



7. Keeping the Chickens healthy

Temperature: "Avoid the big chill"

Day old chicks need to be kept at 90°F -95°F. Electric brooders especially for chicks are available to make this easy. Or, a heat lamp may be suspended about 20" above the floor. Even better, use two heat lamps in case one burns out.

A chick guard made of chicken wire or cardboard encircling the heat source will keep chicks close to heat, feed and water and keep them from piling up and smothering in corners. It can be moved outward as chicks grow for more space, so leave extra material at one end.

Monitor temperature daily by placing a thermometer at chick level. Comfort can be observed. If chicks huddle under the light, they are too cold. If chicks huddle in corners, they are too hot. Reduce 5°F each week until minimum of 65°F is achieved and the birds are ready for your yard or chicken coop.

Water: "Wet their whistles"

Use one 1-quart waterer per 25 chicks. Provide fresh, cool (not cold) water, and be sure to clean and replenish daily. Disinfect waterers prior to use and then weekly. Dip beaks of the chicks to induce drinking. Elevate waterer after first week to reduce contamination from litter. Waterer should not be higher than the chick's back. Double waterer capacity at 6 weeks. Provide adult birds 1 - 2, one-gallon waterers, depending upon floor space for every 25 birds.

Poultry Disease Control

Over the long term, disease is likely to occur in almost every poultry flock. Signs will be reduced feed consumption, reduced egg production, droopy, sick looking birds, very loose droppings on the floor or dead birds. Immediate action should be taken when any of these problems appear.

Addressing Disease Starts with Sound Management

This starts with a strict sanitation program between flocks, and relies on eliminating problems before they occur. Different age groups should be kept isolated. Housing and equipment should be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected between broods.

Unnecessary traffic between flocks should be avoided. Surroundings should be kept comfortable, with good ventilation and dry litter. Waterers should be disinfected weekly. Healthy chicks should be purchased which have been vaccinated.

Poultry Safety First When It Comes to Predators

The surest way to prevent losses from predators is to be sure fencing is secure and high enough to keep birds in. Confining birds eliminates losses. Double-check housing for gaps or "holes" in housing that might be attractive to predators. If they are allowed to run in a yard (free-range), be sure that all birds are in at dusk and the door of the house securely closed for the night.

Be sure to store feed in metal containers such as big garbage cans to avoid attracting rats, mice, raccoons, etc. This will reduce a predators' desire to invade your birds' home area.

Turkey Poult	They are slower to understand eating and drinking, so be sure to watch closely the first few days. To get poults started, dip beaks in water and
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	<p>feed. Provide adult birds 1 - 2, one-gallon waterers depending upon floor space for every 25 birds.</p>
Ducklings/Goslings	<p>To get ducklings and goslings started, dip beaks in water and feed. Provide adult birds 1 - 2, one-gallon waterers, depending upon floor space for every 25 birds .it may begin to play in the water at 3 - 4 weeks. These birds love to swim, we suggest placing marbles (or small rocks) in the bottom of the waterer to reduce splashing.</p>
Chicken Feed	<p>Rely on the research-proven Purina poultry feed recipe products to provide the best nutrition to your birds.</p>
Poultry Feeders	<p>One foot long per 25 chicks. Keep full at all times, scatter starter ration on newspapers first 2-3 days to encourage eating. For adult birds provide 36 inches of feeder space for 25 chickens, ducks and geese and 100 inches for 25 turkeys.</p>
Small / Medium Breeds / Egg Laying Chicks	<p>Give Purina® Sunfresh® Start & Grow® recipe or Organic Start and grow until 18-20 weeks old and then switch to Layena® Sunfresh® recipe or Organic layer. For best egg production, use artificial light in laying house to create maximum 17-18 hour day. Do not decrease the length of lighting period when flocks are in production.</p>
Large Breeds/Broiler (meat chicks)	<p>Feed Purina® Flock Raiser® Sunfresh® recipe or Organic grower from start to finish. Pullets being kept for egg production should be fed Layena® Sunfresh® recipe or Organic Layer beginning at 18-20 weeks.</p>
Ducklings/Goslings	<p>Feed Purina® Flock Raiser® Sunfresh® recipe from hatch on. Purina® Flock Raiser® Sunfresh® recipe is specifically formulated to meet the unique needs of ducklings and goslings.</p>
Turkey Poults	<p>Feed Purina® Game Bird Startena® recipe (30% protein) from 0 to 8 weeks. This is critical as turkey poults need higher protein than chicks, ducklings and goslings need to thrive. Purina® Flock Raiser® Sunfresh® recipe should be fed 8 weeks to maturity.</p>
Game Birds	<p>Purina game bird chow diets were developed through extensive research programs to meet the unique dietary requirements of a wide variety of wild and exotic type of game birds. Purina® Game Bird Chow® diets are suitable for pheasants, quail, guinea fowl, ducks, chukar, peacocks and a wide variety of other species found on preserves and private collections.</p>