



Welcome! LIVE starting @6-ish

Fun Chicken Facts:

- 1. Chickens are pretty fast. A chicken can travel up to 9 miles per hour when it wants to.**
- 2. The largest ever recorded chicken egg weighed nearly 12 ounces, and measured 12.25 inches around.**
- 3. Chicken language has real meanings. The birds give different alarm calls depending on which type of predator is threatening them.**
- 4. There are more chickens on earth than people – 25 billion. There are also more chickens than any other bird species.**



Please Continue To Hold ☺

Fun Chicken Facts:

- 5. The greatest number of yolks ever found in a single chicken egg was nine! NINE!!**
- 6. The chicken is the closest living relative of the tyrannosaurus-rex.**
- 7. The longest recorded distance flown by any chicken was 301.5 feet.**
- 8. The record number of eggs laid by a chicken in one day is 7. The record number for eggs laid by a chicken in one year is 371.**
- 9. As chickens grow older, they lay larger eggs, but fewer than when they're younger.**



Starting Soon!

Fun Chicken Facts:

- 10. In Gainesville, FL, you have to eat fried chicken with your bare hands. Eating it by any other method is illegal.**
- 11. The earliest known printing of “Why did the chicken cross the road?” was in 1847 in a New York Magazine.**
- 12. When a chicken gets its head cut off, it can run the length of a football field before dropping dead.**
- 13. It only takes about 26 hours for a hen to produce an egg, and 21 days for the egg to incubate and hatch.**
- 14. Chickens are omnivores, and a hen will eat their own raw eggs if they are not satisfied with their diet**
- 15. Most eggs are typically laid in the morning between 7am and 11am.**



Almost Ready!

Fun Chicken Facts:

- 16.** Chicken eggs nutrition value is the same, regardless of the egg color.
- 17.** Chickens have three eyelids.
- 18.** In order to clean themselves, chickens take dust baths. They dig a small pit in the ground and use the dirt to help with the oil in their feathers.
- 19.** Chickens can see and dream in full color.
- 20.** The fear of chickens is called Alektorophobia.
- 21.** There's a rare breed of chicken from Indonesia that is completely black including the feathers, beak, and organs, due to hyperpigmentation. They can be sold for \$2,500.

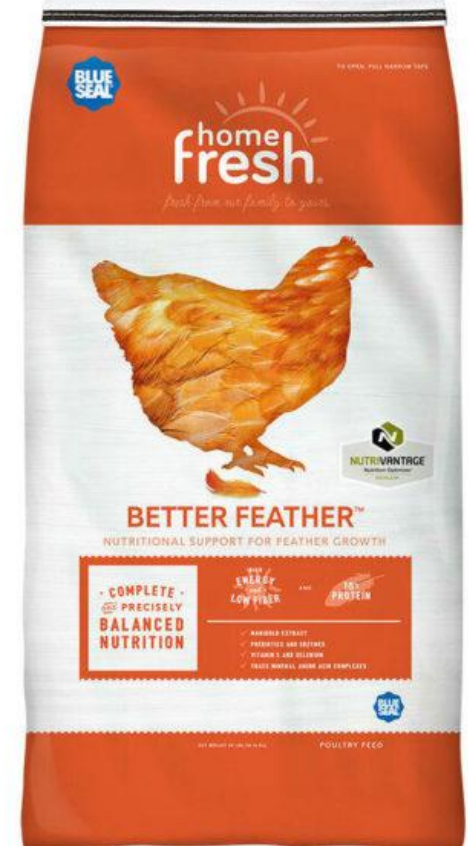


The Backyard Flock

March 31, 2020

Built on Trust

- **In this presentation:**
 - Why you should get chickens
 - What kind should you get?
 - How to care for baby chicks
 - Housing and nesting
 - Predators
 - Laying hens
 - Molting
 - Feed & Water
 - Pretty cool video of how an egg is created inside a hen



While all fowl of the species *Gallus gallus* are called chickens there are more specific names for specific types & ages:

- **Chicks** – Baby Chicken
- **Cock/Cockerel/Rooster** – A male chicken (depending on its age).
- **Pullet or hen-** A female chicken .A chicken is a cockerel or pullet if it is less than one year of age.
 - After one year of age, the chicken is referred to as a hen or cock.
- **Capon** - castrated male chicken - these are valued for their meat as the lack of testosterone and slower aging giving more time for weight and fat gain makes for better flavor.
- **Broiler or Roaster** chickens are reared for meat rather than for eggs.
- **Layers** are reared for eggs.



Why keep chickens?

Built on Trust



Top 7 Reasons to Keep Chickens

- 1. Great-Tasting, Nutritious Eggs and Meat**
- 2. Chickens Have So Much Personality**
- 3. Get One Step Closer to Sustainable Living**
- 4. A Healthy Lawn without the Chemicals**
- 5. One Man's Leftovers are a Chicken's Feast**
- 6. Balanced Compost Pile**
- 7. Handy Leaf, Weed, and Grass Clipping Removal**





Top 10 (or so) Chicken Questions Answered

Built on Trust

Do I Need a Rooster?

Sure!

- **If You Want to Drive Your Neighbors Crazy**
- **For Hen Protection**
- **But....Must Consider the Attack Rooster...**





How Long Do Chickens Live?

Protected from Predators and Deep Fryers:

- 8-15 years





What Breed of Chicken Do I Get?



- **Depends on Your Purpose**
- **Depends on Your Interest**

- **Laying Hens?**
- **Broilers or Roasters?**
- **Ducks?**
- **Turkeys?**



Did you know?

- ***American Poultry Association*** lists nearly 400 breeds of chickens most with several varieties
- Over 1,000 chicken shows held annually in the US showcasing these birds
- The ***APA Standard of Perfection*** sets the ideal qualities for each breed and variety



Types and Variations

- **Feather color**
 - Solid coloring
 - Barring, penciled, mottled
- **Feather type**
 - Silkies, frizzles, long tails
- **Leg and feet variations**
 - Silkie, Salmon Favorelle, etc
- **Size**
 - Bantam, standard
- **Sound?**
 - Long crows!



Breeds and Varieties

- **Breed** is a type of chicken
 - Leghorn or a Plymouth Rock
- **Variety** is defined by the variations within the breed
 - Leghorn – single comb vs. rose comb, white vs. light brown
 - Plymouth rock – White Rock vs. Barred Rock



- **Feather distribution**
 - Polish, cochins, naked neck
- **Comb type**
 - Single, rose, pea, v-shape, etc



Single Comb



Rose Comb



Pea Comb



Cushion Comb



Buttercup Comb



Strawberry Comb



V-Shaped Comb

Types of Variations

Crossbreed: Sex-Links



- Chickens which can be sexed at hatching, usually by color
- Often are hardier and more productive than their parents' respective breeds. (note: Be aware that these are breed hybrids and will not breed true.)

What is a Bantam Chicken?



- A small version of the larger (standard size) breed

The most common commercial egg layers are White Leghorns

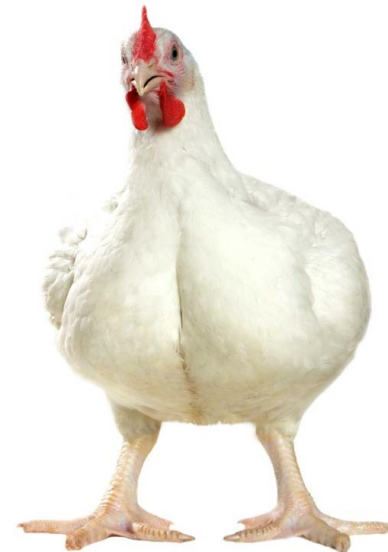
Some of the best for small backyard operations are:

- **Rhode Island Reds**
- **Barred Plymouth Rock**
- **Sex-Link**



Breeds of Meat Birds

- Selected for fast growth
- Reach slaughter size at 7-14 weeks
- Can get joint disorders because their legs cannot bear the heavy bodies.
- ***Cornish Rock*** is the Most Popular Breed
- ***Freedom Rangers*** are slower to grow, but better for free-range/pasture



Can Be Used As Layers and/or Meat Birds

- Take Longer to Reach Slaughter Weight
- But Are Better Foragers
- Some say a better flavored meat



New Hampshire Reds



**The New Hampshire Red
is an
Excellent Dual Purpose
Breed for the Backyard
Flock**

- **Cold Tolerant**
- **Excellent Egg Producer**
- **Heavy breed, said to
Produce Superior Meat**
- **Tends to be Broodie**
- **Early Maturing**
- **Vigorous**



Starting Chicks

Built on Trust

What Do I Need To Take Care Of My Chicks When They Arrive?

- **Brooder**
- **Infra-red Light & Bulb**
- **Bedding**
- **Feeder**
- **Chick Starter**
- **Waterer**
- **Thermometer**
- **All your supplies are available at your local dealership today!**



Where Do I Get Baby Chicks?

- Good quality birds are essential for successful results- *Order them at your local dealership!!*
- Young birds are often vaccinated at the hatchery before shipping - ask if they are vaccinated for:

➤ Marek's and/or Coccidiosis

- Marek's disease is a highly contagious viral disease
- If you only got your chicks *vaccinated for Marek's*, you can still feed them medicated feed with no issues.
- If you got them *vaccinated for coccidiosis*, do not feed them medicated feed



Starting Chicks

- Check young birds carefully before placing them in the brooder
- Cull any sickly birds immediately



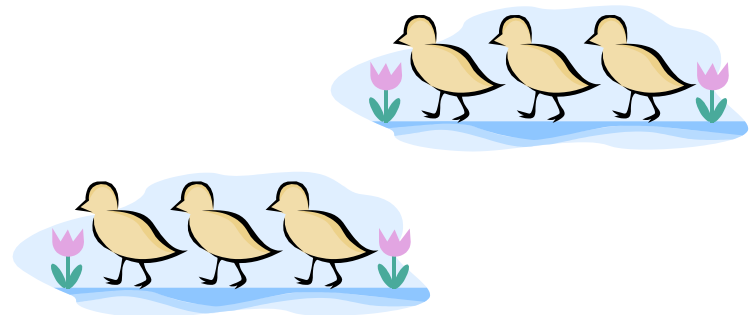
Getting Ready For Chicks

-SPACE-

- Create an area to hold chicks for 7-10 days

Objectives:

- Keep them warm/comfortable
- Keep them close to feed and water
- Help them adjust to their environment
- Allow approx. 1 sq.ft. per chick
- Housing options:
Wooden/cardboard box,
stock tank, brooder guard



HEAT & LIGHT

One 250-watt infrared heat lamp for every 25-100 chicks

- Provide a second lamp in case one burns out
- Recommended temperature is 90-95° F at bird level for first week
- Hang lamps 18-20" above floor and adjust as necessary
- Provide a light source to keep chicks out of the dark
- ***Heat is critically important in the first week!!***



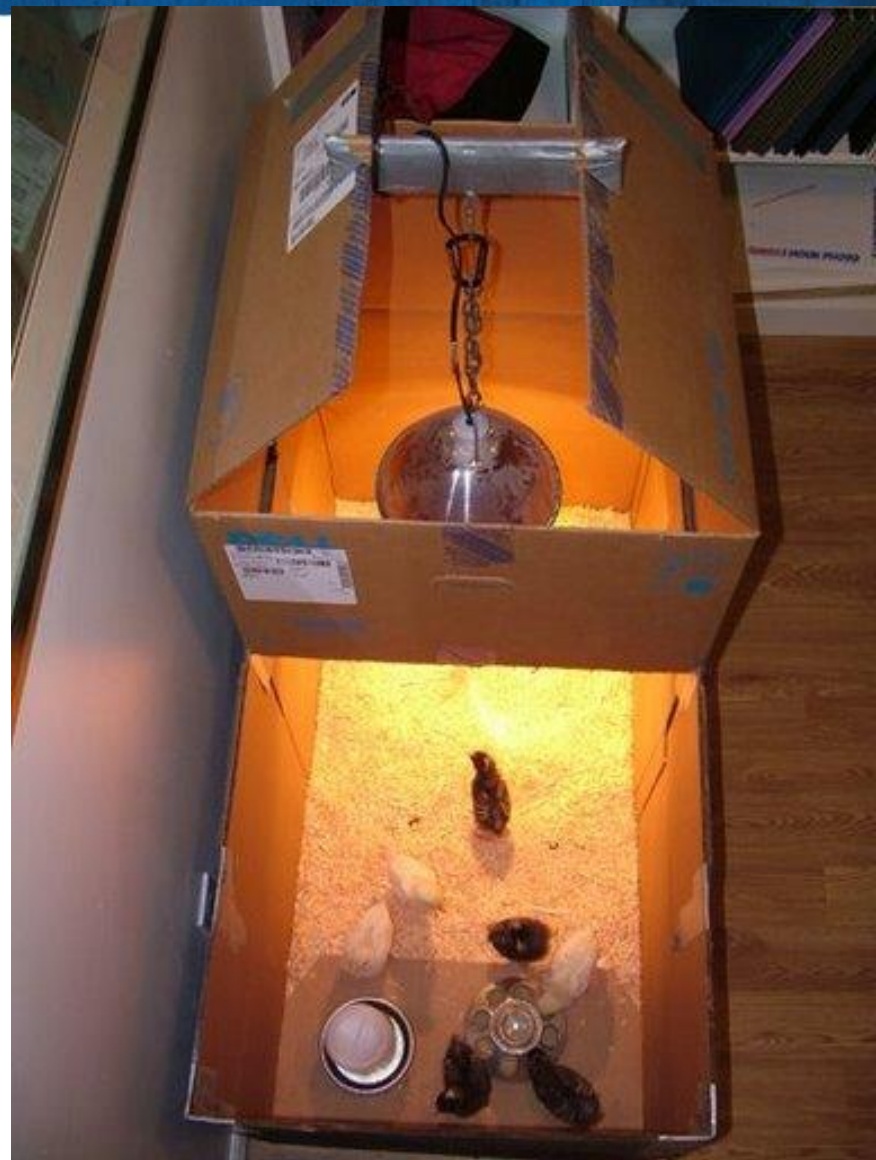
Temperature is Critical

Temperature Control

Week 1	90-95° F
Week 2	85-90° F
Week 3	80-85° F
Week 4	75-80° F
Week 5	70-75° F
Week 6	75-70° F
Week 7	70-75° F
Week 8	65-70° F
Week 9	65° F Minimum



Home Brooder Ideas



Don't leave chicks in the dark!

- Use natural light during the day
- Provide 18-20 hours of light daily for days 3-7
- Reduce light gradually to 10-12 hours daily thereafter



Brooding Chicks

- **In addition to monitoring air temperature**
 - Don't allow birds to be exposed to air drafts
 - But. . . Birds need fresh air
- **Keep birds dry**
- **Keep pens (floor) dry**





Chick Management

Built on Trust

Food & Water

- Provide a one-gallon waterer for each 25 young birds to start
 - Provide 1" of feeder space per chick to start
 - Prep: Clean and place feeders and before birds arrive
 - Set the height of feeder and water even with the backs of chicks – raise as they grow
 - Reduces waste and contamination
- ✓ *More on feed & water later in presentation*



Management tips

- Provide more space as chicks grow for living, feeding and watering
- Reduce temperature gradually by approx. 5° F per week until 65°F
- Keep litter clean and dry, adding & changing bedding as necessary
- Clean &/or disinfect waterers once a week



How Do I Keep My Birds Healthy?

- If you show, isolate birds for a couple of weeks before exposing other birds to them
- Don't let friends/neighbors handle your birds
- Know the signs of sick animals(contact veterinarian or USDA Extension Office immediately)
- Keep birds protected from wild birds (easier said than done)
- http://www.aphis.usda.gov/publications/animal_health/content/printable_version/keep_poultry_diseases_away.pdf



Housing and Nesting

Built on Trust

How Big Does the Coop Need to Be?



**Generally,
3-5 Sq. Ft.
per Adult
Chicken**

How Do I Protect From Predators?

- Solidly Built Coops
- Close Them In at Night
- Roosters
- Dogs
- Electric Fences





ne heads eaten
eads and crops eaten
d; mauled, abdomen ea
eaten
ared, no trace
ide fence





**What are some other
predators to take into
consideration for
your area?**

Built on Trust



Roosts

- Poles on which chickens can sit, rest, and sleep
- Tree branches work fine
- Free-range chickens will roost in trees

Portable Coops & Free Range Chickens

- Foraging chickens have more exposure to parasites
- Keep water available
- You will get more eggs if you have them eat a complete diet in the morning before letting them out. You'll also be able to find the eggs
- Recommend to provide a higher protein complete diet, like *New Home Fresh® Better Feather™*



How Many Nest Boxes Do I Need?

- One for every 4-6 Hens

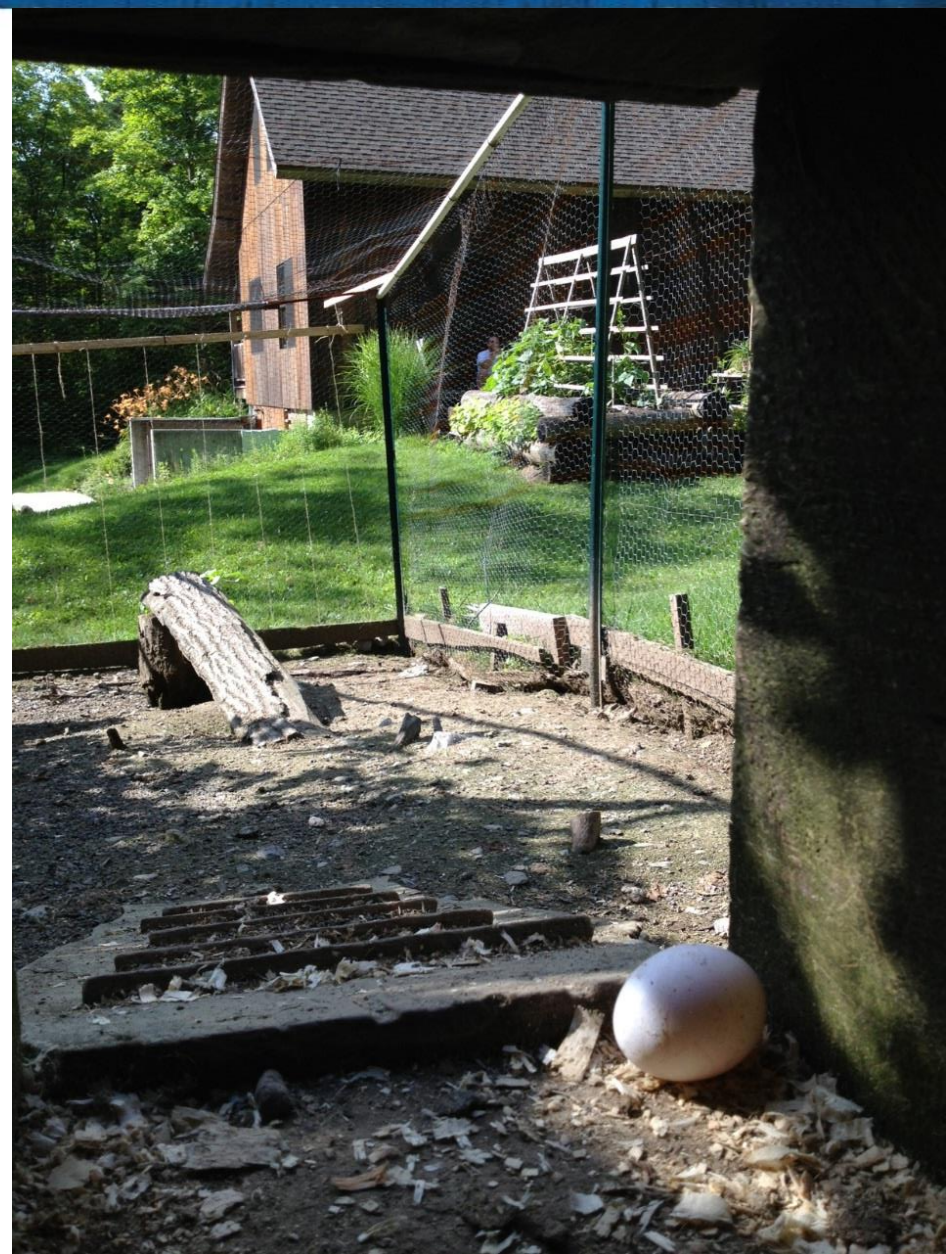


Nest Box Specifications

- Nesting boxes need to make the hen feel secure
- Provide nest boxes off the ground and keep them clean
 1. Metal or wood
 2. Individual nests should be 14" square by 12" high



Despite Providing The Best Nest Box...

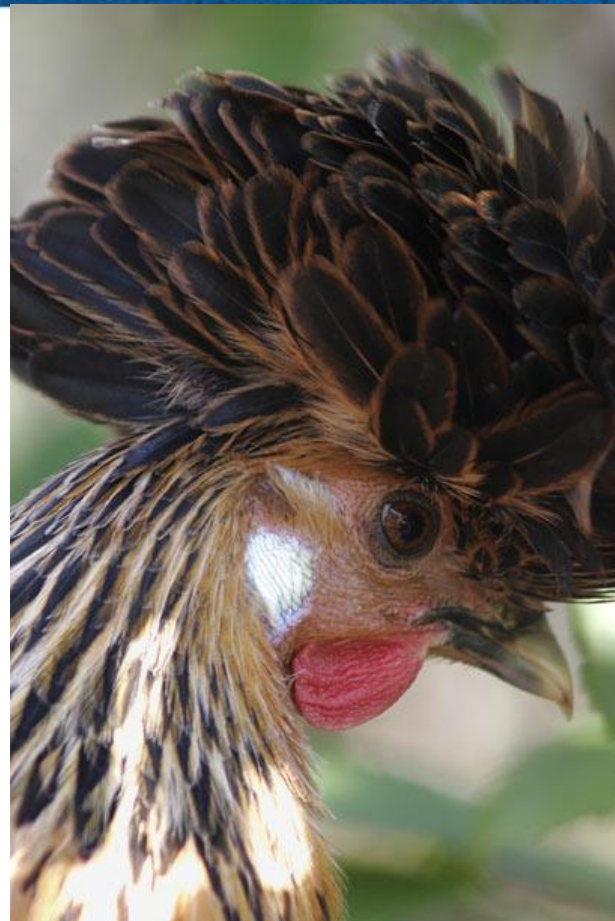




The Egg

Built on Trust

Egg Color—Neat Fact!



Chickens with white earlobes (like this one) lay white or lightly tinted eggs, and chickens with red earlobes most commonly lay brown eggs. There are exceptions, of course, but this is the general rule:
Earlobe color = egg color

At what age do chickens start laying eggs?

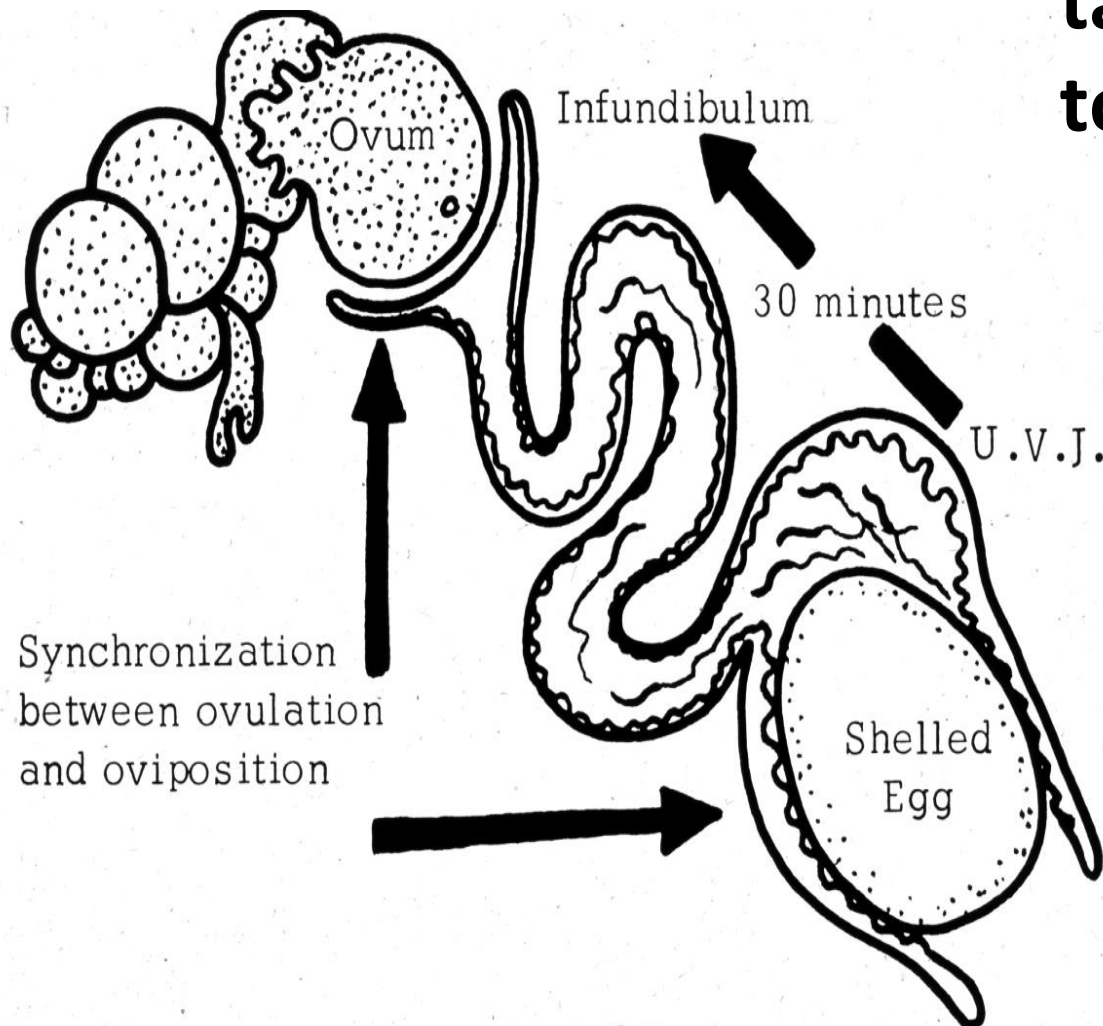
Results not typical:



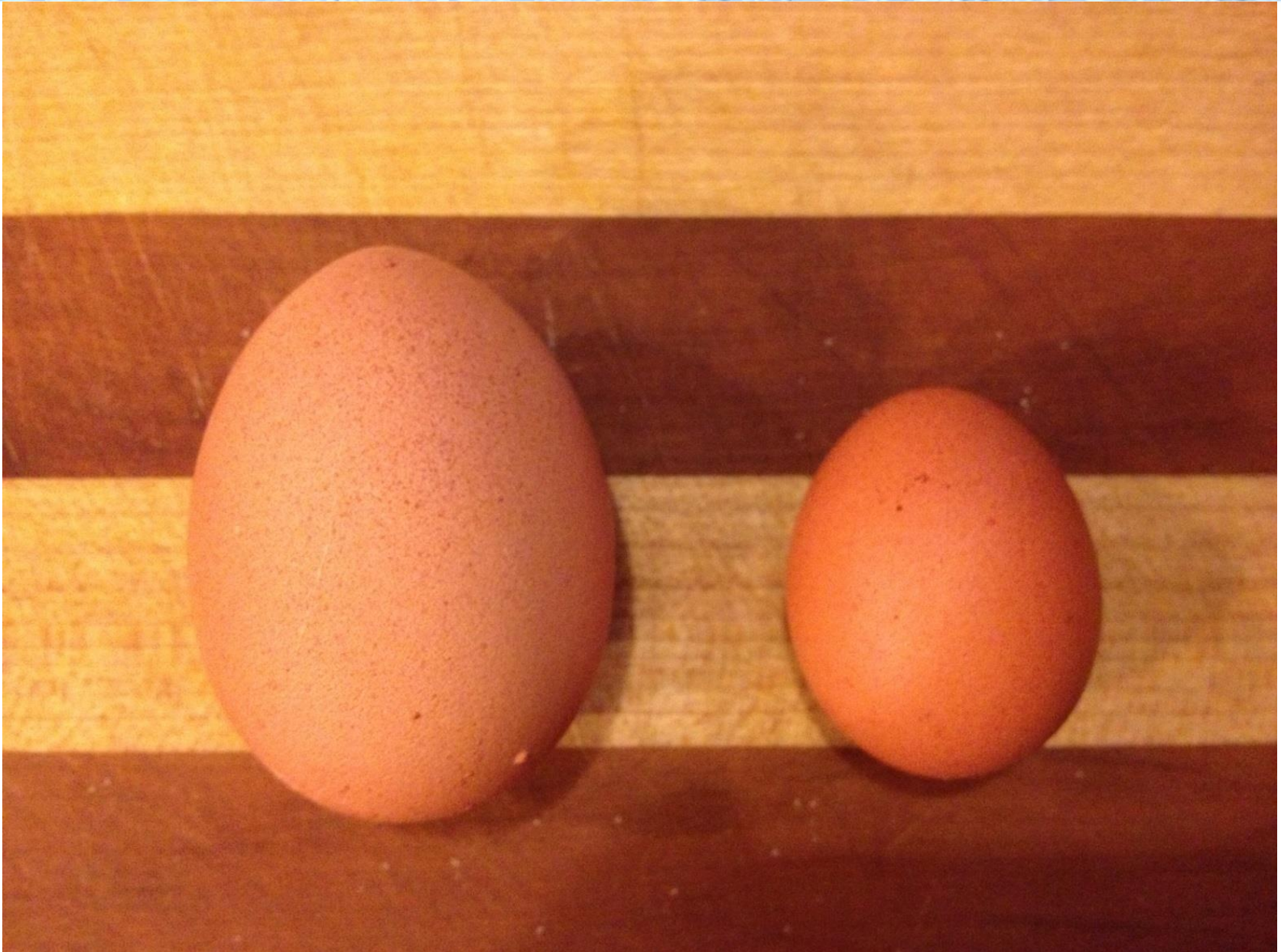
- Typically 5-6 Months Old
- Lay 200-300 eggs per year
- Peak production at 2 years, slowly decline after that

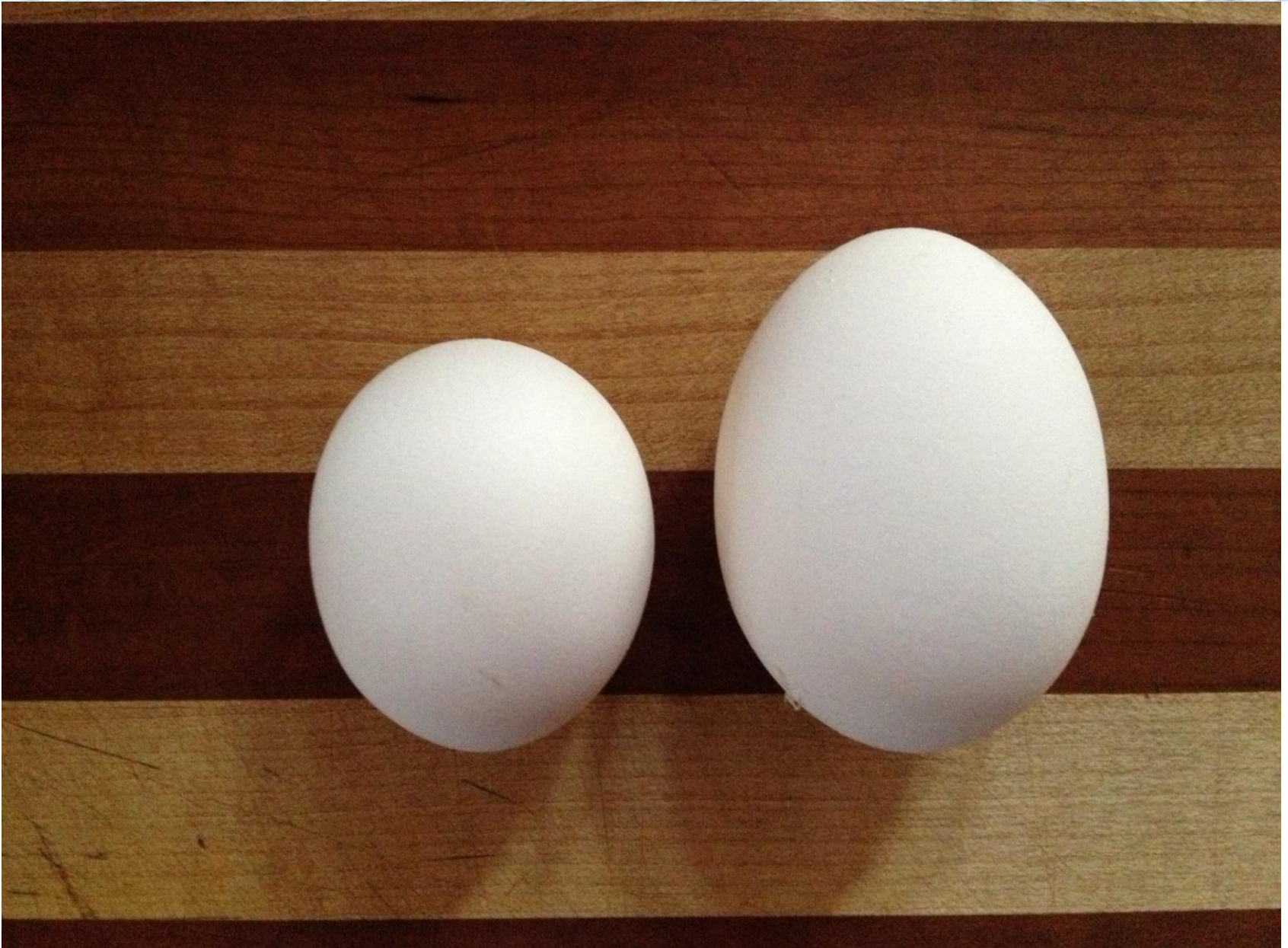
Laying an Egg

- Shell formation takes 24-26 hours to complete

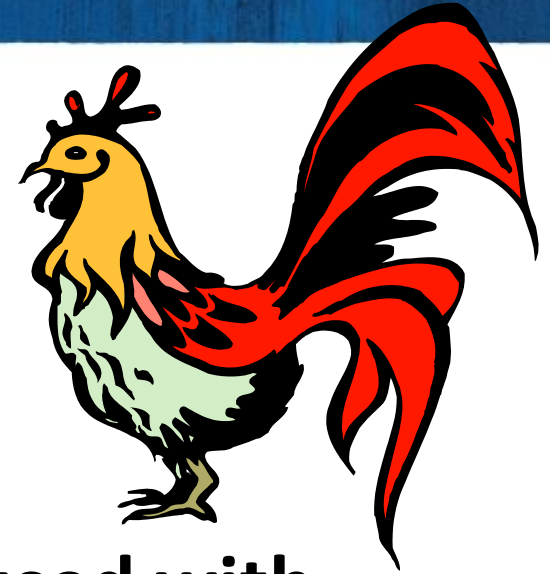


Brief video
at end of
this slide
show!



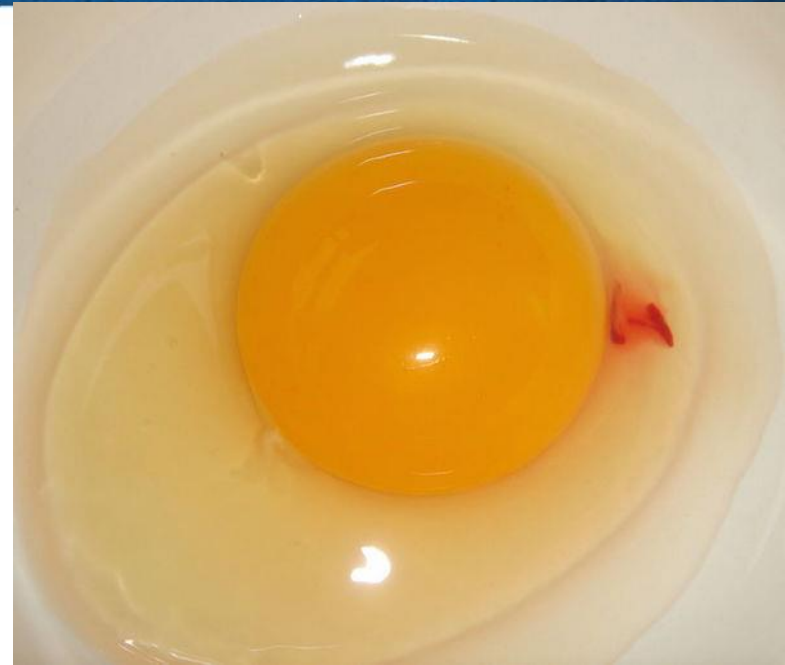


Do I Need a Rooster for my Hens to Lay Eggs?



- Not really!
- But, if you like: Males can be housed with anywhere from 1 to 10-12 hens
 - This depends upon the breed and age of the birds
 - Ornamental and exhibition breeds have more fertility problems
 - For pedigree breeding up to 15 hens can be housed with a single good male in rotation

That Blood Spot...



- Eggs with a visible blood spot on the yolk are safe for consumption.
- These tiny spots are not harmful and are caused by the rupture of a blood vessel during formation of the egg.
- Blood spots do not indicate a fertilized egg.



Molting

Built on Trust

Daylight & Molting

- **Molting is natural**
- **Molting occurs in response to decreased light as summer ends and winter approaches**
- **All chickens will molt annually, their first occurs around 16-18 months of age.**
- **During a molt, chickens will lose their feathers and grow new ones.**



Daylight & Molting

- With light stimulation hens can lay through the winter, 10-hr/day
 - However, they will need a break sometime to undergo a molt to regenerate body reserves





Feed & Water

Built on Trust

- Speaking of Molting -

New! HomeFresh® Better Feather™

- 18% protein to support increased requirements (feather re-growth) during molt
- NutriVantage Nutrition Optimizer – supports immune function
- Provides proper calcium to feed to whole flock, even if just a few are molting at t time



What Type of Feeders and Waterers Do I Use?



Feeders



Waterers



Fresh, Clean Water is Crucial

- Hens that go without water for more than 24 hours will stop laying eggs and may have their laying disrupted for a week or more
- The stress of going without water might also trigger a molt, which would put the hen off laying for a longer period.



What size feed do I use?

- Meal (mash)
- Crumble
- Pellet

- Meal/mash, crumbles, and pellets indicate different sizes of feeds
- They are processed much the same & then screened for size
- Start baby chicks on a meal/mash or crumble
 - Crumbles can be eaten by most chicks; less waste than meal



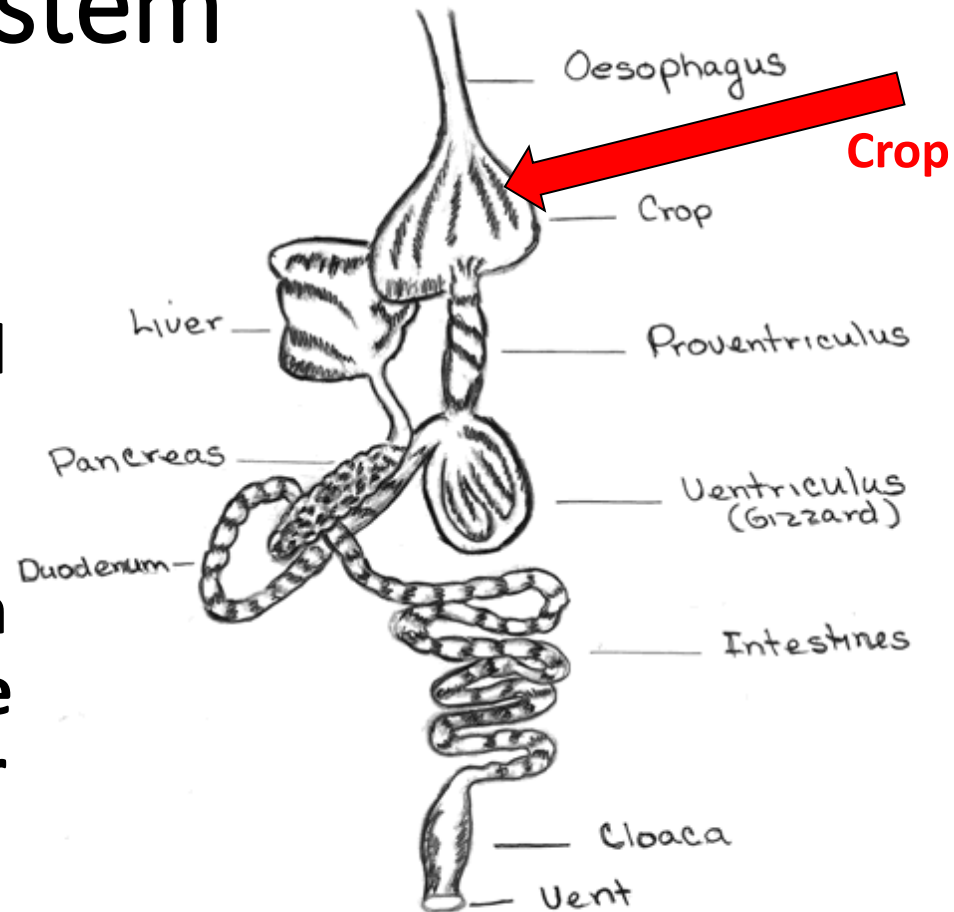
Feed Forms:

- Meal (Mash) – Crumble - Pellet



Avian Digestive System

- This digestive system is adapted for grinding hard or encased (shells of seeds) food (no teeth!)
- Has a modification which is called the "crop" where food is stored and further moistened
- May Need to Provide Grit



How Much Feed Do Chickens Eat?

- Depends on breed etc, generally 4 to 6-oz per day



How Much Feed Do Chickens Eat?

- **Feed Estimates for
Poultry When Laying:**

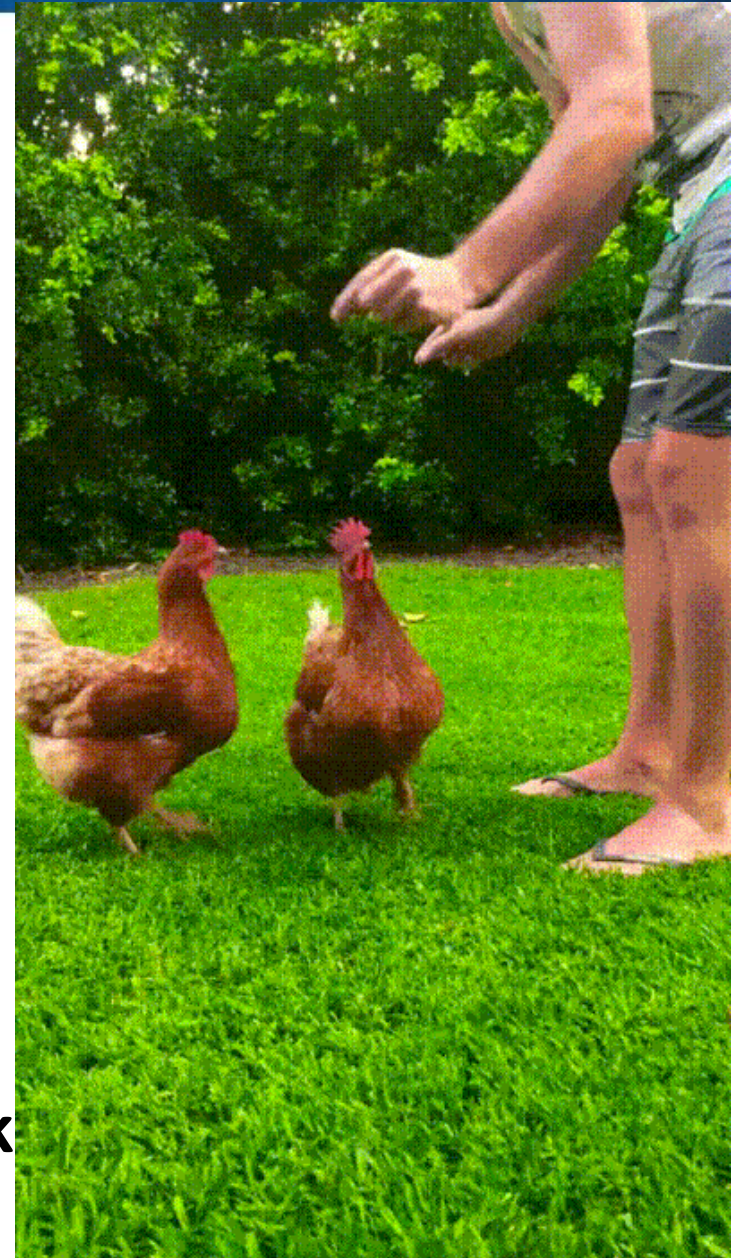
Chickens → 1.5 lb per bird/week

Turkeys → 4-5 lb per bird/week

Geese → 3.0 lb per bird/week

Ducks → 1-1.5 lb per bird/week

Gamebirds → 1-1.5 lb per bird/week



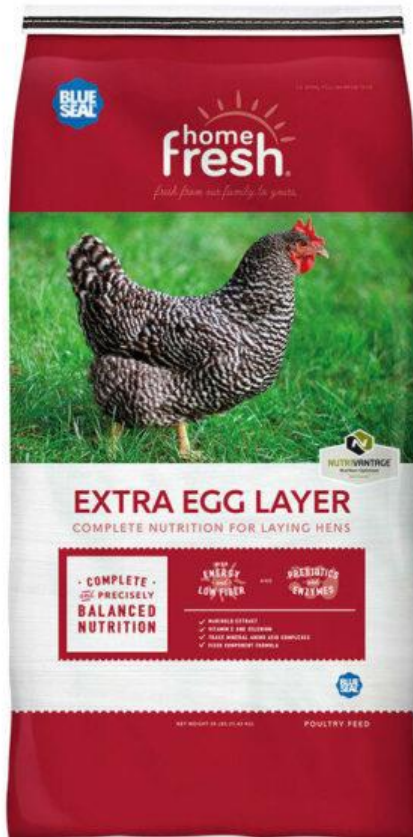


**Feed Selection:
Blue Seal
has your Feed!**

Built on Trust

What Do I Feed My Chickens?

- **Depends on Purpose, Age, Season**



- **Blue Seal HomeFresh® Poultry Feed**
 - **HomeFresh® poultry feeds offer a complete line of quality nutrition products**
 - Chickens (Layers & Broilers)
 - Turkeys
 - Ducks & Geese
 - Gamebirds
 - **MADE IN VERMONT!!**
 - With superior consistency and freshness
 - **Specially designed to meet your birds' unique nutritional requirements**
 - **Backed by research**





Features & Benefits

- **NutriVantage® Nutrition Optimizer®**
 - A research-driven supplement designed to help birds derive optimum nutrition from their diet.
- **Complete and Precisely Balanced Nutrition**
 - Optimum levels and ratios of nutrients help support and maintain overall health.
- **High Energy and Low Fiber**
 - Whole grain-based diets support optimal growth and development.



NUTRIVANTAGE®
Nutrition Optimizer®



Features & Benefits

- **Prebiotics and Enzymes**
 - Multiple enzymes and proprietary hydrolyzed yeast, aid in maintaining healthy digestion for sustained nutrient digestibility.
- **Marigold extract**
 - Natural color enhancer
 - for bright yellow yolks.
- **Essential Amino Acids**
 - Quality protein is essential for growth and development, reproduction and support of healthy skin and feathers.





HomeFresh® Starter Feeds

Medicated Versus Non- Medicated Feeds

- Coccidiosis is a disease that can kill chicks that have not built up a resistance to it.
- Amprolium is a medication that helps to control the coccidiosis while allowing the birds to build up a resistance
- Medicated, Non-Medicated and Organic Feeds are available

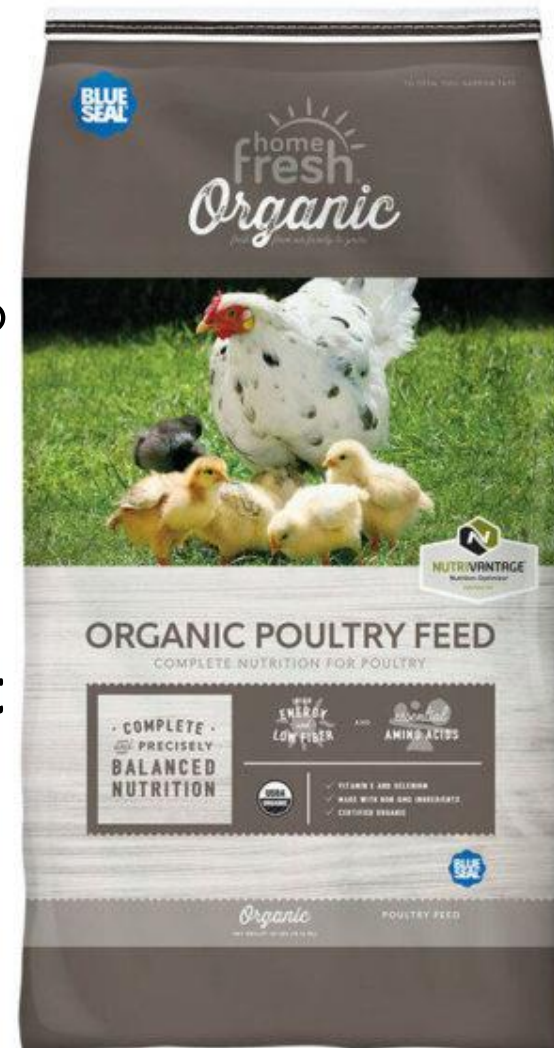




HomeFresh® Organic

***Home Fresh® Organic* Starter, Grower & Layer feeds are a complete feed for replacement chickens, ducks, and geese.**

- **NutriVantage® Nutrition Optimizer®**
- **Complete and Precisely Balanced Nutrition**
- **High Energy and Low Fiber**
 - **Whole grain-based diets support optimal growth and development.**
- **Essential Amino Acids**
- **Made with Non-GMO Ingredients**
- **Certified Organic**



General Feeding Guidelines: Laying Hens

Feed

Age

- Home Fresh Starter-AM
- HF Grower & Show
- HF Extra Egg Pellets, Meal (Mash) or Crumbles

- 0 - 8 Weeks
- 8 - 20 Weeks (or 1st egg)
- 20 - 72 Weeks



- Always provide a constant supply of fresh, clean water.
- Feed free choice but let them clean up occasionally.
- See our [Poultry Care Guide and HomeFresh® brochure](#) for more feed guidelines

***The Video
is next...***



**...Hang on a second while
I figure the link out...**



Auburn University: Virtual Chicken

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G6j13-9Pexw>

- Right click
- Open Hyperlink
- Turn up volume



**Thank You
For Watching!
More questions?**

Call/text: 518-369-0969

Mackenzie.Chauncey@kentww.com



Poultry Resources

<http://www.flemingoutdoors.com/poultry.html>

<http://www.strombergschickens.com/>

<http://www.randallburkey.com/>

<http://www.mcmurrayhatchery.com/index.html>

<http://poultryone.com/>

<http://www.chickencrossing.org/>

<http://www.mypetchicken.com/default.aspx>

<http://www.feathersite.com/>

<http://www.backyardpoultrymag.com/>

<http://www.healthychicksandmore.com/>

<http://www.meyerhatchery.com/>