with 4 Incubator Program farmers, 2 staff and one community member, the project is focused on raising just under 200 broilers using a regenerative pasture rotation method for direct-to-customer sales. The 4 farmers involved are Antonio Garcia, Cari Conari, Fernando Gaspar and Jesus Flores, who is both an incubator farmer and staff member. The 2 staff are Addelina Lucero and Liza Marron. The community member is Sherice Shiner. The idea for this project has been in the works for sometime now, and has been largely informed by the work being done at the Main Street Project in Minnesota. At the completion of the Pilot Project, an assessment will be made to determine if the premise is feasible in the long term and whether activities are to continue and/or expand.

Goals:

- To improve access in the community to holistically managed, pasture raised chicken
- To get a sense of the how best to raise pastured poultry at Farm Park so that we might continue to develop a long term sustainable project
- To better understand the pasture poultry market to give incubator program participants another avenue through which diversify their offerings and improve their revenues

Timeframe:

Planning for the Project has been in the works since late 2019, but the actual Pilot will run from mid June 2021 until around early September 2021. If the Pilot proves to be successful, we will explore the possibility of permanently implementing the project to be ongoing at the Farm Park.

Where we are currently:

As of today, we have officially received birds! Chickens arrived via the Postal Service on June 17th, 2021. All those involved have picked up their birds to brood them at their properties for a 4 week period. After that point, most chickens will return to the Farm Park where the South pasture is being prepared for them to graze safely and protected from predators. We are also busy working on a mobile chicken coop which will be where the chickens will reside for the 6 weeks they live at the Farm Park. We are appreciative of all the help from volunteers as we work to get everything ready for their return to the Farm Park on July 15th.

What comes next

After the chickens live at the Farm Park for 6 weeks, we will process them and prepare them for market. Birds should be available for sale at the Farm Stand and SLV farmer's markets beginning either the last week of August or the first week of September. We will update details on this project on our social media including when meats can be purchased by the community. After this stage we will begin analyzing what went well with the project and what can be improved if we decide to continue pasture raising poultry at the Farm Park.