

## NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

Division of Fish, Wildlife and Marine Resources, Reynolds Game Farm  
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Dear Cooperative Extension Agents and 4-H Leaders:

The Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) is once again distributing day-old pheasant chicks for rearing and release projects to qualified 4-H youths. Agents or leaders willing to oversee individual projects would be expected to first become familiar with the Department's *Pheasant Rearing Guide* and *video, How To Raise Ring-necked Pheasants*. Call if you need the guide or the video. Many of you have participated in previous years and are already familiar with the program requirements.

For those interested in starting a pheasant rearing program, there are a number of responsibilities a project leader should plan on. Generally, project leaders review program requirements, discuss rearing techniques, and explain project expectations at an informational meeting or with individual participants. Leaders inspect rearing facilities and evaluate the release site before approving participating 4-H youth to ensure proper rearing and release conditions for the birds. Youth and project leaders usually monitor progress together and share their experiences with other participants at 4-H meetings. The number of pheasants released is recorded at the end of the project.

The rearing and release of pheasants requires a great deal of responsibility by 4-H youth and a substantial time commitment. Why raise pheasants?

- ***Rearing pheasants is enjoyable, challenging and teaches youth responsible behavior.***
- ***Released pheasants offer fall hunting opportunity.***
- ***People enjoy seeing and hearing pheasants.***

In addition to the actual rearing project, leaders may choose to integrate other wildlife management strategies. Pheasants could be banded and released at different ages and on different sites to monitor mortality and survival. With landowner permission, habitat at the release site could be improved to benefit pheasants and other wildlife. Assistance from organizations such as Pheasants Forever is available to improve habitat. There are many opportunities to expand the rearing and release program to include additional wildlife conservation activities. Including these activities is left to the discretion of the project leaders. Cooperative ventures between local sportsman's clubs and 4-H youth are encouraged and at times may help reduce program costs.

All state pheasants are hatched and delivered from the DEC Reynolds Game Farm, Ithaca, New York. Please direct all correspondence to Evan Wills or Carter O'Gorman at the Reynolds Game Farm. Call us if you would like additional information regarding the Day-old Pheasant Chick Program. In order to arrange chick hatching schedules, we need to know the quantity of chicks you are requesting before **March 25, 2016**. Call or mail your orders to the Reynolds Game Farm at 607-273-2768, 81 Game Farm Rd Ithaca NY, 14850, or email at [evan.wills@dec.ny.gov](mailto:evan.wills@dec.ny.gov)

Sincerely,



Fish and Wildlife Technician II

