Incorporated in 2006- organized to provide an avenue for producers to collaboratively meet their processing needs

Statewide, open membership cooperative- 21 members

Coop purchased 2 sets of processing equipment (scalder/plucker) for members

Members interested in retail markets and needed inspection and increased production
MOBILE PROCESSING UNIT- 2009-2010

- Developed in collaboration with Farms for Families, Mission Mountain Food Enterprise Center and AERO
- Funding partners included; USDA RBEG, Toledo Foundation, USDA Risk Management, MT Dept. of Agriculture
- State Inspected under the 20,000 bird federal exemption
- Training program launched in 2010- held five statewide trainings
http://www.chicken.co op/mobile-processing-unit/manual/
Approximately 3000 birds processed in 2011-serving 4 producers

The four members developed on-farm processing plans after undergoing training

The unit traveled approximately 500 miles per farm @ $3.50 per gal

Challenges- damage occurred during travel, insurance cost to cooperative- not producer
## MPU COST ASSESSMENT

- **MPU Cost**
  - Truck: $18,000.00
  - Trailer: $7,000.00
  - Equipment: $20,000.00
  - Custom Fabrication: $1,000.00

- **Variable Costs**
  - Insurance: $2,000.00
  - Licensing: $100.00
  - Supplies: $200.00
  - Repairs: $3,000.00

- **Annual Overhead**: $5,300.00
- **Annual Revenue**: $5,250.00 - (3000 birds @Charge per bird- $1.75)
**MPU CHALLENGES**

- Members are small scale production - ave 100 birds - minimum usage for MPU was 250 birds
- High feed costs - average cost per bird is $2.30/lb
- Large distance and high cost to travel in MT
- Damage to unit
- Regulation still a barrier
  - Every local county sanitarian has their own rules
  - Two agencies to comply with – MT Dept of Livestock and MT Dept of Health and Human Services
FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES AND DEVELOPMENTS

- Clarify Regulation- MT Dept. of Livestock will have sole jurisdiction
  - Address lack of understanding of federal exemptions at local level
- Explore 1000 bird federal exemption
- Expand small scale equipment usage- purchase 2 more sets
- Explore cooperative purchasing of feed and chicks
- Continue education opportunities for members
  - Collaboration with NCAT on educations workshops in 2013
QUESTIONS?

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