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Announcements for 2025 Custom Processing

Happy Winter customers of King and Sons,

We are busy preparing for the coming season of custom chicken processing by way of cut sheets, scheduling, expansion, and efficiencies. The demand for our services has been overwhelming, which I think I've typed three years in a row but as usual, it's more than we ever thought possible. A few figures I'd like to share:

- 2019 – 80,323 chickens – 356,897 pounds
- 2020 – 150,863 chickens – 637,698 pounds
- 2023 – 187,888 chickens – 793,208 pounds
- 2024 – 308,006 chickens – 1,328,657 pounds
- 2025 – over 400,000 chickens scheduled from existing producers
- 2025 – over 120,000 chickens turned down from new producers

To us, those figures are absolutely staggering. For those of you who are newer to our services, it's fair to explain that we are struggling to justify an expansion beyond this capacity. At the end of the day – this plant still runs full capacity half the year and less than one third capacity for half the year. More employees, more equipment, more square feet, etc. may only compound the issue even further.

That being said, if you were able to schedule dates for 2025, we have several asks of you:

- Appointment Accuracy – 2024 was our best year ever in processing the number of chickens scheduled, it was still more than 10% different. 10% doesn't seem so bad but 10% is over 40,000 chickens this year representing dozens of fellow farms that don't get access to processing because of mostly avoidable issues. Predator attacks with six-week-old birds and car accidents on the way to the plant are unavoidable and completely understandable. Failure to call us when you can't get chicks, updating your numbers as you lose birds, getting an appointment at another processor, not tracking your losses - these things are all absolutely avoidable issues where we could offer that appointment to another farm.
- Bird Sizes - we've found that many folks separate their underdeveloped birds and hold them for a later appointment hoping they gain weight. We recommend doing some research on the growth charts of runts and consider the feed conversion of a stunted bird, we think the data shows it's appropriate to cull a bird that isn't and won't grow. Why does that matter to us? Small birds are harder to cut up, bone out, and make weird sized packages – that's if they make it through the slaughter process. Two-pound birds are hard to keep on the shackles throughout the process, old birds' bones are more brittle and get torn up in the plucker, and small birds with broken limbs don't make good looking products for your customers. On a similar note, large birds don't fit in the packages, our process appreciates 3.5 – 5lb dressed birds.

- Picking up on time – the freezer is only so big, if you don't pick up when you say you will it's taking space in the freezer where more fresh chicken needs to go. We offer long term cold storage so that you can pick up at your convenience, something to my knowledge NO other plant offers. Classic Cold Storage is less than ten minutes from us and incredibly affordable. If you are not going to pick up by Wednesday following slaughter, it should go to Classic, and that's something you should tell us on the cut sheet so we can manage the transportation appropriately.
- Dropping off appropriately – Damian does a great job of managing drop off and getting you back on the road as soon as possible. Damian is also a forklift operator at drop off, not manual labor to catch and stack birds. Birds should come in crated and palletted where a forklift can pick up the entire pallet. If your birds are going to arrive in a different manner we have crates and pallets available – be prepared to catch your chickens and/or stack your pallets on crates so the forklift can pick them up. We will not be providing labor to do this for you.
- Drop off times – we will be touching base prior to every appointment to recommend a drop off time based on other producers that day. Night drop off will be available only by request and not regularly staffed. Night drop off when approved will not be a window of time but a 7PM arrival time instead.
- Cut Sheets – we're asking for cut sheets to be submitted to Jeremy on Friday before your appointment so we can better manage our cutting/boning/packaging schedule. Please don't make Jeremy chase you down for cut sheets. If you do not see it listed on the cut sheet there is a reason, please refrain from making your own rules.
- Communication – we know the office can be hard to get a hold of during the summer, especially by phone. Utilizing email is a very convenient way for us to not miss a message and make sure your needs are met while still operating a processing plant and farm operation of our own.
- Certified Organic – last year we packaged less than 2,000 certified organic packages and will not pursue re-certification for 2026.
- Payments – please don't make us chase you to get paid for services we provide. Last year we gave everyone 20-day terms to pay, offered convenient online payments by ACH or Credit Card in addition to in person methods, and we don't charge a processing fee. It should go without saying, but failure to pay will affect your ability to schedule future appointments.
- Policy Changes
 - Split breast will no longer be offered (last year split breast was less than 1% of birds cut up)
 - Whole Chickens – minimum 50
 - Backs – choose one option, also will be in smaller pieces to increase meat yield
 - Condemns – we will offer reporting on DOAs and condemns and also charging for them
 - Various price changes, see attached
- 2026 Scheduling – we don't know if there's a fair way to schedule everyone. Many people weren't able to schedule, many more weren't able to schedule what they wanted, very few got exactly what they wanted. We understand the hardship this creates on your farms, your families, your livelihood – we do not take scheduling lightly. We're doing the best we can to play fair and accommodate as many as possible.

Attachments: 2025 Cut Sheet, 2025 Policy List, 2025 Price List