



*Backyard*  
**Poultry**

America's Favorite Poultry Magazine

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2026 • VOLUME 21, NUMBER 1

# CHICK SUPPLEMENT GUIDE

**IDEAS FOR  
MAKING YOUR  
OWN CHICK  
FOOD**

**ON-FARM  
HATCHING**

**COOKING WITH  
DUCK EGGS**

**PLUS  
LOCO  
MOCO**

\$7.99 US

[backyardpoultry.iamcountryside.com](http://backyardpoultry.iamcountryside.com)

# Brinsea

Incubation Specialists

# If a hen could choose...

## Bringing quality products to backyard farmers since 1976

*Starting your own flock has never been easier with the NEW Maxi 24 and 48 EX Connect app controlled egg incubators*

**Egg incubators, chick brooders, automatic coop doors and more!**



Visit [www.brinsea.com](http://www.brinsea.com) or call 1-888-667-7009 for more information or a free catalog

**Brinsea**  
Incubation Specialists



MADE IN THE U.S.A.



# STRONG CHICKENS FIGHT BETTER!

## POULTRY NUTRI-DRENCH®

***Quickly Restores the  
Immune System!***

- Stimulates Appetite
- Strengthens Newborns
- Increases Egg Production
- Reduces Shipping Stress
- Corrects Diarrhea
- Enhances Antibiotic Response

*Contains Only Natural  
Nutritional Ingredients.*

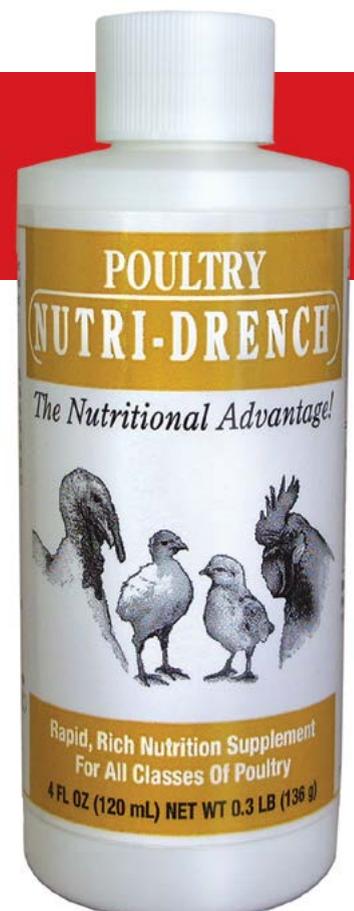
The *ONLY* Oral  
nutritional supplement  
that delivers essential  
nutrients directly into  
the bloodstream *FAST -  
without digestion!*

Backed by 20 years of  
research, field trials and  
2 U. S. Patents.

**CONCENTRATED  
FORMULA**

**BOVIDR LABORATORIES, INC.®**

1-308-635-4913 [www.nutridrench.com](http://www.nutridrench.com)



©2025, Bovidr Laboratories

# Contents February/March 2026

## IN EVERY ISSUE

- 04 **Editor's Letter**
- 06 **Photo Essay:  
The Valdo Chicks**
- 10 **Flocks to Follow**
- 12 **Flock Photos:**  
*The best of the best  
submissions via snail mail  
and our social sites.*
- 14 **Poultry News**
- 16 **Something to Crow About**
- 62 **Coming Events**
- 64 **Recommended Products**
- 67 **Marketplace**
- 68 **Breeders Directory &  
Classifieds**
- 70 **Just for Fun**

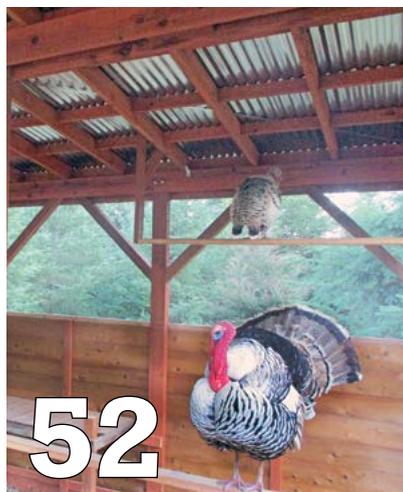
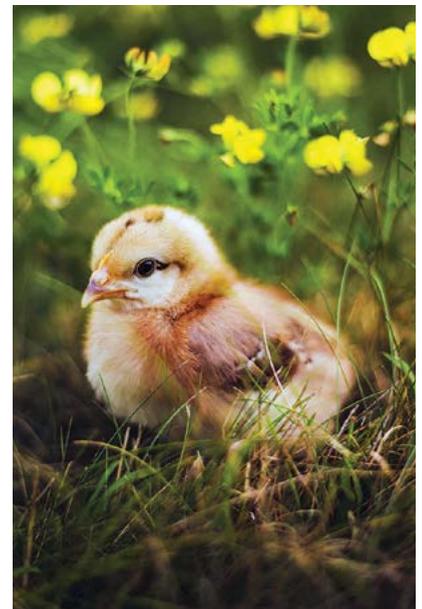
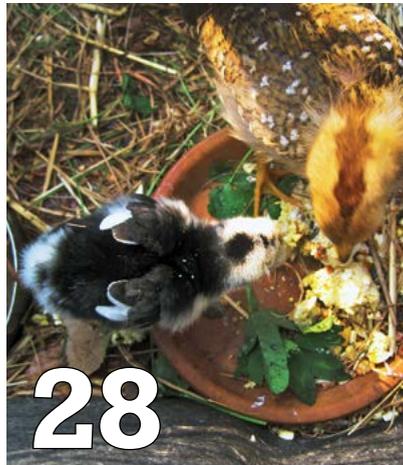
## RECIPES

- 18 **Loco Moco**  
*By Rita Heikenfeld*
- 22 **Rolex and Chapati:  
Rolled in Flavor**  
*By Kenny Coogan*

## ARTICLES

- 26 **Chick Supplement Guide**  
*By Erin Snyder*
- 28 **Ideas For Making Your  
Own Chick Food**  
*By Wren Everett*
- 32 **Planning a Poultry Coop  
with Maintenance in Mind**  
*By Doug Ottinger*
- 36 **On-Farm Hatching**  
*By Mark Hall*

- 40 **Setting Up Your Hens to  
Successfully Brood**  
*By Jenny Underwood*
- 44 **Cooking with Duck Eggs**  
*By Sherri Talbot*
- 48 **Reducing Stress in Ducks**  
*By Erin Snyder*
- 52 **Lessons Learned in Raising  
and Housing Turkeys**  
*By Stacy Benjamin*
- 56 **Breed Profile:  
Catalana Chickens**  
*By Kenny Coogan*
- 58 **Slater's Crowned Pigeon**  
*By Susie Kearley*
- 60 **Coop Inspiration:  
My Healing Coop**  
*By Kallie Sizemore*



## On The Cover

*Photo credit: Seeka Marie Steinbrecher  
with Steinbrecher Acres.*

## Can You Find the Roo?

.....  
He looks just like  
this Roo.



HAPPY  
HEN™

LOOKING FOR TREATS?  
TAKE YOUR PICK!



20% OFF ALL ORDERS - USE CODE "BACKYARD2026" AT CHECKOUT

Offer valid thru 10/31/2026

happyhentreats.com   

## EDITORIAL

### Managing Editor

Ann Tom

editor@backyardpoultrymag.com

### Editorial Director

Karmin Garrison

### Copy Editors

Ana Skemp

Audra Trosper

Jeannette Simonson

Cheryl K. Smith

### Publication Designer

Samantha Ingersoll

### Audience Engagement

Emily Clanton

## CUSTOMER SERVICE

customerservice@countrysidemag.com

970-392-4419

## ADVERTISING OFFICE

1503 SW 42nd St, Topeka, KS 66609

adinfo@ogdenpubs.com

Display advertising rates on request.

800-678-5779

### Backyard Poultry's Main Coop

Backyard Poultry

1503 SW 42nd St, Topeka, KS 66609

BackyardPoultry.IAMCountrySide.com

### Subscriptions (U.S. funds):

\$29.97 for six print issues

\$19.97 for digital only

\$39.97 for all-access (print + digital)

[backyardpoultry.iamcountryside.com/all-membership](http://backyardpoultry.iamcountryside.com/all-membership)

### Or mail to:

Backyard Poultry Subscriptions

1503 SW 42nd St, Topeka, KS 66609

970-392-4419

### Printed in the U.S.A.

Backyard Poultry (ISSN 1559-2251, USPS 023-374) is published bi-monthly by Ogden Publications, Inc., at 1503 SW 42nd St, Topeka, KS 66609. Periodicals postage paid at Topeka, KS and additional mailing offices. ©2026 Ogden Publications, Inc. Backyard Poultry is owned and operated by Ogden Publications. The views presented here do not necessarily represent those of the editor or publisher. All contents of this issue of Backyard Poultry are copyrighted by Ogden Publications, Inc., 2026. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part is prohibited except by permission of the publisher. In accordance with standard industry practice, we may rent, exchange, or sell to third parties mailing address information you provide us when ordering a subscription to our print publication. If you would like to opt out of any data exchange, rental, or sale, you may do so by contacting us via email at [customerservice@ogdenpubs.com](mailto:customerservice@ogdenpubs.com). You may also call 800-678-5779 and ask to speak to a customer service operator.

### POSTMASTER:

Send all UAA to CFS. (See DMM 707.4.12.5);

NON-POSTAL AND MILITARY FACILITIES: Send

address corrections to Backyard Poultry Subscriptions,

1503 SW 42nd St, Topeka, KS 66609

# From the Editor



**C**HICK DAYS ARE HERE again! With winter ending, we look forward to warmer days and with that come chick days! Soon, farm stores will be filled with peeping chicks ready for new homes.

This issue has articles for both new and experienced chick raisers. Whether you're starting fresh or have experience, we've gathered helpful advice for all.

Erin Snyder explains what supplements to feed chicks to get them off to a great start in her "Chick Supplement Guide." She includes how to feed electrolytes, chick grit, prebiotics, probiotics, and much more.

For those willing to skip name-brand chicken feed, Wren Everett offers ways to raise chicks on home-made feed made with common ingredients. She shares simple, all-natural menu ideas for the whole flock.

If you have hens and prefer not to buy or order chicks, try hatching your own at home. Jenny Underwood's article, "Setting Up Your Hens to Successfully Brood," explains how to build a brooder house and pen, and what you need to do so.

Once your chicks outgrow the brooder box, you'll need housing for

your flock. Doug Ottinger discusses key factors to consider before building your coop, including manure removal, ventilation, hardware cloth for runs and window coverings, and coop placement. Planning for easy maintenance and chores will pay off in the long run.

And if you're more of a duck or turkey person, be sure to check out "Cooking with Duck Eggs" by Sherri Talbot for tips on using duck eggs in recipes, "Reducing Stress in Ducks" by Erin Snyder for advice on keeping your flock calm, and "Lessons Learned in Raising and Housing Turkeys" by Stacy Benjamin, which shares practical insights for turkey keeping.

There's a little something for every poultry lover in this issue, and I hope you enjoy and learn from it.

Happy Chick Season!



**Ann Tom,**  
Editor

[editor@backyardpoultrymag.com](mailto:editor@backyardpoultrymag.com)



Hatching & Shipping  
Since 1936

# CHICK SEASON<sup>®</sup> IS HERE!

CALL US FOR A **FREE** CATALOG TODAY!

Visit our website  
[www.cacklehatchery.com](http://www.cacklehatchery.com)  
for weekly sales!



We Carry Over  
**200** Varieties  
of Poultry

**CHICKENS • BANTAMS • DUCKS • GEESE • TURKEYS • & MORE**

**Cackle Hatchery<sup>®</sup>**

Order online at

[www.cacklehatchery.com](http://www.cacklehatchery.com)

or call 417.532.4581

P.O. Box 529 | Lebanon, MO 65336



FLOCK COMMUNITY

# THE VALDO CHICKS

*How Four Chickens  
Changed Everything*

BY NADIA AND LYLA VALDO



**I**F YOU'D TOLD US (THE VALDO CHICKS) back in 2020 that, one day, we'd be running a tiny homestead with a colorful flock of chickens, a pair of miniature horses, and a steady flow of customers stopping by for farm-fresh eggs, we probably would've laughed. Like so many stories that began during the pandemic, ours started with curiosity, a trip to Tractor Supply, and a cardboard box filled with four tiny chicks. We (Nadia, 16, and Lyla, 13, and our mom Carissa) wanted chickens: nothing fancy, just enough for fresh eggs. When we arrived at the store, most of the chicks were already gone. The associate told us that Leghorns were good, hardy layers. That sounded perfect. So, we took those four chicks and headed home, knowing next to nothing about what we were getting into.

Those first few weeks were a blur of learning and discovery. We watched videos, joined every chicken-keeping page we could find on Instagram, and ordered books filled with advice about coops, feed, and egg production. What started as a casual experiment soon turned into fascination. We discovered the wide world of chicken breeds, each with its own feather patterns and egg colors: blue, green, chocolate brown, and cream.

That's when, as we like to joke, "chicken math hit hard."

Four Leghorns soon became a full-fledged flock of 20. We added Red Rangers, Plymouth Rocks, Speckled Sussex, Easter Eggers, Bluebells, Buff Orpingtons, Silver Laced Wyandottes, Chocolate Eggers, Cream Legbars, and Red Stars. It wasn't just about eggs anymore; it was about beauty, personality, and the joy of variety.

Each hen had her own quirks. Some were bold and nosy, others shy and gentle. We learned to tell them apart by their feathers, combs, posture, and personalities. The daily rhythm of caring for the chickens by feeding, watering, and collecting eggs became part of family life. We took to it naturally, gaining not just knowledge but a sense of responsibility and patience that comes only from tending to living creatures. Then, a couple summers later, we began composting the bedding and manure from the coop, using it to feed the small garden beds in front of our house. Some years, the tomatoes thrived; other years, the zucchini didn't quite make it. But the process itself, of creating something from nothing and of nourishing the soil with the help of our own animals, became deeply satisfying.

At first, there were just enough eggs for our family, and maybe a few extras to share. But as our flock grew, so did the egg supply. Friends started asking if they could buy a dozen. Neighbors stopped by, and soon, the word spread about the Valdo Chicks' colorful, free-range eggs. That's when we decided to take it to the next level.

We made it official: Valdo Chicks was born. What began as a pandemic project had transformed into a small business and, in many ways, a new way of life. We became the heart of the operation.

We (Nadia and Lyla) took on major roles, helping collect, clean, and package eggs, while Mom managed customers and social media. This made the venture more than just a household chore; it became a shared purpose, a way to learn real-world lessons about work, communication,



and entrepreneurship. Of course, the story doesn't stop with chickens. As we quickly learned, once you start homesteading, it's hard to stop. Before long, two miniature horses joined the family. What began as a backyard chicken coop had blossomed into a tiny farm filled with personality and heart.

Along the way, we discovered that homesteading isn't just about animals or eggs; it's about perspective. The pandemic had forced everyone to slow down and reevaluate what really mattered. For us, that meant spending more time outside, learning new skills, and finding joy in simplicity. We realized that fulfillment didn't have to come from grand adventures or faraway places; it could come from right there in the backyard, surrounded by squawking hens and neighing ponies. Even baby Eliana, just a toddler now, loves watching the flock, and squeals in delight as the birds scratch at the dirt. She actually learned to walk by chasing chickens in the yard.

Raising chickens taught us more than we ever expected. It taught us about responsibility and empathy, about the value of routine and the rewards of patience. It showed us how living things respond to care and consistency. It gave us confidence, purpose, and a sense of connection to something bigger than ourselves.

But the biggest expansion came when we began selling at local farmers markets, bringing our farm-fresh eggs directly to the community. Setting up our stand for the first time felt surreal: cartons of colorful eggs displayed proudly alongside new products inspired by our new life.

Now, when we load up the car for a Saturday market or watch customers smile at the variety of egg colors, we're reminded of how far we've come from that first impulsive trip to Tractor Supply. It reminds our whole family that growth doesn't always come from planning; it often comes from saying yes to something new, even if you don't quite know what you're doing at first.

Today, the hens are happy, and the egg cartons are stamped with a name that now means something special. For us, those first four little chicks opened the door to a new way of living, one filled with color, community, and the quiet kind of happiness that only comes from watching the sun rise over your own backyard flock. ●





**ROOSTER BOOSTER®**



**Rooster Booster®**  
has been your  
trusted partner  
in poultry health  
for over 25 years.

From supplements to  
topicals & coop care,  
Rooster Booster has  
your flock, brood,  
and clutch  
covered.



Visit your local feed store to see which Rooster Booster products they carry  
and visit [roosterboosterproducts.com](http://roosterboosterproducts.com) to see our full line of products.

All ROOSTER BOOSTER™ products are manufactured in the U.S.A. exclusively for TDL Industries, Inc



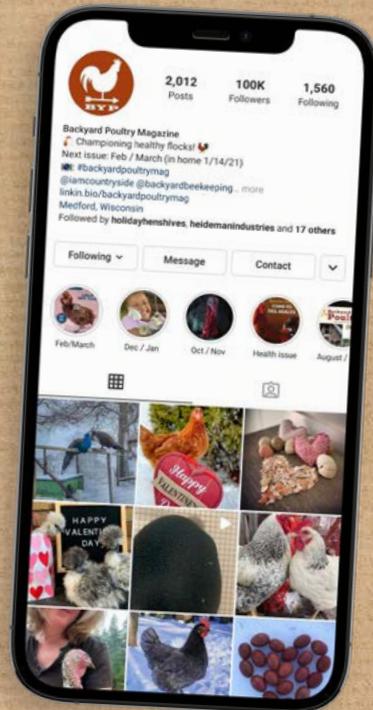
@\_bluwillowfarm



FOLLOW ALONG  
with our small flock  
journey on Instagram:  
[@backyardpoultrymag](#)



@caywoodcoop

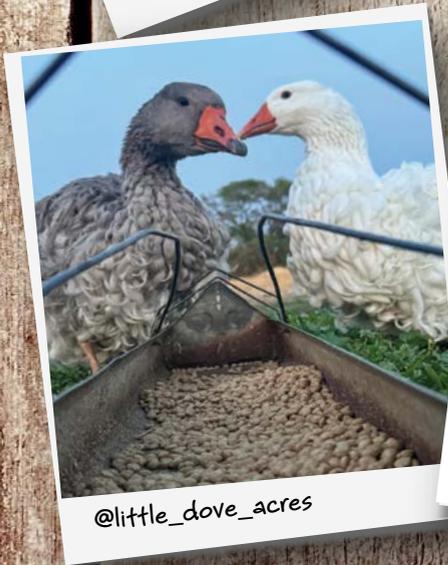


@hanks\_homestead

TAG YOUR  
PICTURES with  
**#backyardpoultrymag**  
and you could be featured in our next issue!

FOLLOW US HERE TOO!

 @backyardpoultry  
 @poultrymagazine



@little\_dove\_acres



@littleredfarmstead



@milligan.farms

# Easily Pluck Two Birds In 15 Seconds



**Backed By An Industry-Leading 2-Year Limited Warranty**

## Yardbird Chicken Plucker



Model 44204



Easy Access  
On/Off Button



Convenient  
Pull Handle



Extra-Large  
Wheels For Hassle  
Free Transport



Irrigation Ring  
Flushes Out  
Feathers



Removable 304  
Stainless Steel  
Tub



Oversized  
Discharge Chute  
Means Less Clogs



Integrated Hose  
Wrap And  
Cord Hooks



Included Y-Valve  
To Split Water  
Connection



**YARBIRD®**

Visit [www.yardbirdpluckers.com](http://www.yardbirdpluckers.com) | 1730 Industrial Avenue | Cumberland, WI 54829 | 800-345-6007

# flock Photos



— Hannah McClure @muddyoakhennhouse



Sebastopol geese. — Shawna Stafford

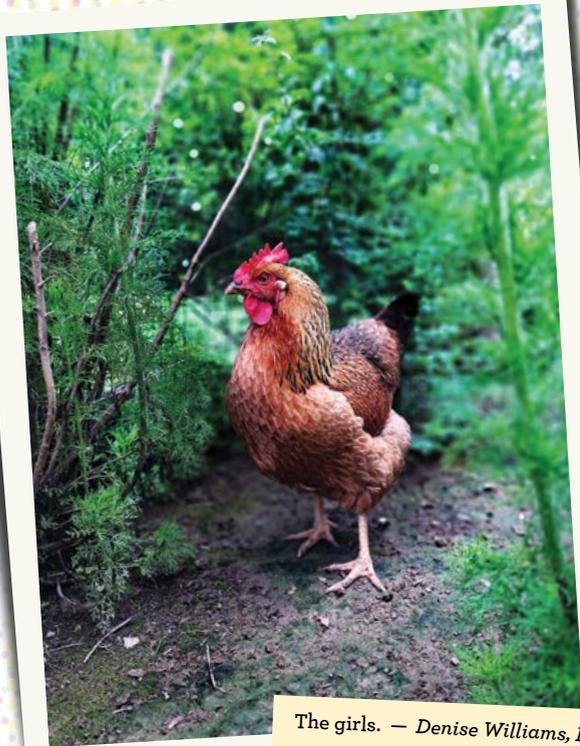


Guess what ... — denise\_\_designs

WAYS TO SHARE: @ EMAIL PHOTOS IN JPG FORMAT TO EDITOR@BACKYARDPOULTRYMAG.COM

📷 TAG US ON INSTAGRAM OR USE #BACKYARDPOULTRYMAG: INSTAGRAM.COM/BACKYARDPOULTRYMAG

Backyard Poultry retains the right to publish and/or reproduce any and all photos submitted.



The girls. — Denise Williams, Knoxville, Tennessee



Love the Polish! — Jessica Heileman



White-Faced Black Spanish. — Heather McKenzie Whitaker

 MESSAGE US ON FACEBOOK: [FACEBOOK.COM/BACKYARDPOULTRY](https://www.facebook.com/backyardpoultry)

 MAIL YOUR ENTRY TO: BACKYARD POULTRY, 1503 SW 42ND ST, TOPEKA, KS 66609

To have your photos returned, please include a self-addressed stamped envelope.



# POULTRY NEWS

BY KENNY COOGAN

In “Poultry News” we share poultry stories of the current, odd, fun, and important. If there are stories that you’d like us to cover, or want to share with us, please email [editor@backyardpoultrymag.com](mailto:editor@backyardpoultrymag.com).

## Global Genetics, Local Impact

In late October, Hendrix Genetics announced a major milestone in both innovation and sustainability. The Netherlands-based animal breeding company received technical recognition from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations for its role in “Sustainable Livestock Transformation.” The honor, presented during the FAO’s 80th anniversary celebrations and World Food Forum in Rome, spotlighted Hendrix Genetics’ commitment to advancing poultry genetics that balance productivity, welfare, and environmental responsibility.

At the heart of the recognition is the Securing Affordability of Poultry Parent Stocks in Africa (SAPPSA) project, co-funded by Hendrix Genetics and the Gates Foundation. Since 2018, SAPPSA has helped 31 million smallholder farmers across Africa access resilient dual-purpose chicken breeds — birds bred to lay well and grow efficiently under challenging rural conditions. In 2025 alone, nearly eight million farmers benefited from these improved genetics.

“Receiving this recognition from the FAO is a profound moment for us,” said Richard Maatman, CEO of



Pedigree facility.

Hendrix Genetics. “It validates our belief that social entrepreneurship — alongside animal welfare and climate resilience — is not just a pillar of our sustainability strategy, but a force for real-world impact.”

Hendrix’s efforts extend well beyond the lab. Its Recurrent Testing initiative in Burkina Faso, in partnership with the avian selection center Coq du Faso, ensures that new poultry lines are tested under tropical conditions. This kind of local performance testing helps ensure that genetics are not only scientifically advanced but also economically viable and regionally adapted — a critical consideration for farmers managing small flocks in variable climates.

Closer to home, the company is investing heavily in its new pedigree facility in Boxmeer, the Netherlands, where real-time feed stations and precision data tracking are transforming poultry research. The focus? Enhancing feed efficiency, egg quality, and animal welfare — traits that resonate with anyone striving for sustainable flock management, from commercial producers to backyard enthusiasts.

By joining the International Egg Foundation advisory board and donating ISA Brown layer birds to training facilities in Mozambique, Hendrix Genetics continues to link global nutrition goals with practical poultry management. The company’s sustainability program also includes a new travel policy and reforestation efforts in Nicaragua, designed to offset carbon emissions by an estimated 2,100 tons annually — roughly the equiva-

lent of planting 14,000 trees.

For backyard poultry keepers, these developments signal a broader industry trend: Sustainability is no longer a buzzword — it’s an operational priority. As large breeding companies integrate welfare, efficiency, and climate goals, the innovations they pioneer often trickle down to the breeds, feeds, and tools available to small-scale keepers worldwide.

## The Debate Over Free-Range Farming

While some global players celebrate progress, others are confronting a more controversial topic: whether free-range farming should continue at all. A recent proposal from European veterinarians and policymakers called for a temporary ban on free-range poultry to combat persistent outbreaks of avian influenza (H5N1).

Advocates for the ban argue that outdoor access, while beneficial for bird welfare, significantly increases the risk of transmission from wild birds to domestic flocks. In regions such as the U.K., France, and the Netherlands — where migratory bird routes intersect with dense poultry production zones — farmers have faced repeated losses.

Critics warn that confining flocks indoors may control one disease but could create new welfare challenges, including increased stress, feather-pecking, and metabolic disorders associated with inactivity.

For backyard flock owners, the debate underscores the importance of

biosecurity vigilance. While large-scale bans may not apply to hobby farms, the lessons are relevant: Limit exposure to wild birds, secure feed and water sources, and report unusual mortalities promptly. Maintaining small, healthy flocks with careful oversight can reduce risks without abandoning the outdoor environments that many keepers — and birds — prefer.

## Activism and Accountability in California

In the United States, poultry made national headlines recently for a different reason. Animal rights activist Zoe Rosenberg, founder of the nonprofit Direct Action Everywhere (DxE), was found guilty in Sonoma County for her role in a 2021 chicken rescue at a Petaluma Poultry facility. The case drew national attention, reigniting long-standing tensions between the poultry industry and animal welfare activists.

Rosenberg and fellow activists claimed they were rescuing sick or dying birds destined for slaughter. Prosecutors countered that the action constituted trespassing and theft, emphasizing that private property laws protect farm operations from disruption. The jury ultimately was swayed by the latter argument, finding Rosenberg guilty on multiple counts.

The verdict sparked widespread debate. Supporters view Rosenberg's conviction as a suppression of animal advocacy, while opponents argue that it reaffirms the need for lawful channels to improve welfare standards.

For small-scale poultry keepers, the case serves as a reminder that transparency and animal care are increasingly scrutinized. Whether one keeps a dozen hens in a backyard or manages thousands in a barn, ethical practices — and the willingness to demonstrate them — matter more than ever.

## Nutrient Science for the Backyard Flock

A recent study published on ScienceDirect examined the role of phytase activity and amino acid density as potential markers for nutrient segregation in broilers. While the title might sound

technical, the takeaway is straightforward: Optimizing digestion equals healthier birds and better yields.

Researchers found that diets adjusted for phytase — an enzyme that breaks down phytate, a form of phosphorus — can significantly improve bone mineralization, growth, and feed efficiency. Moreover, the study suggested that amino acid density could serve as a practical on-farm indicator of dietary quality, helping farmers fine-tune rations for maximum benefit.

For backyard poultry keepers, this science translates to real-world feeding strategies. Phytase is already present in many commercial layer and grower feeds, especially those marketed as “complete” or for “enhanced digestibility.” Choosing feeds that list enzymes like phytase or protease can help your birds absorb nutrients more effectively, reducing waste and supporting stronger eggshells and bones.

Homemade or mixed rations, while popular among hobbyists, often lack this precision. Small flock owners experimenting with grain-based diets may consider supplementing with commercial enzyme blends or consulting a poultry nutritionist to ensure balanced amino acid profiles. A well-digested diet doesn't just boost productivity — it enhances welfare by preventing deficiencies and leg problems, especially in fast-growing breeds.

## Looking Ahead

From global genetics programs to feed science, the poultry world continues to evolve toward sustainability, welfare, and resilience. Whether it's Hendrix Genetics planting trees in Nicaragua, European regulators debating disease control, or small flock owners adjusting feed formulas at home, the thread is the same: The future of poultry depends on innova-

tion that honors both animals and the environments they inhabit.

## Meyer Hatchery 2026 New Additions

Meyer Hatchery is excited to introduce three unique additions for 2026. “The Silver Double Laced Barnevelder is a heritage breed that perfectly blends beauty with backyard utility,” says Meghan Howard, director of sales and marketing. “Their calm, friendly nature and reliable laying make them a favorite for both new and seasoned flock owners.” Also new, the eye-catching Zombie Chickens “spark curiosity and conversation while offering a strong dual-purpose build and gentle temperament,” Howard notes. Finally, the rare Blue (BBS) Partridge Leghorn adds both color and productivity to any flock. “With their heat-hardy, active nature and dependable egg-laying, they're a lively addition for backyard enthusiasts,” Howard adds.



Left: Zombies;  
Bottom  
Left: Silver  
Double Laced  
Barnevelders;  
Bottom Right:  
Blue Partridge  
Leghorns.



As always, *Backyard Poultry* will keep watching the developments shaping our birds' world — because every hen, whether in a research facility or a family garden, is part of the same story.

*If you have a news tip, please submit them to [editor@backyardpoultrymag.com](mailto:editor@backyardpoultrymag.com)*

---

**KENNY COOGAN** earned a master's degree in Global Sustainability and co-hosts the Mother Earth News and Friends podcast, which can be enjoyed at [MotherEarthNews.com/Podcast](https://www.MotherEarthNews.com/Podcast). He also hosts and created the television show *Florida's Flora and Fauna with Conservationist Kenny Coogan*. To learn more about that program, visit [www.FloridasFloraAndFauna.com](https://www.FloridasFloraAndFauna.com).

# Do You Have Something to Crow About?



## We want to hear from you.

Send questions, comments, opinions, advice, upcoming events, etc. to: *Backyard Poultry* Editor, 1503 SW 42nd St, Topeka, KS 66609 or email [editor@backyardpoultrymag.com](mailto:editor@backyardpoultrymag.com).

### In “Response to In-Ovo Sexing” (December 25/ January 26)

I just got my *Backyard Poultry* magazine, and I read the article about in-ovo sexing. I’d read about the awful, cruel, and vicious killing of infant cockerel chicks as soon as they were sexed. I learned about this years ago, and I thought it was possible to do at 3 days of incubation, but here it said 9 days. That’s still much better than allowing them to be hatched and then torturing them to death in ways like suffocation, gassing, or even putting the live babies through woodchippers or whatever is easiest and cheapest for the hatchery.

I’d always thought this was only done by giant companies that supply thousands of chicks for the commercial poultry industry, not the hatcheries that sell the various breeds to people who love chickens and choose to keep them as backyard poultry. I don’t want to buy chicks from any company that would do that. The technology is there and it’s not being used because of the expense to the hatchery, which would make less money using it.

Is it possible to get a list of hatcheries that do or don’t kill the infant chicks but get rid of the eggs at early

incubation? I’ll write to the companies that I’ve used in the past because I won’t patronize such cruelty.

*Richard Chiger  
Monticello, NY*

### Strange Egg

Hello!

Any idea what this rubbery thing could be that was inside a store-bought egg?

Dee



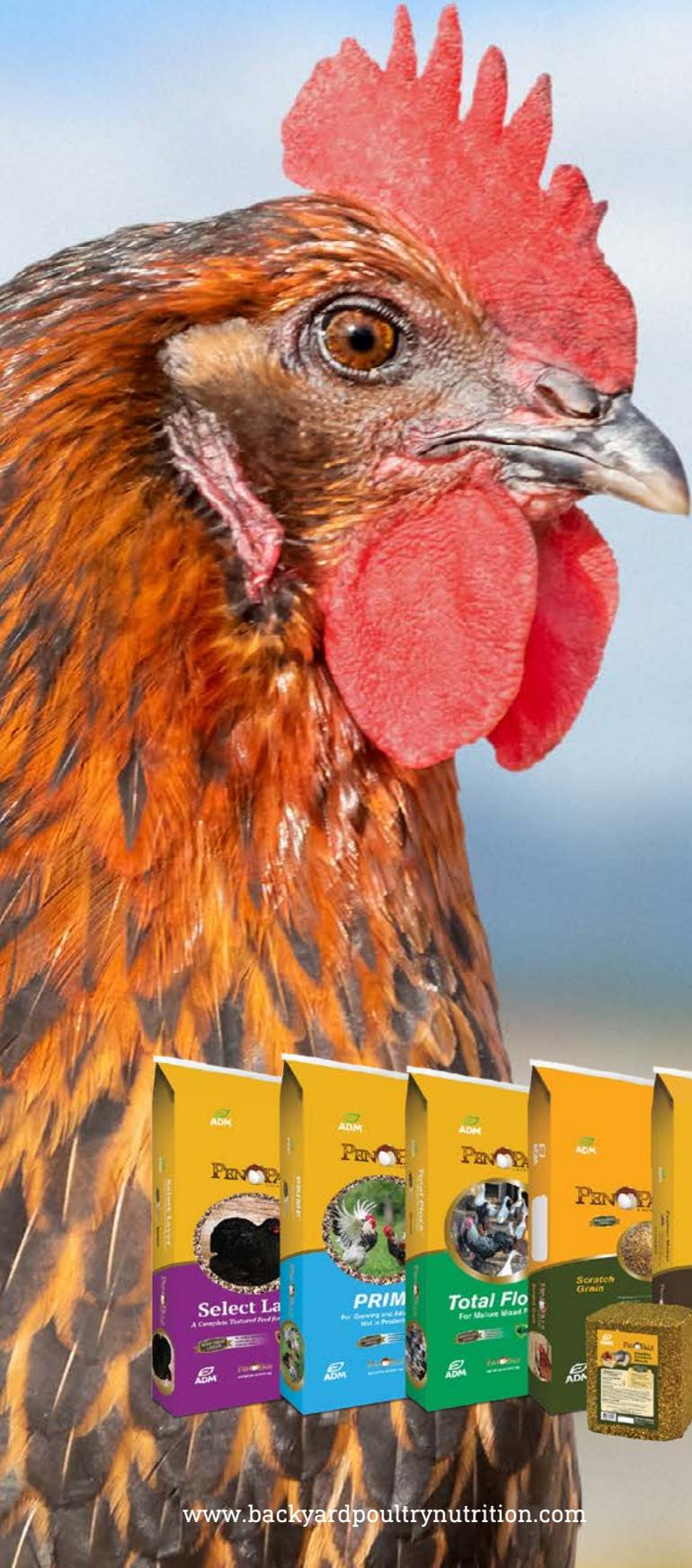
*Since it’s rubbery, it’s probably a meat spot, which is just a bit of tissue from the oviduct that can sometimes end up inside the egg. If it were hard, I’d lean toward an extra calcium deposit. Either way, it likely isn’t anything to worry about.*

*Audra*

**Join us  
on Facebook:  
FACEBOOK.COM/  
BACKYARDPOULTRY**

# PEN PALS<sup>®</sup>

CHICKEN FEEDS



**Nurturing  
Backyard  
Flocks with a  
Complete Line  
You Can Trust.**





# LOCO MOCO

ARTICLE AND PHOTOS BY RITA HEIKENFELD

**M**Y EDITOR, ANN TOM, GAVE ME the idea to make loco moco. Have you heard of this Hawaiian take on seasoned beef patties?

Loco moco is a layered dish of rice, highly seasoned hamburger patty, mushroom gravy, and a fried egg. Hearty and homey!

I'd been wanting to make it, and Ann nudged me in the right direction. First, a little food history. What is loco moco and how did it get that name?

Most food historians agree that loco moco originated in Hilo, Hawaii, in 1949 at the Lincoln Grill. The story goes that a local group of teenage football players wanted something to provide energy for practices and football games that was more than a burger, and was filling and inexpensive, too.

The owners of the Lincoln Grill created an Asian version of a seasoned beef patty, served on a bed of sticky white rice, smothered in brown gravy, and topped with a fried egg. The football team named it for a player whose nickname was "Crazy." Another teammate who'd

been studying Spanish suggested "Loco" instead. The rhyming second part of the name, "Moco," is Portuguese for young man.

My family loves the version of loco moco that I'm sharing with you. Do give it a try, won't you?

The bonus with this recipe is that it doesn't contain weird or hard-to-find ingredients. Think ground beef, rice, mushrooms, seasonings, and, of course, eggs! And though the ingredient list may look long, the different components are easy to assemble and can even be made ahead and rewarmed.

Feel free to add your own tweaks to this recipe. Use it as a guide. Shallots or caramelized onions can be substituted for fresh onions, fresh garlic for powdered, canned mushrooms for fresh, and chives for the chopped green onions. How about a few dashes of hot sauce on top? Or brown rice for white rice?

I hope I've inspired you to try loco moco. You'll be right on trend, and, if you're like us, it'll become a regular in your meal rotation.

# HAWAIIAN LOCO MOCO

I used ground chuck in this recipe, and it made for juicy meat patties. You can use just about any kind of ground beef.

Adding a little mayonnaise to beef patties punches up the flavor and adds moistness.

## INGREDIENTS

### **Patties**

- 1 pound ground beef
- Generous ½ cup minced onion
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder, divided
- 1 tablespoon mayonnaise
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1 large egg, whisked lightly
- ¼ cup panko bread crumbs, or your favorite dried bread crumbs
- Salt and pepper to taste

### **Rice**

- 1 cup rice — I used basmati, but any kind of rice will work

### **Gravy**

- 4 tablespoons butter (½ stick)
- 1 cup finely chopped mushrooms
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- ¼ cup all-purpose flour
- 2 cups low-sodium beef broth
- 1 tablespoon tamari or soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- Salt and pepper, to taste — go easy on the salt
- Green onions, chopped, for garnish (optional)

### **Eggs**

- 4 eggs

## INSTRUCTIONS

### **Patties**

Combine the ground beef, minced onion, ½ teaspoon garlic powder, mayonnaise, Worcestershire sauce, egg, bread crumbs, salt, and pepper. Mix well until all ingredients are thoroughly combined. Use a light hand here. You don't want a real dense mixture, or your patties will become tough.

To test flavor, put a teaspoon or so of mixture in the microwave to cook. Taste and add more seasonings if you like.

Shape the beef mixture into four patties, ½- to ¾-inch thick. If you want a larger, thinner patty, go for it, adjusting cooking time.

Heat a skillet over medium and cook the beef patties for 4 to 5 minutes per side, or until cooked to your liking.

Remove patties from the skillet. I leave the drippings in, but you can pour them out and wipe the skillet clean to make the gravy.

Set patties aside while making rice and gravy.

## Tip

You can make the patties ahead of time and rewarm to continue the recipe.



### **Rice**

Cook rice according to package directions. I like to add a swirl of butter and season with salt and pepper after cooking. (Rice can be made ahead and rewarm.)

### **Gravy**

Melt butter in the same skillet you cooked the patties in, with the drippings left in if you like, over medium heat.

Add the mushrooms and ½ teaspoon garlic powder and cook about 5 minutes, until they become tender.

Sprinkle flour over the mushrooms and butter. Stir well to combine and cook for a couple of minutes. It will be a bit lumpy and somewhat light in color.

## Tip

### SWAP IT OUT

#### Chicken or Turkey for Beef

I haven't tried this yet but intend to. For chicken or turkey, increase the seasonings a bit and use low-sodium chicken or turkey broth for the beef broth.



See the rich brown mushroom gravy.

## Fun Fact

### Loco Moco vs. Salisbury Steak

They're similar, since both are seasoned ground beef patties with a brown gravy. Salisbury steak is usually seasoned with salt, pepper, garlic powder, and other pantry seasonings. It's served over mashed potatoes, while loco moco leans toward Asian seasonings, including soy sauce, and may be served over white rice and topped with a fried egg.

Gradually pour in the beef broth, stirring constantly, to smooth gravy out. Add the Worcestershire sauce and soy sauce and mix well.

Bring the mixture to a simmer and cook for about 5 minutes, or until the gravy thickens. Stir occasionally.

Season with salt and pepper to taste, then adjust seasonings if necessary.

### Eggs

Do your own thing here. Most recipes call for sunnyside-up eggs, but we like ours a little more done.

### TO ASSEMBLE LOCO MOCO

Divide rice among four plates.

Place a beef patty on each bed of rice.

Spoon mushroom gravy over the beef patties, and top with fried eggs.

Garnish with chopped green onions.

Serves 4. ●

---

**RITA HEIKENFELD** comes from a family of wise women in tune with nature. She's a certified modern herbalist, culinary educator, author, and national media personality. Most importantly, she is a wife, mom, and grandma. Rita lives on a little patch of heaven overlooking the East Fork River in Clermont County, Ohio. She is a former adjunct professor at the University of Cincinnati, where she developed a comprehensive herbal course.

AboutEating.com column:  
rita@communitypress.com



# RAISING HEALTHY Chicks

# STARTS HERE

*Start Right. Grow Strong. Lay Proud.*



SCAN ME

**AVAILABLE AT YOUR LOCAL DEALER OR ONLINE AT:**  
[kalmbachfeeds.com/where-buy](http://kalmbachfeeds.com/where-buy) • [amazon.com](http://amazon.com) • [chewy.com](http://chewy.com)

# ROLEX AND CHAPATI: ROLLED IN FLAVOR

## Discovering Uganda's Rolex and Chapati Through Conservation and Cuisine

ARTICLE AND PHOTOS BY KENNY COOGAN

**I**N THE HEART OF WESTERN Uganda, where the dry forests of the Toro-Semliki Wildlife Reserve stretch toward the Congolese border, I found myself on a journey that braided together conservation, anthropology, and cuisine. I'd been invited by an old friend — an anthropology professor I first met 17 years ago on

a field course in Costa Rica. She now runs a primatology and conservation program in Toro-Semliki, and, this time, I joined her and 13 undergraduates for a weeklong hike through chimpanzee habitats as part of the Semliki Chimpanzee Project.

The terrain was rugged and remote. Our base camp had no plumbing,

no electricity, and no walls — just pitched tents, rainwater showers, and an open-air hut where meals were prepared. What we lacked in amenities, we made up for in camaraderie. With a rotating crew of 6 to 9 staff, including park rangers, Ugandan researchers, and chefs, our group of 16 visitors quickly became a tight-knit community. The four-sided Rubik's Cube I brought was a huge hit. And as any seasoned traveler knows, the key to understanding a place often lies in befriending the cooks.

Every morning before setting out on 4-to-6-hour hikes to track chimpanzees through dry woodland forest, we were served a dish that became the unofficial fuel of our expedition: rolex. Not the luxury watch, but a humble, hearty Ugandan street food — an omelet rolled inside a chapati. Simple, portable, and packed with protein and carbs, it was the perfect trail breakfast. And it was delicious.

### The Origins of Rolex: Uganda's Street Food Star

The name “rolex” is a playful twist on “rolled eggs.” It's a dish born of necessity and ingenuity, popularized



by street vendors in Kampala and now beloved across Uganda and some nearby West African countries. The basic components are straightforward: a vegetable omelet and a chapati, rolled together like a burrito. But the magic lies in the freshness, the sizzling preparation, and the communal joy of watching it made before your eyes.

Rolex is more than just food — it's a cultural symbol. It's affordable, adaptable, and deeply tied to Uganda's urban and rural society. Vendors often set up roadside stands with a single charcoal stove, cracking eggs and chopping vegetables (usually just tomato and onion) while chatting with customers. In our case, the chefs at Semliki base camp had their own open hut, where they cooked over skillets and shared stories as they worked. They were delighted when I showed them photos of my home garden, and we bonded over our mutual love of growing food and feeding people.

### Chapati: The Foundation of Flavor

Chapati, the flatbread that wraps the rolex, is itself a culinary import with deep roots. Originally brought to East Africa by Indian laborers during colonial times, chapati has become a staple across Uganda, Kenya, and Tanzania. It's soft, chewy, and slightly crisp on the edges when cooked right — a perfect vehicle for eggs, beans, meat, or vegetables.

At Semliki, the chapatis were made fresh each morning, rolled out on wooden boards and cooked on hot pans. The chefs had a rhythm to the process, flipping and pressing the dough with practiced ease. Watching them work reminded me of the tactile joy of baking — something many *Backyard Poultry* readers will appreciate, especially those who raise their own hens and value homemade ingredients.

### Recipes from the Forest: Chapati and Rolex

Here's how to recreate the flavors of Uganda in your own kitchen.

These recipes are adapted from what I learned at Semliki and from conversations with local chefs. And if you raise your own chickens, this is the perfect opportunity to use your fresh, home-raised eggs — just like we did every morning in camp.

## Chapati

### INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¾ cup warm water
- 2 tablespoons oil or ghee (plus more for cooking)

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a large bowl, mix flour and salt. Add water gradually, kneading until a soft dough forms.
2. Add oil and knead for another 5 to 7 minutes until smooth.

3. Cover the dough and let it rest for 30 minutes.

4. Divide into 6 to 8 balls. Roll each ball into a thin circle (about 6 to 8 inches in diameter).

5. Heat a skillet or griddle over medium heat. Add a little oil and cook each chapati for 1 to 2 minutes per side, until golden brown spots appear.

6. Keep warm in a towel until ready to serve. Or if you're in Uganda, they'll keep warm the entire day.

Makes 6 to 8



Advance and progress in the exhibition poultry hobby. Become a member of North America's oldest livestock organization today!

Visit Our Website  
[WWW.AMERPOULTRYASSN.COM](http://WWW.AMERPOULTRYASSN.COM)

## Rolex

### INGREDIENTS

- 4 fresh eggs
- ½ small onion, finely chopped
- ½ tomato, finely chopped
- ¼ green bell pepper, finely chopped (this was not an option at our base camp)
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 2 chapatis (see recipe above)
- Oil for frying
- Optional toppings: crushed red pepper, dry or wet hot sauces (they had a lot of choices at our base camp)



### INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a bowl, beat the eggs with chopped vegetables, salt, and pepper.
2. Heat oil in a skillet over medium heat. Pour half the mixture into the pan and cook like an omelet, flipping once.
3. Place the cooked omelet on a chapati and roll it up tightly.
4. Repeat with remaining ingredients.
5. Serve hot, with optional spicy toppings. At Semliki, we had a rotation of dry and wet hot sauces, plus crushed red pepper flakes to add heat and flavor.

### Beyond Breakfast: Chapati Variations

While rolex was our go-to breakfast, plain chapatis were served every other morning. Sometimes we added peanut butter or honey, and often they were served with a side of bananas. Uganda, in fact, consumes more bananas per capita than any other country in the world. Whether fried, mashed, or eaten raw, bananas are a staple — and they pair beautifully with the soft, chewy chapati.

This simple pairing — chapati with peanut butter and bananas — became a comforting snack at camp, especially after a long hike or during a quiet afternoon. It's a combination that *Backyard Poultry* readers can easily replicate at home.



### Conservation and Cuisine: A Shared Table

Food has a way of grounding us, even in the most unfamiliar places. At Semliki, the rolex became a daily ritual — a moment of warmth and nourishment before the physical demands of chimp tracking. The chefs, researchers, and rangers all shared the same meals, and that shared table fostered connection. The anthropology professor told us in secret that she's noticed as the years have gone on that more and more students said they had “texture issues” with food, which she added is more of a first-world problem than anywhere else. But everyone loved a rolex or chapati.

After our week in Semliki, we continued our journey through Uganda, exploring Queen Elizabeth National Park, where we saw elephants, hippos, crocodiles, warthogs, lions, and dozens of bird species. Later, we hiked through the Bwindi Impenetrable Forest to see the endangered mountain gorillas — only around 450 remain in Uganda today. And after our hike, we were served rolex! These experiences were awe-inspiring, but it was the quiet moments at base camp — the laughter in the cooking hut, the pride in local ingredients — that stayed with me.

Uganda's culinary traditions are as rich as its biodiversity. From street vendors in Kampala to conservation camps in Toro-Semliki, the rolex is a thread that ties people together. It's a dish that speaks to resilience, creativity, and community. And for me, it's a reminder that even in the remotest corners of the world, food can be a bridge — between cultures, between generations, and between old friends reunited after 17 years.

### Final Thoughts

If you ever find yourself in Uganda — whether on a conservation course, a wildlife safari, or a culinary adventure — seek out the rolex. It's easy to find. Watch it made fresh, talk to the cooks, and savor the simplicity. And if you're home, try making it yourself. ●



# AZURE

Standard of Healthy & Abundant Living

## Organic Healthy Feed Means Organic Food

At Azure, we understand that whether you're raising laying hens or meat birds, the quality of feed matters.

INCLUDING  
Organic, Non-GMO,  
Corn/Soy Free Options,  
all at affordable,  
bulk pricing.



Join for **FREE** and save **15% OFF**  
your first Azure order with **BackyardPoultry15\***

This 15% off promotion is exclusively available to new customers. To qualify, customers must create a new Azure account and place a minimum order of \$100 or more in products, which will be shipped to a drop location of their choice. The promo code must be entered at checkout. This offer expires on December 31, 2026.

To learn more & place an order, visit [www.AzureStandard.com](http://www.AzureStandard.com)





CHICKENS, CHICKENS, CHICKENS

# CHICK SUPPLEMENT GUIDE

ARTICLE AND PHOTOS BY ERIN SNYDER

**L**IKE ADULT CHICKENS, chicks are what they eat. So, while their little bodies have yet to produce meat or eggs, providing them with a nutritious start to life will not only benefit them during their growing period, but will also help them live healthier, more productive lives.

## Are Supplements for Chicks Necessary?

Chicks undergo a lot of stress, first from hatching and then again when shipped through the mail or exhibited in a feed store. Adding supplements to their diet often gives stressed and weak chicks the extra boost they need to survive the first few days of life.

While it may not be possible to provide your growing chicks with all the supplements mentioned in this article, feeding even one or two can have a significant impact on your newly hatched chicks' health.

## Emergency Electrolytes

Electrolytes are one of the most popular chick supplements. Mixed into drinking water, electrolytes offer chicks an extra boost to start life. This powerful supplement is often mixed together with vitamins, giving the appearance of being the "perfect" supplement for day-old chicks. However, electrolytes can easily be overdone and cause more harm than good. Therefore, it's important to avoid overusing them.

Chicks should be given electrolytes for the first 24 to 48 hours after shipping, but after that, remove them from the brooder.



Chicks allowed access to fresh greens require grit to help their bodies digest their food.

## How to Serve:

Following the directions on the package, mix electrolytes into one gallon of water. Avoid homemade electrolytes and use only chick or chicken-formulated electrolytes from a trusted company.

## Essential for Life: Clean Drinking Water

Clean drinking water doesn't just mean water that's free from wood shavings and manure. It also means water that's free of all supplements. Clean drinking water is as vital for a chick's health as supplemented water, so I like to offer my chicks water with supplements for 12 hours each day, and then swap it out for clean water.

Some chicks don't take to water that has supplements mixed in, so it's vital to offer plain water, too. Another good solution to this problem is to offer two water fountains in the brooder: one with clean water, the other with the supplement-enhanced water.

## Digestive Aid: Chick Grit

Chicks need grit to help digest their food because the grit helps break down the food in the gizzard, before it passes through the rest of the digestive tract. It's a good idea to offer all chicks grit, but it's especially critical for those who supplement their chicks' diet with oats, grass, etc. Chick feed is formulated for easy digestion that doesn't require grit, so some poultry experts suggest that free-choice grit is unnecessary. However, I like to err on the side of caution and offer grit free choice at all times, to promote good digestion.

Provide chicks with grit free-choice via coarse dirt, or with a commercial brand of chick grit (be sure to purchase chick grit only, as grit for adult hens is a choking hazard for small chicks). When using dirt, be sure to use dirt only from sources free of pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers to prevent chicks from consuming harmful toxins.

## Immune-Boosting Prebiotics and Probiotics

A common myth is that chicks don't benefit from prebiotics and probiotics. However, there's no truth behind this popular

belief, as chicks hatch with no gut flora, so they need these supplements to start building a healthy immune system.

Probiotics work to build up beneficial bacteria in the chick's intestines before bad bacteria have a chance to take over and cause the chick to become ill. Probiotics not only protect against diseases in the digestive tract, but they also help keep chickens healthy in times of stress and strengthen the overall immune system.

Chicks should be offered probiotics from day one and continued throughout the course of their life to promote good health and longevity, and to boost egg production.

### ***How Do Probiotics Help Chicks?***

Probiotics work to feed the probiotics in a chick's gut. Without probiotics, probiotics literally starve to death and are no use to the consumer. Good probiotic supplements for chicks include:

- Dandelion Greens
- Flax seeds
- Sea Kelp

### **Healthy Oats**

Oats are the perfect supplement for baby chicks, helping them grow faster without promoting excessive growth. Offering a boost of important vitamins and minerals, oats are believed to help chicks stay healthier.

Oats are also an excellent source of fiber and several B vitamins, including niacin, riboflavin, and thiamine. They also contain beneficial minerals such as calcium, copper, iron, magnesium, and zinc. They're often added to a chick's diet to help clear up and prevent pasty butt (a common and potentially deadly condition in chicks).

Not only do oats help chicks grow healthy and strong, but they also help prevent potential behavior problems too. Chicks fed oats are less likely to bully flock mates and engage in cannibalistic tendencies than chicks raised without oats as part of their daily diet.

To feed, grind oats into a coarse meal and sprinkle lightly on top of feed twice daily.

### **Chick-Saving Oregano**

The most popular herb fed to baby chicks is oregano — and for good reason. Oregano essential oil fed at certain levels (generally 500ppm) can reduce the incidence of cocci, improve weight gain, feed conversion, and boost the immune system.

Chicks can be offered dried oregano flakes after consuming their first meal. Sprinkle lightly over feed twice daily. An alternative to this is oregano tea (see recipe below).

### ***How to Make Oregano Tea:***

- 1 teaspoon dried organic oregano flakes
- 1 cup water



Sprinkle dried oregano on top of feed to boost immune systems.

Bring water to a boil. Remove from heat. Stir in oregano leaves and let steep for 10 minutes. Cool to room temperature. Dilute oregano tea with a gallon of water before serving. Replace with clean drinking water after 12 hours.

### **Supplements Are Essential for Healthy Chicks**

Chicks need supplements to boost their health and give them a good start to life. By adding supplements to your chicks' diet, you can help them start off life on the right foot, and boost them for productive, healthy lives. ●

#### **RESOURCES**

*Fresh Eggs Daily*: by Lisa Steele

- [www.mypetchicken.com/blogs/faqs/do-i-need-to-give-my-shipped-chicks-vitamins-and-electrolytes-when-they-arrive](http://www.mypetchicken.com/blogs/faqs/do-i-need-to-give-my-shipped-chicks-vitamins-and-electrolytes-when-they-arrive)
- <https://grubblyfarms.com/blogs/the-flyer/why-are-electrolytes-important-for-chicken-and-chick-health>
- <https://thefrugalchicken.com/do-chicks-need-poultry-grit>
- <https://nutrenaworld.com/the-importance-of-grit-for-chickens/>
- <https://grubblyfarms.com/blogs/the-flyer/when-to-use-probiotics-for-your-chickens>
- [www.mdpi.com/2076-2607/13/2/257](http://www.mdpi.com/2076-2607/13/2/257)
- <https://backyardpoultry.iamcountryside.com/feed-health/the-scoop-on-using-prebiotics-and-probiotics-for-chickens/>
- [www.fresheggdaily.blog/2012/07/new-and-improved-breakfast-of-champion.html](http://www.fresheggdaily.blog/2012/07/new-and-improved-breakfast-of-champion.html)
- <https://poultrydvm.com/supplement/oregano>

**ERIN SNYDER** and her family have raised chickens and ducks for nearly two decades. She's passionate about all things poultry but is especially interested in poultry nutrition, predator protection, egg-laying disorders, and helping chickens live their best lives well into their golden years. You can follow her chicken adventures on her newly hatched Instagram page: [www.Instagram.com/TheHenHouseHygge/](http://www.Instagram.com/TheHenHouseHygge/)



# Ideas For Making Your Own Chick Food

ARTICLE AND PHOTOS BY WREN EVERETT

**F**or as long as there have been chickens, there have been the chicks who grew into them. For most of that time, those chicks ate natural foods that were readily available in their wild or domestic worlds — fallen fruit, bugs, grubs, grass, carrion, and seeds.

In relatively recent times, however, chickens have become exceedingly popular. And when something is popular, companies spring up to supply

whatever someone could possibly want or imagine to accommodate their interest. Both novice and experienced chicken keepers, just trying to do what's right for their new flock, will always be advised to purchase pelleted chicken feed that's been custom blended for every stage of their birds' lives. Doing so, of course, will give your birds the scientifically decided rations that will yield perfectly passable poultry.

But it's not the only option. For those willing to venture off the name-brand-crumble path and figure things out in a self-sufficient way, I'm here to declare that it's possible to raise chicks on homemade feed made with things that you likely already have on hand. I've raised dozens upon dozens of chicks — some of which lived to more than eight years old — and I've never once bought a bag of starter crumble. I'd like to share how I do it.

Now, I know that my approach isn't one that's commercially viable — I imagine anyone raising 200+ Cornish Cross market broilers, for example, won't generate the kinds of scraps and food necessary for their high metabolism. But for those like me, who raise a dozen barnyard-mix chicks a year (or less) to maintain a small backyard flock, this method works.

## The Ingredients

There's no set list of perfect ingredients for good chick food, but rather a spectrum of ingredients that you can choose from based on their local availability. I try to balance three different categories in a ratio instead: greens, animal protein, and grains.

Greens can easily be gathered from any unsprayed patch of lawn. Everything from clover to dandelion to grass is excellent stuff for baby chicks — but since they won't be able to bite little bits off rooted plants, you'll likely have to mince them very finely for the first few weeks. As soon as you can move your chicks outside, your responsibility for this category will be handled by the chicks themselves.

Animal protein can be secured in more ways than you might guess. Everything natural that comes from animals can go in this category — uncured, raw, finely minced meat trimmings and bits (though I avoid chicken), leftover scrambled egg scrapings from the pan, old yogurt, and, most importantly, bugs, worms,



First food before mixing.



First food after mixing.

and grubs of any sort. If you have children, employ them to find all the creepy crawlies they can — many are enthusiastic about the job, especially after a good rainstorm.

Grains can be supplied by anything from birdseed to table scraps (with some very strong caveats!) Don't feed your chicks a refined product, such as anything made with white flour or sugar, and certainly nothing that came plastic-wrapped. When I say "table scraps" I mean things like soaked stale whole-wheat bread or scrapings from the rice, oatmeal, or

polenta pan. Whole seeds are also grand — my chicks seem to particularly be fond of millet.

I generally try to mix one part greens to one part animal protein to two parts grain for the best mix for my chicks, but I'll always give them as much animal protein as I can find. If I have any bonus bits, such as the mush left over from juicing or the okara left over from making soymilk, that also gets thrown into the mix.

Now that you're familiar with the ingredients, let's talk about how to serve them to your ever-growing brood.



Chicks love spring greens.

## PULLET-SHUT

AUTOMATIC CHICKEN DOOR



FORGET TO CLOSE THE COOP AGAIN?  
WHEN WILL YOUR LUCK RUN OUT?

### PROBLEM SOLVED!

Stay out visiting friends,  
sleep in, enjoy your vacation!

Prevent losses.

#### ENJOY PEACE OF MIND.

- Endorsed by Rob Ludlow of BYC
- Automatically closes and opens
- Easy to set open and close times
- Comes Fully Assembled
- Solid Aluminum Frame and door with brass pivots, no wood
- No switches to fail, no string to break
- Charging options: 12v battery with solar panel or plug-in charger
- Battery Status Light
- Dawn/Dusk Sensor Option
- American Designed, American Made
- Three sizes available. Fast Shipping
- Starting at \$180 + options
- Plus: Solar Powered Coop Light Kits (more eggs!), and predator hand traps (bad raccoons!)

Doors  
Starting  
at \$180



[www.chickendoors.com](http://www.chickendoors.com)  
(512) 995-0058



## The First Few Days

For the first week or so, I provide my version of “baby food” to my hatchlings. It’s a mixture of equal parts millet, cornmeal, leftover oatmeal from breakfast, and whole-milk plain yogurt. Mixed thoroughly, it forms a moist, peckable mush that the chicks quickly figure out is tasty to eat. Don’t worry if they aren’t very interested in eating for the first day or so — they’re still digesting the last bits of their nutritious egg yolk.

Once all the chicks are steadily eating and pooping — usually by the third day — it’s time to start making things more interesting.

## Moving On and Growing Up ...

First, I start ripping up whole weeds from the yard and garden (chickweed, clover, and the tenderest grass you can find is a good start) and placing the entire plant in their brooder box — roots, dirt, and all. The exposure to

soil is good for building up immune systems, and the plant offers a lot for the new chicks to peck, scratch at, and clamber over.

I also start giving them access to grit — merely limestone fines from my local quarry, and large-grade sand — so they can scratch through and peck it as well.

Finally, though they’re usually too big for the bitty birds, I start putting live worms and pillbugs in their food dish. The chicks are usually frightened at first, but they soon start fighting over the tasty tidbits.

All these interesting edibles are in addition to the chicks’ main meals of grains, animal proteins, and finely chopped vegetable matter. I feed the chicks twice a day, morning and afternoon, and try to calibrate the amounts, so they finish it all by the evening. It takes a while to figure out what that amount is, especially since the amount they need grows as they do!

## Outside and Beyond

I move my chicks outside as soon as possible — within the first week, weather permitting. This diet, as you might surmise, is not augmented with artificial vitamin D, as many commercial feeds are. That means the chicks need to be in direct sunlight to capture vitamin D the good old-fashioned way. Even if it’s just for an hour or two at noon, it’s critical that the chicks be able to be in sunlight whenever possible.

During the first few weeks, I do this by moving my brooder box — merely a plastic tote with a grate over the top — outdoors. Once the chicks are big enough that they can’t slip through chicken wire, I keep them in a chicken tractor during the day (and safely move them indoors at night). The chicken tractor, of course, also gives them access to natural greens, grit, and bugs.

Once the chicks are in the tractor and beginning to feather out, I start offering them a birdseed mix of sorghum, millet, sunflower seeds, and cracked corn, as well as any “safe” food scraps I make in the kitchen. This includes raw meat scraps, minced banana peel, the outer leaves of cabbages, watermelon rinds, melon seeds — anything that’s unrefined, natural, and not salty.

I hope these ideas have whetted your appetite for experimenting with a homegrown, all-natural way to rear chicks. It may not be conventional in a modern sense, but if you go far back enough, it was traditional, and even further back ... quite natural. ●

---

**WREN EVERETT** and her husband quit their teaching jobs in the city and moved back to the land on 12 acres in the Ozarks. There, they’re learning to live as modern peasants: off-grid, as self-sufficient as possible, and quite happily.



Chicks will do anything for worms.



**MT.  
HEALTHY**  
*Hatcheries*  
EST. 1924

**HEALTHY STARTS HERE.**

**TRUSTED SINCE 1924.**

**BASED IN**

**CINCINNATI, OHIO**

**CHICKS - TURKEYS - GAME BIRDS**

**EVERY GREAT FLOCK,  
STARTS WITH A  
GREAT HATCHERY.**

*Order Your  
Spring Chicks Now!*

**WWW.MTHEALTHY.COM**

**#MTHEALTHYHATCHERY**

**CALL 1-800-451-5603 FOR A FREE CATALOG**

**FREE SHIPPING**



# PLANNING A POULTRY COOP WITH MAINTENANCE IN MIND

*When designing your new poultry coop, stop and think about routine maintenance, and ways to make normal upkeep and repairs easier.*

ARTICLE AND PHOTOS BY DOUG OTTINGER

**N**O MATTER HOW well-built or well-planned a chicken coop is (or any animal shelter, for that matter), it's inevitable that it'll need future maintenance and repair. Routine tasks, such as periodic removal of manure and wet litter, will be necessary. Corrosive damage to both wood and metal surfaces can occur from ammonia and chemicals in the manure. Structural components, including windows and doors, may need periodic painting or repair. Lower sections of wooden walls can soften from moist bedding and manure, rot away, and leave entry points for predators. Rodents have uncanny ways of finding entry into even the most well-built poultry houses. Coops built

with dirt floors are prone to break-ins by burrowing and digging invaders. Thinking of ways to avoid future maintenance problems, and making your routine chores easier, is important when planning and building new poultry housing. There's definitely not a one-and-only way to design poultry housing. There are many ways to build a coop. With that said, let's look at a few basic things a person might want to consider when designing a new coop.

## Plan for Manure Removal

While this may seem almost too obvious, it's a chore that's sometimes forgotten about in planning. Buildup of manure and bedding is often not

given much thought until it becomes a little too deep and suddenly needs to be removed. Poultry can produce voluminous amounts of manure. If you have a large walk-in coop, a scoop shovel and garden cart or wheelbarrow become necessities. When planning your structure, make sure the door is wide enough to allow the garden cart inside, or at least into the open doorway, while doing your clean-out chores. This can't be emphasized enough. I can readily attest to this, having made the mistake of not taking door dimensions into account more than once (some of us learn more slowly than others). This simple step in planning can save you much in the way of time, labor, and



Poultry manure is very corrosive. Here it has destroyed the bottom and sides of aluminum nesting boxes.



Doors and windows may need repair from time to time.



Ensure that OSB floors and siding aren't in direct contact with damp manure and bedding.



Because no subsoil barrier had been installed around the base of this coop, a mink was able to dig under the wall and kill a batch of young pullets.

aching muscles. Carrying shovelful after shovelful of heavy manure out the door, to a waiting cart, isn't fun.

Small or narrow coops and runs, including areas of a tool shed that've been sectioned off for poultry, may also become unnecessarily difficult to clean. Make sure you have enough room to move shovels and rakes freely during manure removal. I've seen housing areas too narrow and tight to freely use a long-handled shovel or rake, requiring cleaning chores to be performed on hands and knees with a small garden trowel and a bucket. Design the layout so that gates or doors are in such places that you don't have to move bedding and manure through work and tool areas. If you're handy with a skill saw and can do some rudimentary framing, cutting a new exterior door in a shed wall can make a lot of sense.

If possible, avoid using OSB (oriented strand board), chipboard, or particle board in areas that will be in contact with damp bedding and manure.

Sheets of OSB are used in almost 70% of new construction today. It's also commonly used for flooring,

walls, and roof sheathing in pre-fabricated sheds, including chicken coops. While oriented strand board is sturdy and much cheaper than sheets of standard plywood, it also tends to soften and start breaking down when in contact with constant moisture. All wood products may start decomposing if constantly damp, but OSB tends to deteriorate much more rapidly under such conditions. Coop floors made of OSB, as well as sections of OSB walls, can quickly rot away when in contact with damp bedding and manure.

There are many schools of thought

about using pressure-treated plywood and lumber in animal housing. If you do want to use pressure-treated wood, it can be used directly for both floors and walls, or it can also be placed over a pre-fab OSB floor. Pressure-treated wood will resist decay much better than non-treated wood. Because pressure-treated plywood is more expensive than standard plywood, one option is to use partial sheets, 16 to 24 inches high, on the lower sections of walls. If you'd rather not use pressure-treated lumber in your coop, a good layer

### Safe for the Hens • Easy to Move • Made In USA



- Great predator protection
- Fun for the whole family
- Happy, healthy chickens
- Chores are done from the outside

Easy lift and move handle, only 50 lb carry weight!



We ship nationwide



[www.homeplacemarket.com](http://www.homeplacemarket.com)  
Schellsburg, PA • 717-983-8450



or two of porch and floor paint can be applied to protect the wood, including OSB. In any event, plan how you'll protect wood, in critical areas, from decay.

### Plan for Ventilation

Most poultry do better in environments that aren't too hot. Windows placed on opposite sides of a coop can help greatly with air flow and cooling

on hot summer days. Years ago, large chicken houses were often built with windows that were placed lower on one side and higher on the other. The theory was that cool air would enter through the lower windows, creating a draft and causing warmer air to rise out through the upper windows. This standard method of construction seemed to work well and can be used in backyard coops today.



## Reinventing the Chicken Coop



Backyard chickens meet contemporary design! Matthew Wolpe and Kevin McElroy give you 14 complete building plans for chicken coops that range from the purely functional to the outrageously fabulous. One features a water-capturing roof, another pays homage to midcentury modern

architecture, and another sports a built-in composting system. Some designs suit beginning builders, while others are challenging enough for experts. Full-color photographs and detailed construction illustrations accompany the step-by-step building plans. **Item #6536, \$19.95**

**This title is available at  
Shop.IAmCountryside.com or by  
calling 970-392-4419.**

**Use code FEBMAR20 for a 20% discount.**  
(Expires on 3/10/26)

### Use Hardware Cloth to Enclose Runs and Cover Windows

Chicken wire is great stuff for internal dividers inside the coop, but it's no match for a pack of marauding neighborhood dogs or a family of raccoons intent on having a chicken dinner. If possible, spend the extra money and purchase hardware cloth to enclose pens, runs, and windows. It may save you the dismay of going out to your coop some morning, only to find it broken into, with piles of dead birds killed by a predator.

### Strengthen the Exterior

If you're building housing with a dirt floor, protect against digging predators by burying hardware cloth at least 12 inches deep around the exterior walls. Concrete or concrete blocks, if available, can also be used, but this is an expensive option, and pouring a concrete floor might be just as feasible.

### Don't Place a Coop Against Fences or Other Buildings

Make sure you have space to work around the outside of the coop. It can be difficult to perform exterior maintenance on a coop built too close to a fence or another building.

### Plan Your Coop

Designing and building a new coop will be different for everyone, but thinking of ways to make chores and maintenance easier should be a big part of the planning. ●

**DOUG OTTINGER** lives, works, and writes from his small hobby farm in northwest Minnesota. His educational background is in agriculture with an emphasis in poultry and avian science.

# IDEAL POULTRY BREEDING FARMS, INC.

*"Generations of Quality Poultry"*



*Large Variety of Standard Chicks  
Broilers • Polish • Ducks  
Geese • Guineas • Bantams & More*

Visit The Website!



IDEALPOULTRY.COM • CAMERON, TEXAS • 1-800-243-3257



# On-Farm Hatching

## A New System is Hatched

ARTICLE AND PHOTOS BY MARK HALL



**F**OR MORE THAN A CENTURY, live chicks have been shipped by mail to poultry farmers and other enthusiasts all over the country. Tiny fuzz-balls from a hatchery in New England can arrive in good shape on the West Coast in 2 to 3 days. With no food or water inside their cardboard box, one might think they couldn't possibly survive. However, because they absorb their nutrient-rich yolk just before hatching, they can live up to 72 hours without any food or water.

Yes, this system has provided reliable and efficient service to many generations of chicken growers. It's certainly not a practice to be wantonly scrapped. I've always tried to live by the motto, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it," but it never hurts to examine alternative methods of doing things, when they're presented. You never know what new ideas might benefit your poultry practices.

Take, for instance, an innovative hatching method known as on-farm hatching. Newly developed in Europe, this approach is a twist on an old theme. Like the traditional method, eggs are incubated inside a large setting machine at the hatchery, but the last few days of gestation are spent elsewhere. On Day 18, instead of simply moving them over to the hatcher, the eggs are relocated to their destination three days early. Here they'll hatch in huge hatching trays that are pre-positioned inside a barn or some other large outbuilding.

"What's the purpose of moving the eggs out of the hatchery before they're hatched? They're going to be delivered to the farm in a few days anyway."

The answer to that question is borne of stress — the stress otherwise ex-

perienced by chicks that are handled and transported, that is. "But my newly delivered layers have always thrived," you may say, and I'd chime right in to affirm that my layers have always done well, also.

However, this new system isn't intended for layers, but for broilers, where meat production is the name of the game. To meet their bottom line, broiler farmers seek every bit of extra weight gain possible for their meat birds. On-farm hatching attempts to maximize their growth by boosting the birds' health and production. Results from early trials seem to show improved health and production among broilers that entered the world through the on-farm hatching model.

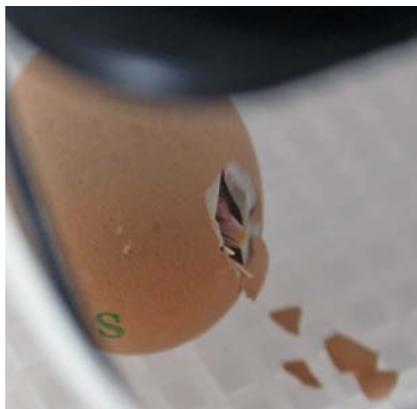
The first on-farm hatching benefit stems from the immediate availability of chick feed and water inside the hatching trays. Although the absence of provisions for up to 72 hours isn't generally harmful, broilers experience greater weight gain when fed and watered immediately. As a recent study revealed, chicks that began to eat immediately after hatch gained a slaughter weight as much as 4.4% higher than those that didn't.

Also, when there's an immediate availability of feed and water, the stomach and intestines develop more rapidly, which may help reduce antibiotic use. According to a related study, chicks hatched using the on-farm method needed only half the antibiotics, on average, than the antibiotics required by their counterparts. It was also determined that they were several times less likely to require antibiotics altogether.

There are many possible causes of death in chicks including disease, poor water quality, and genetics, just to name a few. Nevertheless, on-farm chicks experience a lower

rate of mortality. A study on the subject showed that, at 40 days of life, total mortality was lower in the on-farm hatched flock (3.40%) than in the flock that was hatched in the hatchery (4.01%).

On-farm hatching can even help avoid a chick health nemesis: A lower rate of the common ulcerous skin condition called footpad dermatitis is



noticed consistently with this method. However, the reason for this correlation isn't fully understood.

Much greater hatching efficiency is also consistently enjoyed with the on-farm hatching method. Study results indicated that the number of unhatched eggs using the traditional hatchery method is nearly twice that of on-farm eggs. This is largely due to the extra amount of time generally allowed at the farm for hatching; the chicks aren't removed until all viable ones are hatched. Because having more empty shells and unhatched eggs can increase the risk of certain bacterial infections, hatcheries place a strict time limit for eggs to remain inside the incubator. With the on-farm method, however, all unhatched chicks and nonviable eggs are carefully identified and removed, while allowing the others a few extra days to hatch.

Nevertheless, there's also an

*All-Natural*

# VetRx

RESPIRATORY AID

**POULTRY**

**PROMOTES HEALTHY UPPER RESPIRATORY FUNCTION**

SAFE & EASY TO USE FOR ONE BIRD OR THE ENTIRE FLOCK

*Also Available For:*

- Caged Bird
- Cat & Kitten
- Dog & Puppy
- Equine
- Goat & Sheep
- Pigeon
- Rabbit
- Small Fur Animal

PROUDLY MADE IN THE USA

800-554-1080  
www.goodwinol.com

GOODWINOL PRODUCTS CORPORATION

# Sweet PDZ®

## FRESH COOP, HAPPY FLOCK

Sweet PDZ Coop Refresher naturally controls odors and moisture, keeping your coop clean, dry and healthy. Safe, easy to use, and perfect for a fresher home for your flock.

- ABSORBS MOISTURE**  
Extends Life of Bedding By Quickly Absorbing Moisture
- SAFEGUARDS**  
Protects Respiratory Health Environmentally Safe
- ALL - NATURAL**  
100% All-Natural Earth Mineral Safe for Horses and Humans

OMRI LISTED For Organic Use

Discover why Sweet PDZ is the trusted brand in odor control at [sweetpdz.com](http://sweetpdz.com) or call 800.367.1534



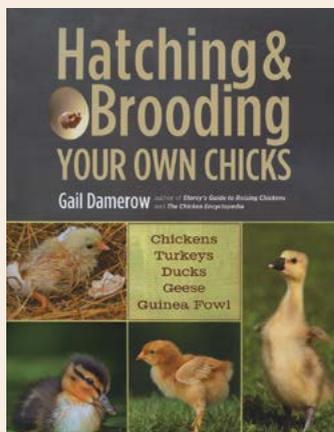
obvious disadvantage inherent with on-farm hatching. Because the day of hatch, along with the last few days leading up to it, are all spent on the farm, the farmer is now the one to take time out of a busy day and do those

things the hatchery once did — carefully control the critically important temperature and humidity, as well as mitigate bacterial risks.

I find this alternative hatching system fascinating. The scientific ev-

idence for its effects on broiler performance is still a bit limited, but at least one American-owned hatchery has already made the switch to on-farm hatching. Will more hatcheries in the U.S. follow suit? I don't know, but I'm egg-cited to find out! ●

 **MUST READ!**



## *Hatching & Brooding Your Own Chicks*

This is the guide you need if you want to incubate, hatch, and brood chicks yourself rather than buying them from a hatchery. Filled with beautiful illustrations, poultry authority Gail Damerow explains how to hatch healthy baby chickens, ducklings, goslings, turkey poults, and guinea keets. She addresses everything from selecting a breed and choosing the best incubator to ensure proper set-up and sanitary conditions, understanding embryo development, and feeding and caring for newborn chicks in a brooder. **Item #6584, \$24.95**

**This title is available by calling:  
970-392-4419 or by visiting:  
Shop.IAmCountryside.com**

**Use code FEBMAR20 for a 20% discount.**  
(Expires on 3/10/26)

### RESOURCES

- De Jong, Ingrid C, et al. "Effects of On-Farm and Traditional Hatching on Welfare, Health, and Performance of Broiler Chickens." *Poultry Science*, vol. 99, no. 10, 2020, pp. 4662-4671.
- Jerab, Julia G. "Antimicrobial Use in On-Farm Hatching Systems vs. Traditional Hatching Systems: A Case Study." *Antimicrobial Usage Monitoring Systems and Stewardship of Antimicrobials in Animal Health*, special issue of *Animals*, vol. 13, no. 20, 2023.
- Maiorka, A, et al. "Posthatching Water and Feed Deprivation Affect the Gastrointestinal Tract and Intestinal Mucosa Development of Broiler Chicks." *Journal of Applied Poultry Research*, vol. 12, no. 4, 2023, pp. 481-492.
- "Overview: On-Farm Hatching." Innovate Animal Ag, <https://innovate-animal.org/on-farm-hatching-overview>. Accessed 1 October 2025.
- Souza da Silva, Carol, et al. "Day-Old Chicken Quality and Performance of Broiler Chickens from 3 Different Hatching Systems." *Poultry Science*, vol. 100, no. 3, 2021.

**MARK M. HALL** lives with his wife, their three daughters, and numerous pets on a four-acre slice of paradise in rural Ohio. Mark is a veteran small-scale chicken farmer and an avid observer of nature. As a freelance writer, he endeavors to share his life experiences in a manner that's both informative and entertaining.



2026 Chicks

ORDER SPRING CHICKS  
ONLINE NOW AT  
[MCMURRAYHATCHERY.COM](http://MCMURRAYHATCHERY.COM)

# Defining Quality for Generations

For over a century, Murray McMurray Hatchery has remained a trusted, family-owned business, serving generations of poultry keepers. Our small, dedicated team works tirelessly to ensure our poultry meets the highest standards. Whether you are an experienced enthusiast, or just embarking on the journey, look to McMurray Hatchery for guaranteed quality rare and Heritage breeds, low minimums, and all the supplies you need to raise your flock.

[MCMURRAYHATCHERY.COM](http://MCMURRAYHATCHERY.COM) | 800.456.3280



SCAN TO REQUEST A FREE CATALOG

*Murray McMurray*



Photos courtesy of Shelby Lascelles.



# Setting Up Your Hens to Successfully Brood

ARTICLE AND PHOTOS BY JENNY UNDERWOOD



**C**HICKENS ARE an integral part of our homestead. We purchase day-old chicks from a store or an individual and raise them. It's hard work and takes a good amount of preparation and attention. Is the heat lamp working? What if the electricity goes off? Are they too hot, too cold?

This year, our chickens took matters under their own "wings" and decided they'd do all the work themselves, and six of our hens successfully brooded and hatched their own babies. This

was the easiest and best way we've ever raised chicks. And strangely enough, almost all the hatched babies were pullets!

To set our mamas up for success, we built a brooder house, a run, and a moveable "intermediate chicken" house with pen. The brooder house helped ensure our broody mamas weren't bothered by other chickens and that the babies could stay with just their moms until they were big enough to be on their own. The intermediate house allowed them to grow

to full size before going into the pen with our other chickens. It's so much easier when the mama hen raises her own babies.

To build the brooder house, you'll need to decide first how big you'll build it. Ours is 54-inches by 36-inches and is set up off the ground on wooden legs made from 4x4 posts. It easily accommodates two mamas and their babies at one time. You can build the house with plywood, metal, or boards. We built a frame with 2x4s and covered it with rough-cut sawmill lumber. We put on a slanted roof, which slants away from the pen, so water doesn't pour onto the roof of the pen. I also have a roof on the pen to protect the chicks during inclement weather. The house has a door that leads from the house to the pen. We shut this during the first few days, so the chicks don't wander away from the mama. There's also a door on the back of the brooder house that we can access to change the straw, feed, and water, and otherwise care for them. A door is on the outside of the pen, too.

The run is set on 4x4 posts and consists of a 2x4 frame, covered on the sides with chicken wire. Alternatively, you can use hardware cloth or small welded wire. The roof is covered with metal, but you could choose to cover with the chicken wire or hardware cloth.

A note on metal: Figure out how much metal you'll use by measuring the length of the roof and pen roof (if desired). Metal is generally sold in 12-foot sheets that are 3-feet wide. Figure out how many sections

one sheet will get you. Unless you want to splice it, make sure the metal is long enough to do one full run. So, in our case, our roof is 36 inches long by 42 inches wide. That means I need two pieces that are 36 inches wide and 36 inches long. However, I'll need to cut one of the pieces to fit (basically 10 inches wide, but measure everything as you go along). To roof my run, which is 54 inches wide by 6 feet long, I needed one full 12-foot sheet. Cut this at the 6-foot middle. Then install the first piece (lengthwise in this situation), measure and trim the next piece as needed, and install. Remember, on metal roofing there's a lapping bump. This helps prevent leaks, so be sure to cut your metal so it still laps properly.

### Frame

Begin by cutting 2x4 boards for the frame. This consists of four boards 32 inches long and four boards 40 inches long. Then, cut four boards 36 inches long and four boards 54 inches long. Fasten a 36-inch board to the bottom of a 32-inch board and a 40-inch board. Then fasten at the top at a slant. After this, you may trim the standing 2x4s at the angle needed to make the slant. Repeat exactly. Then take the 54-inch boards and make a rectangle by fastening them to two 32-inch 2x4s. Repeat for the other set of these boards. Attach these together by forming two end walls that are 36 inches by 40 inches/32 inches. (This is an angled wall so the back is 40 inches tall and the front is 32 inches.) Set the 54-inch by 32-inch walls at the front and back. Screw or nail solidly together. Cut 2x4s to go every 12 to 18 inches across the roof as joists. The joists will run in the opposite direction as the metal. Attach these on the inside of the roof frame. Place studs in the frame walls by cutting 2x4s to go every 12 inches. Measure the bottom of the house and cut boards or a solid piece of plywood to fit. Attach all the way

## Materials to Build Brooder House and Pen

- 2x4s, 8 feet long (Approximately 20)
- Screws or nails
- Siding (either boards, metal, or desired alternative)
- 6 hinges (2 large for the back door and 4 smaller ones for the other doors)
- Chicken wire, hardware cloth, or small welded wire
- 3 door latches
- Metal for roofing
- 1 sheet plywood
- 8-4x4 posts, 2 feet long (or you can buy two 4x4 posts that are 8 feet long)



# Metzer Farms

Tag us @metzerfarms  
to be featured

### A Family Hatchery.

Since 1972



### Your Waterfowl Experts

We provide extraordinary care to our birds so you get the highest quality companions.

Whether you are new to the hobby or already have a flock of your own, it's easy for anyone to enjoy raising a duckling or gosling.

### Year-Round Hatching

- 25 breeds of ducks
- 13 breeds of geese

### Now Offering:

- Free Shipping
- 2-Day Shipping to most of the U.S.



Shipping from your nearest location

metzerfarms.com

Call (800) 424-7755, scan the QR Code, or visit our website to see our breeds and order now.









Intermediate movable chicken house and pen.

around with screws or nails. Measure and attach boards, plywood, or metal to the outside of the walls, except the back wall, which will have the larger door. On this one, attach a 2x4 in the middle of the wall, lengthwise. Put your siding only up to this board, creating a half-wall. Now, measure the space left on the side, and cut one piece of plywood to fit this area. Attach two hinges at the bottom and attach to the house, so the door will swing down when released on the outside. Place a latch on the side of the top of this door and on the house frame so you can easily lock it.

In the front, measure an 8-inch-wide by 12-inch-tall door and cut this out. Make sure you aren't on any studs or supporting materials. Cut a piece of plywood just slightly smaller, so it fits snugly but moves easily in this doorway. Attach two hinges on one side and the latch on the other. Place remaining latch on house.

509.933.7150

irisheyesgardenseeds.com



CERTIFIED



ORGANIC

Use Code **Backyard-ie15**

For 10% Off Your Order

Seed Potatoes | Garlic | Bare Roots | Sweet Potatoes | Garden Seeds | And More



Pen attached to brooder house.

### What are your personal Health and Life Insurance Options?

- Decreased costs?
- Increased Benefits?
- Improved Customer Service?

At Capper's Insurance Service, we're ready to help you access the best information, products and service possible. Capper's Insurance Service has a full line of Health, Life and Annuity products for all ages; whether you are on Medicare, still working full-time or simply have questions and want to discuss options for yourself or for a loved one.

Call **800-678-7741** with any questions and to speak with us about your options.

Capper's Insurance Service is your licensed agent serving the readers of our magazine with protection services since 1932.

1503 SW 42nd St. | Topeka, KS 66609 | cappersinsurance.com



Contact Capper's Insurance Service with questions or concerns about Medicare, Health, Life or Annuity products.

Proud Partner of



*Capper's Insurance Service, Inc. is not affiliated with Medicare or any other governmental agency.*



Side view of brooder house.



Back view of brooder house.

### Pen

Build the pen by cutting four 4x4 posts, 2 feet long. Cut six 2x4s, 6 feet long and three 2x4s, 54 inches long. Construct the long sides by fastening a 1-foot 2x4 halfway down on three of the posts, which are placed at each end and in the middle. Repeat for other side. Finish the ends with the short 2x4s. Cut eight 2x4s that are 40 inches long. Attach these vertically to the bottom boards at each spot where there's a post and on the ends on either side. Cover with desired wire. Place your door where you can access the house door. Leave this area free from wire. I put my door in the area by the house and to the middle 2x4. Cut out a door from plywood that fits this, place hinges, and latch on. Install your desired roofing and flooring.

### Intermediate House and Pen

The intermediate house and pen are set closer to the ground and consist of an elevated house with an area enclosed in front and underneath it. It's mounted on wheels in the back and can be moved around, if desired. The bottom is flat on the ground so the chickens can peck and scratch. Ours has chicken wire on the bottom, but it's better to have it open if your land is flat enough that there won't be gaps between the ground and side frame bottom.

Decide your desired size. If you're planning to have quite a few chicks at once, you'll need to make it bigger to accommodate them. Ours is a 2-foot by 2-foot house with a 6-foot-long chicken run, and it worked perfectly for up to six medium-sized chickens. It has a screened window that can be opened to let in more air during hot weather. The access door is in the back of the house, and there's a door with an outside sliding handle that opens onto the ramp in the pen. The pen has a door on the outside, to allow you to easily feed and water. Build in a similar fashion as described above, however, use 2-inch-wide boards to lighten the weight. Also, just build the pen all the way to the ground and forgo the raised floor. Place wheels at the back and install a handle on the front.

Get started with this easy, efficient way to hatch your new baby chicks next year. You may find you no longer have a use for that heat lamp! ●

---

**JENNY UNDERWOOD** is a homeschooling mama to four lively blessings. She makes her home in the rural foothills of the Ozark Mountains with her husband of 20 years. You can find her reading a good book, drinking coffee, and gardening on their little fifth-generation homestead.



### OFFERING:

- French Pearl Guinea
- Brown Chinese Geese



**GUINEAS** are fast growing, suitable for backyard growers who want to control ticks and for those who would want to use them as a meat bird.

**BROWN CHINESE GEESE** are a graceful and attractive breed. They are good foragers, sometimes referred to as "weeder geese", and produce meat with a low grease content.



### Fifth Day Farm Contact

sales@fifthdayfarminc.com  
freedomrangerhatchery.com

717-917-6729



# Cooking with DUCK EGGS

BY SHERRI TALBOT

**W**HILE FARMERS RAISE a wide variety of poultry, waterfowl, and game birds for meat, when it comes to eggs, the chicken is the overwhelming choice. From a consumer perspective, part of this is habit and availability — when was the last time you saw turkey eggs in the grocery store? Another part

is convenience — almost all recipe measurements assume the cook will use chicken eggs.

However, bakers and egg lovers may be missing out. Ducks have a tremendous amount to offer in the quality, nutrition, and texture of their eggs. And they're a plentiful resource; breeds like the Khaki Campbell can

easily match the production levels of laying hens, with some lines even laying 300 eggs a year.

## Anatomy of an Egg

Duck eggs are made up of the yolk, white, shell, and shell membrane, which is located between the shell and the internal egg components. Average duck eggs are about 20% to 30% bigger than extra-large chicken eggs, but the structural differences between the two include more than just their size.

To begin with, duck shells are heavier. Even if the shell is fractured, the shell membrane — designed to protect against bacteria — is thick enough to keep the egg safe. In nature, this is to protect hatching ducklings from wet groundcover and clumsy duck feet.

Duck egg yolks are more likely to be orange, rather than yellow, due to the different nutritional make-up



of both the yolk and the duck's diet. The yolks are bigger than those of chicken eggs and make up a larger percentage of the inside of a chicken egg. The whites (also called the albumin) of the eggs are thicker than those of chickens, giving duck eggs a firmer consistency that some may initially find odd. Surveys have shown that some people actively find them objectionable, with complaints about the whites being "tough."

### Nutrition

Even taking into account the difference in size, duck eggs have higher levels of protein, fat, and iron. They also beat out chicken eggs in levels of vitamins A, B6, B12, and E. A four-ounce serving of duck eggs can have even more B12 than a serving of beef. One initial study with rats showed that duck eggs might be a resource to help those with vitamin D deficiencies.

The heavier shells of duck eggs allow them to retain their nutritional value, and they've been shown to remain safe for longer than chicken eggs. As far back as the 1950s, research recognized that unwashed duck eggs could last for up to six months in the refrigerator and for weeks at room temperature, with less deterioration than chicken eggs.

Duck eggs may be an alternative for those who are allergic to chicken eggs. Always consult your physician, but some allergies have been shown to be limited to chicken eggs. The difference in nutritional makeup allows for duck eggs to be substituted in certain cases.

### Cooking with Duck Eggs

When cooking, the use of duck eggs often requires modification of the recipe, especially with baked goods. The lower water content in duck eggs can result in differences in the texture of



**Church/Gov't  
Unite**



**Our Constitution**



**Enforce  
Sunday Law**

FREE MATERIALS  
Be Informed, Not Deceived!  
Leave Mailing Address.  
.....  
**TBSM P.O. Box 374, Ellijay, GA 30540**  
**tbsmads@yahoo.com**  
**1-888-211-1715**



**Chicken Coops**  
BY **Formex®**

12-15  
CHICKENS





▲ 4-6  
CHICKENS



MADE IN USA

**(800)310-3867**

**formex.com**



**NEW! COOP STAND**



**NEW! CHICKEN RUN**  
\* wire not included



**NEW!  
CHICKEN RUN  
EXPANSION KIT**

the final product, unless other changes are made. This is especially true when whipping the whites. Their stiff consistency makes it difficult to get the same fluffiness that chicken eggs can achieve. As a result, it may be more difficult to get the desired consistency from meringues, angel food cakes, and the like.

This can be overcome, to some extent, by using the freshest eggs possible and whipping them longer to get as much air into them as possible. Some recipes also recommend adding a small amount of an acidic liquid, such as lemon juice or white vinegar, to provide a more stable, stiffer egg white.

For many dishes, duck eggs may be preferable. One study explored using duck eggs in biscuits, and they were described by testers as being creamier than those containing chicken eggs. Pastries made with duck eggs have been found to have a more pleasing color and texture by the majority of those surveyed.

Some tasters in more recent studies — within the last 10 years — stated that they found duck eggs to have a more intense flavor than chicken eggs. Interestingly, a study done

in the 1950s showed exactly the opposite results, with some of those surveyed complaining that duck eggs had less flavor.

In some dishes, duck eggs may have a stronger smell, which can be unpleasant for consumers, even when used in cooking. However, in these cases it was discovered that a mix of 50/50 chicken and duck eggs resulted in baked goods that people enjoyed, while also having the added nutritional benefits of the duck eggs.

### The Bias Against Duck Eggs

A 1950s study on the use of duck eggs showed that those willing to try them noticed little difference between chicken and duck eggs. However, some of those surveyed refused to eat them at all, with no reason given.

As our cultural palate has changed over time, we appear no less reluctant to try new foods. Because of this, duck eggs remain an underused resource for many cooks and bakers. Recent surveys show less than 10% of egg consumption is duck eggs, and it's likely that this is partially due to the same bias against the unfamiliar.

Despite this, there's no doubt that duck eggs have significant nutritional benefits that should be considered when making your grocery choices. ●

### RESOURCES

- Makinde, F.M., Awoyera, K.D. & Oguntunji, A.O. (2019). Effect of Substitution of Chicken Egg with Duck Egg on Biscuit Quality. *Sustainable Food Production*. Vol. 5: 38-47. doi:10.18052/www.scipress.com/SFP.5.38
- Marvin B. Rhodes, John L. Adams, Nelle Bennett, Robert E. Feeney. (1960) Properties and Food Uses of Duck Eggs. *Poultry Science*. 39(60): 1473-1478. <https://doi.org/10.3382/ps.0391473>.
- Medina-Cruz M. Fernanda; Zaráte-Contreras, Diego; et al. (2023). Nutritional characteristics of different types of eggs. *Agro Productividad*.
- Metzger, John (2012). The Advantages of Ducks and Their Eggs. *The American Livestock Breeds Conservancy News* 29(3).
- Santoso, D.I., Soeryanto, Romadhoni, I.F., and Bahar, A. (2022). Choux pastry made from fresh eggs: a comparative study between chicken and duck eggs. *Food Research* 6 (2): 271-276.
- Snyder, Cecilia. (2020). Duck Eggs vs. Chicken Eggs: Nutrition, Benefits, and More. *Healthline*. [www.healthline.com/nutrition/duck-eggs-vs-chicken-eggs#bottom-line](http://www.healthline.com/nutrition/duck-eggs-vs-chicken-eggs#bottom-line)



**SHERRI TALBOT** is the co-owner and operator of Saffron and Honey Homestead in Windsor, Maine. She raises endangered, heritage-breed livestock and hopes someday to make education and writing on conservation breeding her full-time job. Details can be found at [SaffronandHoneyHomestead.com](http://SaffronandHoneyHomestead.com) or on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/SaffronandHoneyHomestead](http://www.facebook.com/SaffronandHoneyHomestead).

**FAMILY OWNED AND OPERATED**

LOCATED IN LEIGHTON, AL



**NPIP CERTIFIED HATCHERY**

**BROWN EGG LAYERS**

**CORNISH CROSS BROILERS**

**WHITE EGG LAYERS**

**COLORED EGG LAYERS  
AND MORE!**

**EMAIL/WEBSITE**

**SALES@VALLEYFARMSHATCHERY.COM  
WWW.VALLEYFARMSHATCHERY.COM**

**PHONE**

**(256)314-2282**

**ADDRESS**

**4270 RICKS LANE  
LEIGHTON, AL 35646**



Calm ducks are happy ducks.

# Reducing STRESS in Ducks

ARTICLE AND PHOTOS BY ERIN SNYDER

**L**ESS MELLOW THAN chickens, ducks can easily become upset by a variety of things. From disease control, predator prevention, and flock management, these 10 tips can help keep your flock quiet and stress-free.

## #1 Manage a Healthy Flock

Healthy ducks are less likely to experience high levels of stress than flocks plagued by disease and parasites. Reduce the risk of disease by feeding ducks a high-quality feed, offering clean water sources, and routinely cleaning the coop and run.

## #2 Raccoons, Owls, and Foxes: Oh No!

Predators come in a wide variety of shapes and sizes. Ducks are at a high risk of being attacked by ground and aerial predators, and even household pets. Predator attacks are distressing and traumatizing for all involved, and it isn't uncommon for surviving ducks to show symptoms of stress for several months (or longer) after an attack.

Some common symptoms include lethargy, decreased appetite, ruffled feathers, lameness, and a disinterest in normal behaviors. The best way to help your ducks recover from this stress is to move them to a safe location to avoid a repeat performance, as many predators will strike again if the opportunity presents itself.

Offering your flock enrichments to reduce their anxiety, such as time spent splashing in the kiddie pool in a safe enclosure, or foraging for treats, may also help them recover from the trauma of an attack.

You can prevent predator attacks by avoiding free-ranging and by housing ducks in a completely predator-proofed coop and run.

## #3 Raise Ducklings

My family has found that raising ducklings is one of the best ways to prevent stress in the duck flock, for several reasons. In our flock, the adult ducks seem to adapt better when being introduced to young adult ducks that we've raised as ducklings, (versus ducks purchased as adults), making introductions calmer and more stress-free.

Another benefit of raising ducklings is that ducks handled from a young age are more trusting, easier to handle, and tend to be less skittish than ducks purchased as adults.

## #4 Consistency is Key

Ducks thrive on routine and are considerably calmer when everything stays the same. Domestic ducks notice

every change, including if you're late for feeding time, if their water bucket is a different color, or even if you're wearing a new coat or shoes.

To prevent stress, avoid making sudden changes to your flock's environment or routine. If changes are necessary, make them slowly and gradually, to avoid overwhelming the flock. Keep water bucket colors consistent and avoid wearing a new



Spending time daily handling ducklings will help them grow up to be calm and relaxed around you.

brightly colored coat or boots into the duck pen. Sticking to a routine, whenever possible, will also help your flock stay tranquil and stress-free.

While sometimes change can't be prevented, avoid needless changes to the routine and environment.

### #5 Duck Talk

Talking to our flock through the daily routine is one of the best ways we've found to keep our ducks peaceful. For example, when I tell our top female "Molly, I'm going to pick up your water bucket," she knows to step aside from the water bucket so I can pick it up.

By telling her my next move, Molly knows what to expect, and I can avoid scaring her by suddenly approaching. Whether entering the coop or going to pick them up, talking to your flock will help them know what to expect.

When talking to your ducks, always use a gentle, soothing voice.

### #6 Avoid Eye Contact

Ducks seem to have a sixth sense that allows them to know if you're watching them. If upset, they'll respond by nervously running around and quacking loudly.

When you walk past nervous or stressed ducks, avoid looking at them.



**Hoffman Hatchery Inc.**

- Chicks • Turkeys • Ducklings
- Goslings • Guineas
- Gamebirds • Bantams
- Equipment • Books

Call 717-365-3694

www.hoffmanhatchery.com

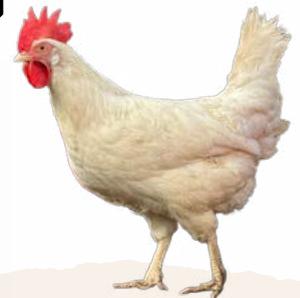
**FREE CATALOG!!** PO Box 129BP  
Gratz, PA 17030



**WHERE BETTER  
POULTRY CARE BEGINS.**

*One-year warranty  
on all core parts.*

## THE LONG-OVERDUE UPGRADE POULTRY GEAR NEEDED



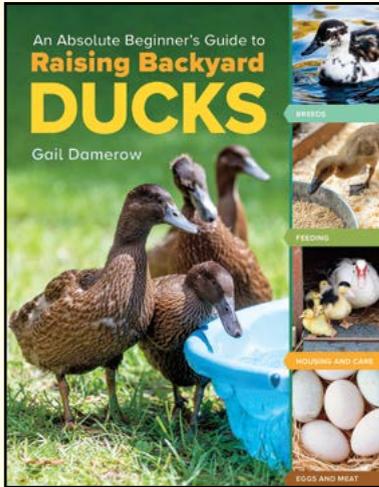
**SPOIL  
YOUR  
Chickens**



Order Direct: [poultrysupplyco.com](http://poultrysupplyco.com)  
Questions? We're chicken keepers too!  
Reach out anytime at [info@poultrysupplyco.com](mailto:info@poultrysupplyco.com)

**👍 MUST READ!**

## *An Absolute Beginner's Guide to Raising Backyard Ducks*



Ducks are quickly gaining on chickens as popular animals for the backyard homestead or small farm. They are friendly, productive, good at eating pests, remarkably healthy, and easier to raise than chickens in many ways. Plus, they

are exceptionally adorable! This accessible introductory guide features original photography tracking the growth and care of a small flock of backyard ducks and addresses everything the beginner duck keeper needs to know to be successful, including breed selection, housing, feeding, health care, understanding behavior, and egg and meat production. **Item #11951, \$16.99**

**This title is available at  
Shop.IAmCountryside.com or  
by calling 970-392-4419.**

**Use code FEBMAR20 for a 20% discount.**  
(Expires on 3/10/26)

If you need to check on them, a quick glance from the corner of your eye can let you know what's happening in the flock without causing the ducks to become more distraught.

They'll usually settle down quickly when you're around if they think you aren't watching them. Note: This tip is only to help to calm distressed ducks, as friendly ducks don't mind human eye contact.

### **#7 A Calm Environment**

Ducks need a placid environment to thrive, so being extra vigilant to prevent disturbances can go a long way toward reducing stress in the flock. Avoid loud noises, such as shouting, fireworks, power tools, or music, to keep their level of anxiety down.

### **#8 Handle Them Right**

Even if you don't raise them as pets, there may come a time when you'll need to handle your ducks. Sickness, injuries, or needing to relocate to another coop or pasture are all likely scenarios that'll require you to handle them.

To avoid overwhelming your ducks, practice handling them several times a week. Before reaching for your ducks, be sure to tell them you're going to pick them up, so you don't accidentally startle them.

Pick them up carefully, being sure to support the body, paying extra attention to the wings, to avoid bending them. (This is especially critical when a duck is molting). Keep handling time short to prevent stressing ducks that aren't used to being handled.

### **#9 Hand Signals**

Use hand signals to avoid agitating ducks when moving them from the coop to the run or from one pasture to another. Ducks respond remarkably well to the slightest finger movement, making them easy



These ducks' body language shows they're calm and relaxed.



to herd without scaring them. Here's what you do:

Start by holding out your arm at full length. (Left arm to move ducks toward the right; right arm to move ducks left.) Wiggle your fingers in the direction you want the ducks to move. Ducks quickly master this technique and can be trained to respond to hand signals after only a few attempts.

### #10 An Expertly Managed Flock

One of the greatest causes of stress in domestic ducks is a poorly managed flock. Cramped living conditions, bullying in the flock, and too many drakes per hens can cause strain and shorter lifespans in backyard ducks.

Avoid these common mistakes by never overcrowding your flock, relocating flock bulls to their own pen in the coop, and managing good male to female ratios. (Visit [www.Metzer-Farms.com/blog/Male-to-Female-Ratio.html](http://www.Metzer-Farms.com/blog/Male-to-Female-Ratio.html) for more information).

With proper management, good nutrition, and some tips and tricks to help your ducks stay calm, you can help reduce stress in your flock, and help your ducks live healthy, happy lives. ●

*\*Most of the tips are through my own experiences and what I've found to work best for raising a calm, stress-free duck flock.*

#### RESOURCES

- <https://duckdvm.com/condition/predator-attack>
- <https://ducksofprovidence.com/duck-predator-attack-emergency-care/>
- [www.majesticwaterfowl.org/mmissue74.htm](http://www.majesticwaterfowl.org/mmissue74.htm)

# REVIVE

## Failing Drain Fields & Extend The Life of OLD Septic Systems

33% More Tablets, Same Price!  
New Packaging, 90% Less Plastic!

MADE IN THE USA

**Accelerator**  
by Dr. Pooper®  
Drain Field Cleaner

20 Tablets

Keeps septic systems flowing & rejuvenates failing drain fields

**SAFE & NON-TOXIC INGREDIENTS**

- Cleans organic clogs, sludge, and scum in septic tanks and drain fields
- Revives sluggish or clogged drain fields
- Eliminates septic odors, inside and out
- For aerobic and anaerobic systems
- Reduces the need for pump-outs

Up to 40x

EASY TO USE

Check the Entire Septic System

1. Launch Tablet

2. Septic Tank

3. After 24 Hours

100% Money-Back Guarantee

Save 10% with Coupon Code **POULTRY** at **DoctorPooper.com**

**Cackle Hatchery**

*"I'm from Missouri and I'm Healthy!"*

**Hatching & Shipping Since 1936**

**FREE CATALOG**  
[www.cacklehatchery.com](http://www.cacklehatchery.com)

417-532-4581

**OVER 200 VARIETIES OF POULTRY**

**ROOST BOOST™**  
**ORDER NOW**  
FOR YOUR CHICKS BROODER



Covered roosting structure in the foreground.

# Lessons Learned in Raising and Housing Turkeys

ARTICLE AND PHOTOS BY STACY BENJAMIN

**R**AISING TURKEYS HAS quite a learning curve. I'd done a lot of research and felt confident that my first attempt at building a turkey coop would be perfect. Yet, by the time my first four turkeys were 3 months old, they'd unanimously decided they were no longer going to sleep in their coop. This was when I learned that turkeys have a huge independent streak, and their motto is "I do what I want!"

That first attempt at housing our turkeys was in a 10-foot by 10-foot coop. Half the coop was fully enclosed, with solid walls and ventilation provided by hardware cloth at the top of the coop. The other half of the coop had three sides that were screened from top to bottom with ½-inch hardware cloth, to create



Our open-sided turkey barn.

an enclosed sun porch with a roof. I thought this design would give my turkeys everything they could possibly want. The enclosed portion of the coop would provide warmer shelter during winter weather, while the sun porch would provide open-air accommodation for the summer. However, I soon learned that this design provided nothing they wanted. It was too small and enclosed, and they couldn't roost up high, which is a turkey's favorite thing to do.

### Types of Turkey Shelters

If you think big when it comes to housing your turkeys, you'll have the best chance of ensuring that they'll sleep in their intended shelter and not in a location of their own choosing. Turkeys like to roost high off the ground in an area where they can see their surroundings. Their shelter should ideally have a high roof and a spacious interior — more like a barn than a traditional coop. It helps for you to be flexible and understand that turkeys will continually challenge what you think is best for them. You may need to adjust and rework the initial shelter once you begin to understand their behaviors. If you have an existing barn, it may be the perfect place to house your turkeys safely at night.



Turkey nesting in the tall grass.

If you need to build housing from scratch, consider incorporating one or more screened sides to give it the open-air feeling and a line of sight that turkeys crave. Plentiful ventilation is important in the design of a turkey shelter, to prevent moisture from becoming trapped inside, as well as to prevent their housing from becoming too hot in summer — another benefit of incorporating screened walls. No matter how much thought you put into the design of your turkey shelter, just know that there will undoubtedly be a few that prefer to sleep on top of it instead of in it.

If your turkeys are as determined to sleep outside at night as mine are, a covered roosting structure may be a good fit for them. Provide several roosting bars at varying heights — up to six or seven feet off the ground. A corrugated metal roof will provide them with the option of seeking protection from the worst winter weather. Still, one or two will prefer to sleep on top of the shelter; but if it's raining or snowing at nighttime, almost all of mine choose to sleep under the roof. If you provide a covered shelter rather than a fully enclosed shelter, you'll want

**Legg's Peafowl Farm**  
Kansas City, MO

**3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Peafowl Online Auction**  
Bidding begins February 19th through 22nd

A great offering of adult peacocks and peahens in pairs, singles, and yearling birds. Offering the largest selection of varieties ever assembled in the industry - this auction has some of the rarest, most sought-after colors and varieties from the heart of our breeding program.

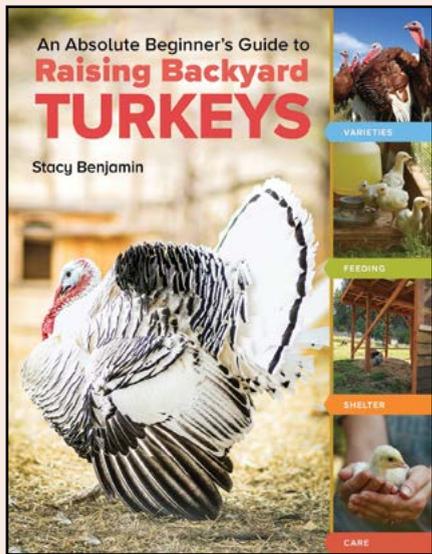
For more information visit  
[www.leggspeafowl.com](http://www.leggspeafowl.com)

Now taking orders for  
day-old peachick packages!  
Hatching in June & July

A photograph of several day-old peafowl chicks sitting on a bed of straw. They are small, downy birds with a mix of brown and grey feathers.

**👍 MUST READ!**

## *An Absolute Beginner's Guide to Raising Backyard Turkeys*



Written by a backyard homesteader with a small flock of heritage turkeys, *An Absolute Beginner's Guide to Raising Backyard Turkeys* focuses on eggs, meat, and personal

enjoyment. Poultry expert Stacy Benjamin will show you how to: raise your own poults; understand turkey behavior and breeding habits; provide proper shelter and nutrition. Includes full-color photographs.

**Item #12598, \$18.99**

**This title is available at  
Shop.IAmCountryside.com or  
by calling 970-392-4419.**

**Use code FEBMAR20 for a 20% discount.**  
(Expires on 3/10/26)

to take steps to protect them from nighttime predators. Although my turkeys sleep in an open-sided barn, the turkey yard is surrounded by 4-foot-high electric poultry netting which has kept them all safe here for many years.

### ELEMENTS OF A SUCCESSFUL SHELTER:

- High roof
- Unobstructed view of surroundings
- Good ventilation
- Multiple roosts at varying heights

Another important piece of advice for housing your turkeys is that when the teenage turkeys are old enough to move from their brooder into an outdoor shelter, it's important that you train them to go into their shelter at night immediately after they move outside. It's critical to be diligent about it — even one night spent roosting on a fence or in the trees will make it a challenge to convince them to sleep inside after that.

### Providing Nesting Places

Before my first turkey hens started laying, I spent a lot of time deciding



A turkey egg laid in the repurposed dishwasher.

what sort of nest box we should build for them. After they started laying, I realized I could've saved myself the trouble, because they ignored everything we'd built for them. Wild turkeys make their nests on the ground, often under a dense canopy of brush but sometimes in tall grass or herbaceous vegetation. It's common for domestic turkeys to want to follow that instinct and leave the safety of their turkey yard to make a nest out in the bushes. Nesting in the wild is dangerous, and they're an easy meal for any passing predator. Broody turkeys are at especially high risk of predation. It's much safer for them to nest closer to home, so I recommend giving them a few options, to encourage them to lay their eggs where you can keep an eye on them.

We leave an unmanaged area of vegetation in the edge of the turkey yard, where we let the grass and weeds grow tall. This is a favorite egg-laying location for the turkey hens. They love to make hidden nests in the tall grass, and, by having a dense area of vegetation inside their fenced yard, they can satisfy their instincts for privacy while staying safe and making it easier for us to find their eggs.

Another favorite laying spot here is the repurposed stainless-steel washing chamber from an old dishwasher — dubbed the spaceship — set near the outskirts of the pasture. Some of our turkeys like to lay their eggs on the floor in a couple of small chicken coops. The large wooden nest boxes that we custom-built to what we considered to be perfectly comfortable turkey dimensions have been ignored. So, before you go to the trouble of building nesting boxes, try to cultivate an overgrown, secluded spot in a safe area of your poultry yard. You can also look for items in your scrap area or structures that aren't in use to repurpose into potential nesting spots. ●

For more tips on raising turkeys, check out my book, *An Absolute Beginner's Guide to Raising Backyard Turkeys*.

**STACY BENJAMIN** is a poultry enthusiast, gardener, and beekeeper who resides in St. Helens, Oregon with her husband and a flock of four dozen very spoiled chickens and turkeys. She began raising heritage Narragansett turkeys in 2015 and quickly fell in love with their larger-than-life personalities. Stacy enjoys teaching about the joys of turkey ownership and encouraging others to add these beautiful and charismatic birds to their flock. She also shares the antics of her turkeys on her Instagram account *@5rfarmoregon*, and she blogs on her website at [www.5RFarm.com](http://www.5RFarm.com).



**Quality You Can Count On**

We also sell gray Koshier King and Color Yield Freedom Rangers and Cornish Cross chicks!

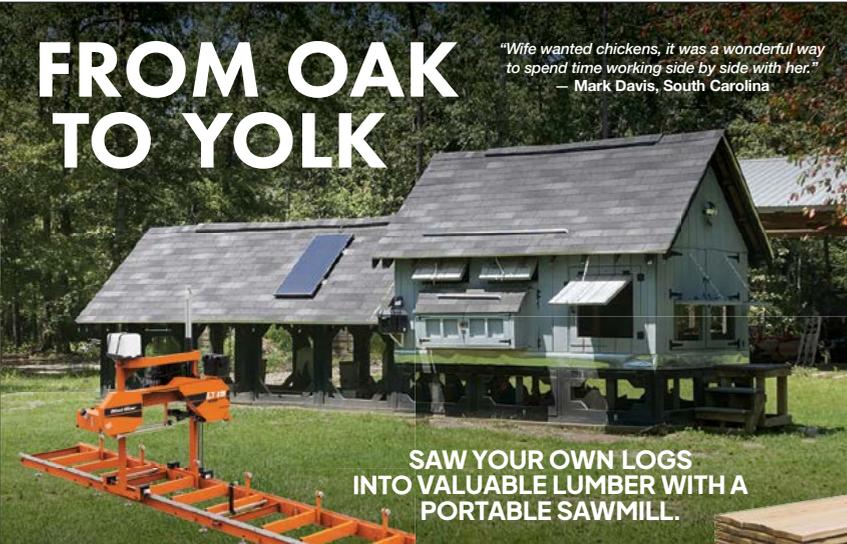
Perfect for free-range environments, these tri-colored or red feathered chickens grow to 5-6 lbs in just 9-11 weeks. They are an active breed and thrive when allowed to free range, scratch and dust bathe in natural sunlight.



717-336-4878 • [www.FreedomRangerHatchery.com](http://www.FreedomRangerHatchery.com)

# FROM OAK TO YOLK

*"Wife wanted chickens, it was a wonderful way to spend time working side by side with her."*  
— Mark Davis, South Carolina



**SAW YOUR OWN LOGS INTO VALUABLE LUMBER WITH A PORTABLE SAWMILL.**

LT15WIDE SAWMILL SHOWN

**BUILT IN THE USA**

With the help of their Wood-Mizer portable sawmill, Mark Davis and his wife turned three oak trees and two yellow pine trees into a chicken house and run for their new hobby. Discover the freedom to saw your own lumber into the perfect chicken coop and more! Call or visit [woodmizer.com](http://woodmizer.com) to start your next project or side business with a Wood-Mizer.



Financing Available! **live the wood life** [woodmizer.com](http://woodmizer.com) 800.553.0182

©2026 Wood-Mizer LLC Live the wood life® is a registered trademark.  **Wood-Mizer** from forest to final form



# BREED PROFILE: CATALANA CHICKENS

## Spain's Golden Layers Deserve a Second Look

BY KENNY COOGAN

**I**F YOU'VE EVER WISHED FOR a chicken that thrives under the summer sun, produces plenty of white eggs, and looks stunning strutting across your yard, meet the Catalana.

This breed, with its glowing buff plumage and lively temperament, is one of the rarest chickens monitored by The Livestock Conservancy. Though nearly forgotten in North America, the Catalana remains a

living link to the colorful poultry traditions of Spain — and a reminder that some of the most valuable breeds are also the most endangered.

Catalana chickens are a rare and hardy breed that thrives in hot climates. They're gentle, intelligent, and great foragers. Although they can be a little flighty, they enjoy being around people and will become inquisitive and friendly if you spend time with them. The roosters are relatively quiet and placid but are protective of their hens. They're a dual-purpose chicken with medium-sized white eggs. Overall, they're a lovely, self-sufficient heritage-breed chicken that more people in warm climates should own and preserve.

### A Golden Heritage

The Catalana, also known as the Prat Leona, originated in the Catalonia region of Spain. Bred as a dual-purpose chicken, it became known for both table quality and egg production. Spanish farmers valued it for its ability to withstand heat, forage efficiently, and continue laying in challenging conditions.

When the breed was imported to the United States in the early 1900s, it showed promise for commercial production. However, the Catalana never caught on with large hatcheries. American markets favored brown eggs, and the breed's striking white eggs simply didn't fit consumer preference. Today, only a handful of dedicated breeders keep it going — a situation that's both fragile and full of opportunity.

"As high-volume egg layers, they tend to have an active nature that I can attest to," says Jeannette Beranger, senior program manager for The Livestock Conservancy. "With a lot of work, they can be tamed somewhat. They lay beautiful white eggs, and they produce a nice carcass for the table. Don't expect them to go broody."

### Built for the Heat

Where some breeds wilt under the summer sun, the Catalana thrives. Its large single comb and long wattles help the bird release excess heat,



Catalana cockerel. Photo by: The Livestock Conservancy.



Photo by: The Livestock Conservancy.

while its close-fitting plumage prevents overheating.

In Spain and parts of South America, Catalanas have long been the breed of choice for farmers working under intense heat and bright sun — qualities that translate well to southern U.S. states where summers can challenge even hardy layers.

Their adaptability comes with a personality to match. Catalanas are confident, active foragers that prefer space to roam. While not aggressive, they're independent and constantly on the move. With regular handling, they can become friendly — though they'll likely never be lap chickens.

Beranger notes that their good looks are both an asset and a challenge. "I think you don't see them a lot in shows because it's hard to perfect good buff color consistently," she says. "They're real eye candy when they're at their best, as the cockerel in the photos."

### A Breed in Crisis

Despite their virtues, Catalanas are teetering on the edge of extinction in the U.S. "This is probably one of the rarest chickens on our list," Beranger explains. "I hope this article can bring some attention to them! In our last census we found only four flocks, with about 46 birds total."

Forty-six birds are barely enough to maintain genetic diversity, let alone repopulate the breed. Without ongoing breeding programs and broader awareness, the Catalana could vanish within a generation.

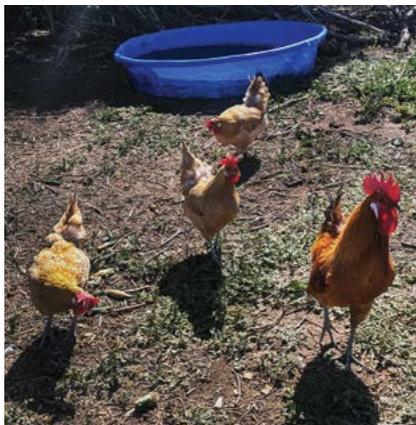


Photo by: Rebecca Pacheco Williams.

Yet, there's hope. A small but growing number of enthusiasts are rediscovering the breed's charms and working to rebuild its population.

### Dedicated Breeders Step Up

One such breeder is Rebecca Pacheco Williams of Winchester, California. Her flock of Catalanas reflects both affection and purpose.

"We do love them," Williams says. "They'll eat from our hands and enjoy roosting in the trees. We've been quite successful in breeding them and are currently working on expanding the flock so we can promote the breed and provide breeding pairs to others."

Williams' birds roam under the warm California sun — a perfect setting for a heat-tolerant Mediterranean breed. Her goal mirrors that of The Livestock Conservancy: to get Catalanas into more hands, where they can continue to thrive as productive and beautiful backyard birds.

### Beauty Meets Function

At their best, Catalanas are striking, with their golden buff bodies, rich red combs, and elegant tails with dark highlights. The hens are productive layers of large white eggs, often producing steadily through long summers when other breeds slow down.

They're also solid table birds, with firm, flavorful meat — a reminder of their origins as a dual-purpose breed. While they rarely go broody, their consistent laying and resilience make them an appealing option for homesteaders in warm climates.

Because their color can vary, and their active natures make confinement less ideal, Catalanas benefit from a free-range or semi-free-range setup. With space to forage and stretch, their personalities shine, and they repay the favor with reduced feed costs and excellent egg output.

### Conservation in the Coop

Raising Catalanas isn't just about enjoying a unique breed — it's an act of conservation. Each chick hatched and each breeding pair maintained

adds genetic diversity to a population that desperately needs it.

Organizations like The Livestock Conservancy depend on small-scale farmers and backyard keepers to help protect these genetic treasures. The Conservancy's mission is to preserve livestock breeds that represent centuries of agricultural history and adaptation — and the Catalana fits that goal perfectly.

As Beranger emphasizes, awareness is key. "They're one of the rarest we track," she says, "but they have so much to offer to modern flocks. I'd love to see more people discover how special they are."

For poultry keepers who value both performance and preservation, few breeds deliver as much satisfaction as helping a rare one thrive. With their brilliant buff color, graceful stature, and dependable productivity, Catalanas are truly golden birds worth saving.

### A Breed Worth Remembering

The Catalana might not be a show barn regular or a staple of hatchery catalogs, but for those who appreciate heritage and history, this Spanish beauty stands out. Its resilience, productivity, and elegance make it a treasure — one that deserves a spot in the modern backyard. As more poultry keepers discover its charm, perhaps the Catalana will once again glow golden in more American flocks. ●

150+ Breeds

MYERS POULTRY  
QUALITY POULTRY SINCE 1988

Meat Birds Layers Turkeys Ducks & Goslings Guineas & Gamebirds

(814) 539-7026  
www.Myerspoultry.com  
966 Ragers Hill Road South Fork, PA 15956



# Sclater's Crowned Pigeon

## A Stunning Bird with a Mohican (Mohawk)

BY SUSIE KEARLEY



**T**HE SCLATER'S CROWNED PIGEON BREED comes from Papua New Guinea, which is located near the equator, north of Australia. It has a hot, humid, tropical climate. These birds do well in captivity in tropical houses, and are threatened in the wild, due to deforestation. At Cotswold Wildlife Park in Oxfordshire, England, Sclater's crowned pigeons live in the tropical house with a collection of other birds from tropical climates, as well as fruit bats, and a pair of sloths.

I caught up with their keeper, Laura, who told me about their needs, breeding habits, and characteristics.

"There are two types of blue-crowned pigeons," she explains. "Sclater's crowned pigeons and Victoria crowned

pigeons. I've worked with them both. Some wildlife parks keep these birds outside, but they should always have a heated place to return to when it gets cold outdoors. It's generally best to keep them in a warm environment."

Keepers feed them a fruit mix, apples, peas, bananas, papayas, and grass. The seed mix is a pigeon mix with pulses, millet, and corn. They also have grapes, carrots, and shredded lettuce and get a calcium supplement with their food. They have mealworms twice a day, in the morning and the afternoon.

"During breeding season, we give the birds extra mealworms at around noon," says Laura. "The additional live food triggers breeding behaviors. We also give them silver birch sticks that they use to build their nests. They have big nests and, in the wild, they'll build nests between 3 and 15 meters (9 to 49 feet) off the ground. In the tropical house, they've chosen to build their nests in trees about 2 meters (6 feet) off the ground."

Indeed, there was a nest in the tropical house on our visit, and the proud parents were carefully sharing the sitting responsibilities. "They lay just one egg and incubate it for 30 days," Laura continued. "Both mom and dad take turns sitting on the egg."

When the eggs hatch, both the male and female pigeon produce 'crop milk' (a cottage-cheese-like substance that contains minerals and is high in protein and fat) from a pouch in their throat. This is fed to the young bird (called a squab), directly into its beak. The babies also eat yolk from the egg for the first 24 hours. The squab stays in the nest as it grows in strength. After 30 days, it's ready to fledge.

At Cotswold Wildlife Park, there are six Sclater's crowned pigeons — the two parents and their four daughters, which are aged between two-and-a-half and four years old.

"They did produce a male chick in 2023," said Laura. "He's gone to a new home with another collection. We're at capacity at the moment; they're big birds and can cause a ruckus if they chase each other around. They like a bit of drama. Six is plenty for the size of their accommodation."

Keepers won't allow more eggs to hatch until the other birds are rehomed. Laura tries to quietly replace any newly laid eggs with dummy eggs. "They don't like me inter-

fering with their nest and they try to stop me with their wings,” she says.

The dummy eggs are made from their own eggs with plaster of Paris inside, so they can’t tell the difference. She removes the dummy egg after 30 days — they give up sitting on it at day 25, anyway — when they can see nothing is happening with it.

“Removing the egg slows down calcium production,” Laura explains. “If we just removed the egg and didn’t replace it with a dummy, she’d lay another one and this would take its toll on her calcium levels. Her body will take calcium from her bones if there’s not enough calcium available in her diet for another egg. This year, the birds have their own egg in their nest. I haven’t replaced it yet, but I will soon. They nest all year round because the temperature is consistently hot in the tropical house.”



Laura explained that even though the birds are threatened in the wild, they wouldn’t be able to breed more and send them to their native homeland. “We’d be setting them up to fail,” she said. “Logging and clearing areas of forest for palm oil production is destroying their habitat and causing the decline of the species in the wild. Government intervention and action from conservation groups is needed to resolve the problems there and reinstate habitats before any kind of reintroduction program could be considered.”

We returned to her duty of keeping an eye on the breeding situation. “When an egg has hatched and they’re caring for a chick, I don’t intervene,” Laura said. “There’ve been occasions when I replaced an egg with a dummy, then they laid another one, and we ended up with an unexpected chick! Once a chick is fledged, I’ll check that it’s doing well, ring it, weigh it, and sex the birds. We pull a feather to sex the birds by their DNA, because the males and females look the same. Males do develop a basey boom, but not until they’re mature. We have a strong pair in our tropical house, so the male isn’t interested in inbreeding with the other girls.”

I asked if they had fun characteristics, and she said they could be quirky: “The birds know my routine. They come up behind me and go to particular spots when I go to feed them. I love pigeons and look after a variety of them. Some people don’t like pigeons — traditionally, they’re underdogs — but there are so many different species and some of them look incredible. They’re tame, sweet-natured birds. It would be nice to have more Sclater’s crowned pigeon babies, but they’re so large, we have difficulty finding them new homes with other collections.”

Whether they’re suitable for a backyard keeper really depends on the setup. They need a large aviary. They’re a rainforest species, so they need dense vegetation, heated facilities indoors, and lots of space. In their native country of Papua New Guinea, people need a license to keep them, and you can’t even own a feather legally without a CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species) license for listed species.

In the U.S., Sclater’s crowned pigeons (along with other crowned pigeon species) are primarily found in zoological collections, not with private breeders. You may need a license to keep them in the U.S., and the best source of information about keeping them is probably your nearest zoo where the birds are found. ●

---

**SUSIE KEARLEY** is a freelance writer and journalist who lives in Great Britain along with two young guinea pigs and an aging husband. Susie has been published in *Your Chickens*, *Cage & Aviary Birds*, *Small Furry Pets*, and *Kitchen Garden* magazines.

Connect with Susie on:  
[facebook.com/Susie.Kearley.Writer](https://www.facebook.com/Susie.Kearley.Writer)  
[twitter.com/SusieKearley](https://twitter.com/SusieKearley)



# My Healing Coop

BY KALLIE SIZEMORE

**T**HERE'S A LOT OF EMOTION and meaning wrapped up in this chicken coop, far beyond just a place for chickens. I love my coop, not only because my son built it, but because it's a piece of healing after my dad died.

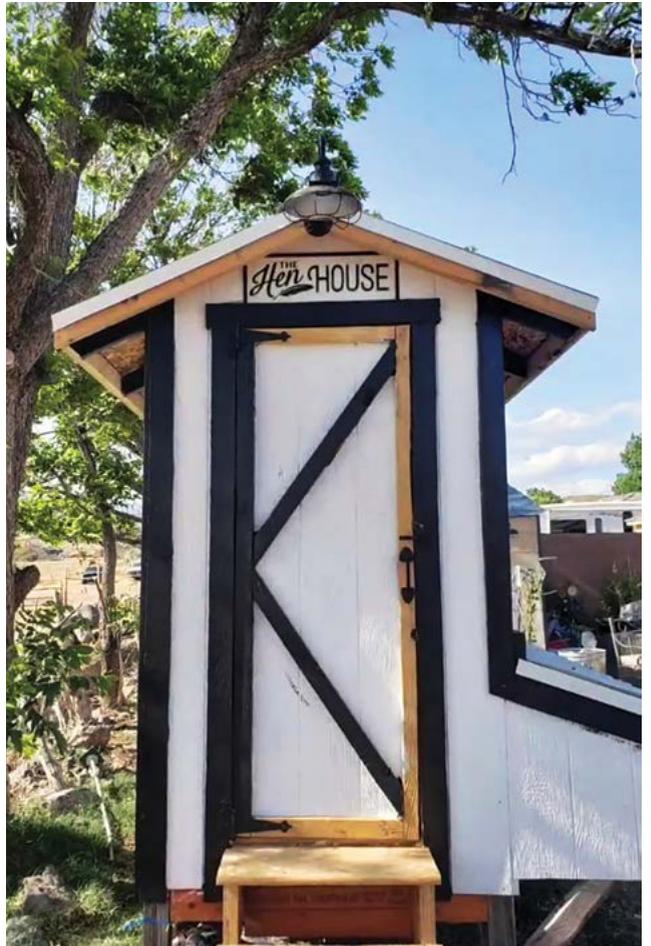
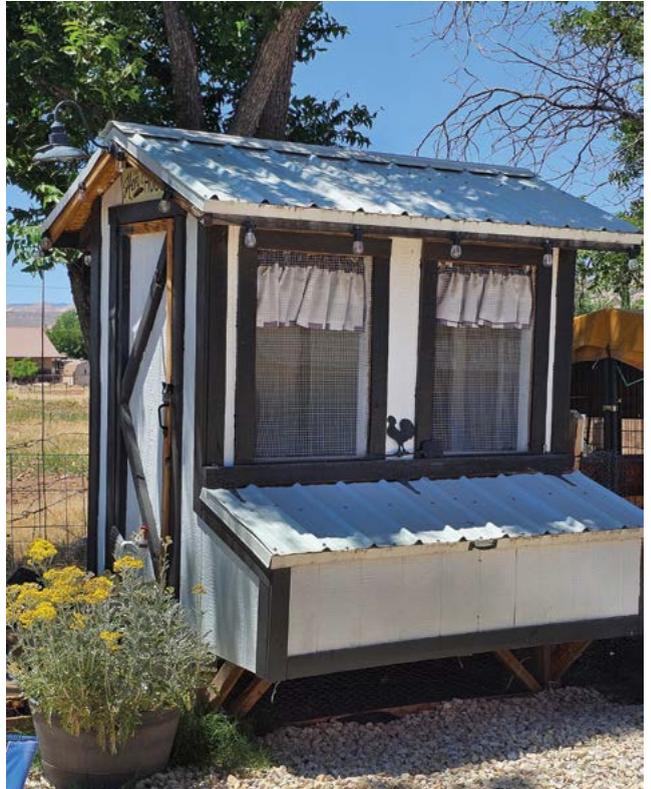
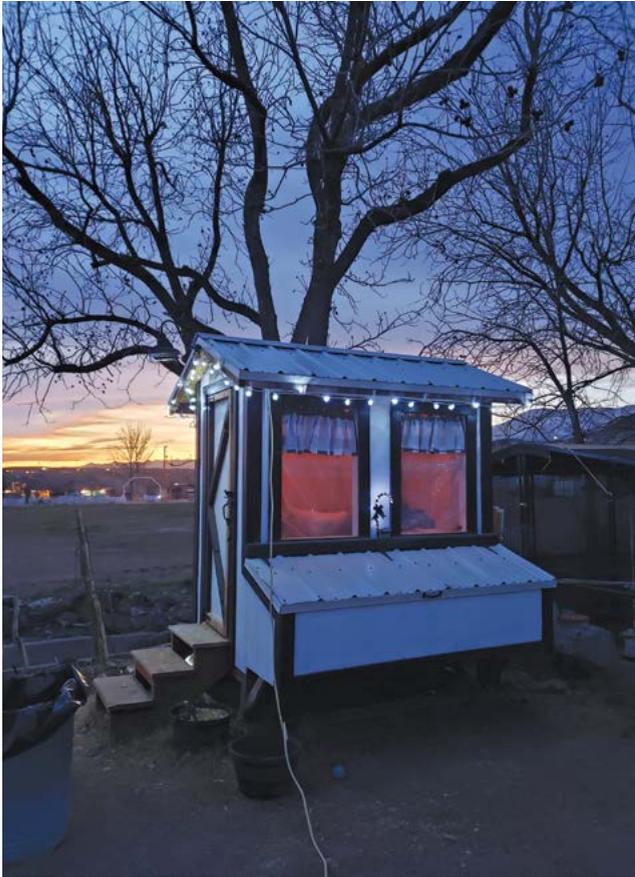
Grief left a space in my life that felt empty and unanchored. My son stepping in to build something for me was an act of love, support, and continuity.

The coop reminds me of my dad and what he valued. It's given me a daily ritual that brings comfort, and watching my flock gives me a little sense of peace when everything hurts.

My son building it created a bridge between the generations. My father's memory, my own life, and my son's care — all in one handmade space.

It's practical yet symbolic. It's more than wood and nails. There are evenings when the sun sets and the hens run around pecking in the yard. In these moments, it's more than just a structure for me, it's my therapy. I can breathe again. ●







COMING EVENTS



The Coming Events listing is gathered and provided by **poultryshowcentral.com**. Add your show listing on their website or send to: **Coming Events, Backyard Poultry, 1503 SW 42nd St, Topeka, KS 66609** or email: [editor@backyardpoultrymag.com](mailto:editor@backyardpoultrymag.com). To be included in the *Backyard Poultry* magazine listing, event details must be sent **90 days in advance**.

**ATTENTION: Due to the avian influenza outbreak, some events may be canceled. Contact event coordinators to confirm before show dates. Poultry Show Central is working hard to stay updated, but changes are being made daily and these events may end up being canceled.**

**ALABAMA**

**February 7, 2026**

**Anniston, Alabama**

Heart of Dixie Poultry Club  
Spring Double Show

[https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Heart\\_of\\_Dixie\\_Bantam\\_Show.html](https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Heart_of_Dixie_Bantam_Show.html)

**February 13-14, 2026**

**Anniston, Alabama**

Alabama Bantam Club Spring Show  
[https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Alabama\\_Bantam\\_Club.html](https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Alabama_Bantam_Club.html)

**February 28, 2026**

**Anniston, Alabama**

Bama All Bantam Double Show  
[https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Expo\\_Show.html](https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Expo_Show.html)

**March 7, 2026**

**Anniston, Alabama**

Silkie Spring Fling  
[https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Silkie\\_Spring\\_Fling.html](https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Silkie_Spring_Fling.html)

**CALIFORNIA**

**February 21, 2026**

**Fresno, California**

Greater California Society of  
Poultry Fanciers

[https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Greater\\_California\\_Society.html](https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Greater_California_Society.html)

**FLORIDA**

**February 5-8, 2026**

**Tampa, Florida**

Florida State Fair SPRING Purebred  
Poultry & Waterfowl Show  
[https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Florida\\_State\\_Fair.html](https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Florida_State_Fair.html)

**February 7, 2026**

**Lake City, Florida**

The Sunshine Citrus Strut  
[https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Sunshine\\_Citrus\\_Strut.html](https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Sunshine_Citrus_Strut.html)

**February 26 - March 8, 2026**

**Plant City, Florida**

Florida Strawberry Festival  
® Youth Poultry Show  
[https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Florida\\_Strawberry\\_Festival\\_.html](https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Florida_Strawberry_Festival_.html)

**March 28, 2026**

**Kissimmee, Florida**

Central Heritage Poultry Classic  
[https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Central\\_Heritage\\_Poultry\\_Classic.html](https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Central_Heritage_Poultry_Classic.html)

**GEORGIA**

**February 20-22, 2026**

**Newnan, Georgia**

Chattahoochee Valley Poultry  
Association Show  
[https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Chattahoochee\\_Valley\\_Poultry\\_Association.html](https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Chattahoochee_Valley_Poultry_Association.html)

**February 28, 2026**

**Lavonia, Georgia**

Hart County Bantam Club All Game  
Bantam Show  
[https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Hart\\_County\\_Poultry\\_Club\\_Show.html](https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Hart_County_Poultry_Club_Show.html)

**March 14, 2026**

**Dalton, Georgia**

Carpet City Bantam Club Spring Fling  
[https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Carpet\\_City\\_Bantam\\_Club.html](https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Carpet_City_Bantam_Club.html)

## **IOWA**

**February 14, 2026**

### **Decorah, Iowa**

Tri-state Pigeon Club

[http://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Tri-State\\_Pigeon\\_Club\\_Show.html](http://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Tri-State_Pigeon_Club_Show.html)

**February 21, 2026**

### **Maquoketa, Iowa**

Eastern Iowa Bird and Small

Animal Swap

[https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Eastern\\_Iowa\\_Bird\\_Small\\_Animal\\_Swap.html](https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Eastern_Iowa_Bird_Small_Animal_Swap.html)

## **INDIANA**

**February 7, 2026**

### **Greenfield, Indiana**

Indiana Pigeon Club Annual

Winter Show

[https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Indiana\\_Pigeon\\_Club.html](https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Indiana_Pigeon_Club.html)

## **KENTUCKY**

**February 21, 2026**

### **LaCenter, Kentucky**

Western Kentucky Poultry Club

Spring Show

[https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Western\\_Kentucky\\_Poultry\\_Club\\_Spring\\_Show.html](https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Western_Kentucky_Poultry_Club_Spring_Show.html)

## **KANSAS**

**March 21, 2026**

### **Gardner, Kansas**

Heart of America Game Breeders'

Association Gardner Sale

[https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Heart\\_of\\_America\\_Game\\_Breeders\\_Poultry.html](https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Heart_of_America_Game_Breeders_Poultry.html)

## **MINNESOTA**

**February 21, 2026**

### **Hutchinson, Minnesota**

MN Game Breeders Poultry &

Small Animal Swap

[https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/MN\\_Game\\_Breeders\\_Poultry\\_Swap.html](https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/MN_Game_Breeders_Poultry_Swap.html)

## **NORTH CAROLINA**

**March 7, 2026**

### **Salisbury, North Carolina**

Old English Game Bantam Club of

NC -Unifour All Breed Show

[https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Old\\_English\\_Bantam\\_Club.html](https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Old_English_Bantam_Club.html)

**March 28, 2026**

### **Winston-Salem, North Carolina**

Forsyth Fowl Fanciers Spring Show

[https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Forsyth\\_Fowl\\_Fanciers.html](https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Forsyth_Fowl_Fanciers.html)

## **NEBRASKA**

**March 28-29, 2026**

### **Norfolk, Nebraska**

Nelson Alternative Livestock Auction

[https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Nelson\\_Alternative\\_Livestock\\_Auction.html](https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Nelson_Alternative_Livestock_Auction.html)

## **OHIO**

**March 28, 2026**

### **Marietta, Ohio**

Southeast Ohio Poultry Breeders

Association

[https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Southeast\\_Ohio\\_Poultry\\_Breeders.html](https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Southeast_Ohio_Poultry_Breeders.html)

## **OKLAHOMA**

**February 21, 2026**

### **Anadarko, Oklahoma**

Great Plains Game Bantam

Spectacular

[https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Great\\_Plains\\_Game\\_Bantam\\_Spectacular.html](https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Great_Plains_Game_Bantam_Spectacular.html)

**March 7, 2026**

### **Norman, Oklahoma**

Canadian Valley Poultry Club Mega

State Championship

[https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Canadian\\_Valley\\_Poultry\\_Club\\_Show.html](https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Canadian_Valley_Poultry_Club_Show.html)

## **TENNESSEE**

**March 7, 2026**

### **Knoxville, Tennessee**

Tennessee Valley Poultry Club

Spring Fling

[https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Dixie\\_Classic.html](https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Dixie_Classic.html)

## **TEXAS**

**February 21, 2026**

### **Mabank, Texas**

Mabank Poultry Classic

[https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Mabank\\_Poultry\\_Classic.html](https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Mabank_Poultry_Classic.html)

**March 7-8, 2026**

### **Comanche, Texas**

Comanche Crossroads

[https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Comanche\\_Crossroads.html](https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Comanche_Crossroads.html)

**March 26 - April 2, 2026**

### **Beaumont, Texas**

South Texas State Fair

[https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/South\\_Texas\\_State\\_Fair.html](https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/South_Texas_State_Fair.html)

## **VIRGINIA**

**March 21, 2026**

### **Doswell, Virginia**

Old Dominion Poultry Association

Spring Show

[https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Old\\_Dominion\\_Poultry\\_Association\\_Show.html](https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Old_Dominion_Poultry_Association_Show.html)

## **WASHINGTON**

**March 7, 2026**

### **Ridgefield, Washington**

Prairie Hatchers Youth Poultry Show &

Chick Auction

[https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Prairie\\_Hatchers\\_Youth\\_Poultry\\_Show.html](https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Prairie_Hatchers_Youth_Poultry_Show.html)

**March 21, 2026**

### **Monroe, Washington**

Cascade Spring Show

[https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Cascade\\_Spring\\_Show.html](https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Cascade_Spring_Show.html)

## **WISCONSIN**

**February 21, 2026**

### **Jefferson, Wisconsin**

Watertown Pigeon Club Annual

Pet Swap

[https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Watertown\\_Pigeon\\_Club\\_Annual\\_Pet\\_Swap.html](https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Watertown_Pigeon_Club_Annual_Pet_Swap.html)

**March 14, 2026**

### **Fond du lac, Wisconsin**

Wisconsin Bird & Game Breeder

Spring Swap

[https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Wisconsin\\_Bird\\_Game\\_Breeder.html](https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Wisconsin_Bird_Game_Breeder.html)

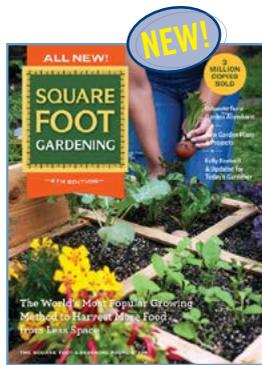
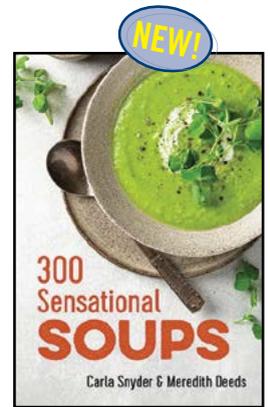


### 300 SENSATIONAL SOUPS

Soup recipes are trendier than ever and it's no surprise. With the ever-rising costs of food and energy alongside the demand for healthy and delicious meals, a good soup is both cost-effective and nourishing for the soul as well as the stomach. With these outstanding recipes, you'll discover something delicious for every season. The book begins with a variety of Stock Basics and then moves on to 10 chapters devoted to all types of soup including Split Pea Soup with Pumpernickel Croutons, Beef and Ale Soup, Pumpkin Soup with Ham and Swiss Chard, Yellow Tomato Gazpacho with Cilantro Oil, Coconut Soup with Crispy Wontons, and an entire chapter devoted to toppings and garnishes. This is the ultimate soup book, your one-stop guide for all things

savory, simmering, and sensational.

#12600 \$24.95 **Sale Price:** \$21.21



### ALL NEW! SQUARE FOOT GARDENING, 4TH EDITION

No digging, no tilling, no fertilizing, no machinery or heavy tools — less watering, waste, and weeding! In *All New! Square Foot Gardening, 4th Edition*, discover the foolproof gardening method that has helped generations of gardeners around the world raise their own organic vegetables in less space, with less effort, and for less money than traditional row gardens. The process is simple: set up your garden box, fill it with a growing blend known as Mel's Mix™, and add a square-

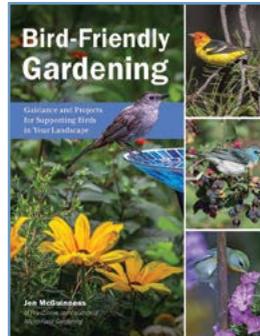
foot grid on top to guarantee proper plant spacing and maximum yields. With this easy and flexible system, you'll reap the rewards of baskets of homegrown produce to enjoy with friends and family.

#12599 \$26.99 **Sale Price:** \$22.94

### THE BACKYARD HOMESTEAD GARDENER & PLANNER SET

This Set includes: *The Backyard Homestead* — With just a quarter acre of land, you can feed a family of four with fresh, organic food year-round. This comprehensive guide to self-sufficiency gives you all the information you need to grow and preserve a variety of vegetables, fruits, herbs, nuts, and grains; raise chickens for eggs and meat; raise cows, sheep, and goats for meat or milk; raise pigs and rabbits, and keep honeybees. *The Backyard Homestead Seasonal Planner* — This hardworking addition to the best-selling *Backyard Homestead* series offers expert advice on what tasks to do around your farm and when to do them — no matter where on the planet you call home. Author Ann Larkin Hansen sets the priorities for each farm area, including the barn, garden, orchard, field, pasture, and woodlot. *The Backyard Homestead Guide to Growing Organic Food* — the essential guide to growing a bountiful food garden includes detailed seed-starting, growing, and harvesting information for 62 vegetables, fruits, and herbs, a complete companion-planting guide, and organic pest-control handbook.

#12554 \$49.95 **Sale Price:** \$42.46



### BIRD-FRIENDLY GARDENING

With hundreds of North American bird species facing population decline or at risk of extinction, right now is the perfect time to create a home-based habitat garden that offers birds the resources they need to safely feed, migrate, breed, and thrive. Thankfully, making your outdoor space a secure and comfortable haven for many different bird species isn't a Herculean task. It's a matter of understanding the needs of our avian friends and how native plants, combined with purposeful garden design, can help meet those needs.

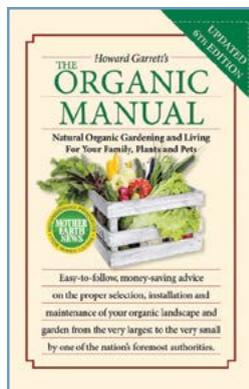
#12476 \$27.99 **Sale Price:** \$23.79

### THE LOST WAYS KIT

Kit Includes: *The Lost Ways* — *The Lost Ways* prepares you to deal with worst-case scenarios with the minimum amount of resources

just like our forefathers lived their lives, totally independent from electricity, cars, or modern technology whatsoever, meaning you'll also be bulletproof against the ever-increasing threat of an electromagnetic pulse, a powerful economic breakdown, famines, and natural disasters. *The Lost Ways II* — *In The Lost Ways II* you'll find the long-forgotten secrets that helped our ancestors survive famines, wars, economic crises, diseases, droughts, and anything else life threw at them.

#12482 \$74.00 **Sale Price:** \$65.99



### THE ORGANIC MANUAL, 6TH EDITION

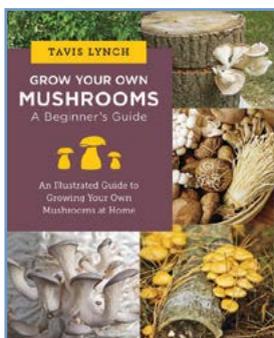
The best-kept secret (uncovered in this book) is that the organic program is better in every way. Whether it's growing beautiful landscaping or delicious, healthy food crops, *The Organic Manual, 6th Edition* explains bed preparation, planting, pest control, and compost making. It also covers natural living advice. The organic method is the most efficient, cost-effective, and fun of any approach. It also produces the best trees, shrubs, flowers, fruits, and vegetables you'll ever grow.

#12539 \$18.95 **Sale Price:** \$16.11

**TO ORDER, CALL 970-392-4419 or visit [shop.iamcountryside.com](http://shop.iamcountryside.com)**  
**FREE SHIPPING on book orders of \$50 or more!**  
**Mention Promo Code: MBPPARZ3 • Sale Ends 3/10/26**

**GROW YOUR OWN MUSHROOMS**

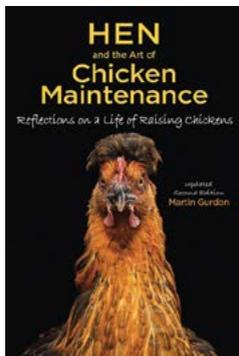
Learn how to grow wild and exotic, medicinally important, sustainable, and deeply delicious mushrooms right at your own home, just as people throughout the world have been doing for centuries. *Grow Your Own Mushrooms* — adapted from *Mushroom Cultivation* — offers photo-illustrated instruction both on how mushrooms grow and how you can cultivate them yourself, with a focus on six types of mushrooms: shiitake, oyster, wine cap, hericium, blewit, and agaricus.



#12575 \$14.99 **Sale Price:** \$12.74

**HEN AND THE ART OF CHICKEN MAINTENANCE**

This book is about keeping chickens, but it is also a feather-clad soap opera of primal urges. Written from firsthand experience, its pages are filled with the quest for absolute power, sex, death, jealousy, and huge vet bills. Beyond all the intrigue and drama, however, there are even some practical lessons to be learned about what not to do when keeping chickens. Martin Gurdon's hilarious "chicken memoir" relives the highs and lows of chicken ownership. The relationship between birds and humans is by turns heartwarming and bewildering, but it is always entertaining.

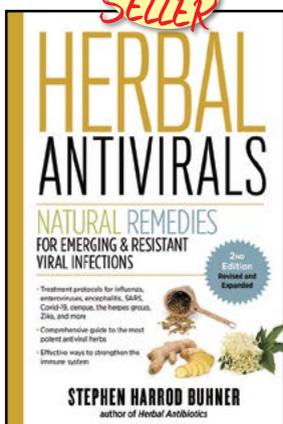


#9670 \$19.99 **Sale Price:** \$17.00

**HERBAL ANTIVIRALS, 2ND EDITION**

Herbalist and best-selling author Stephen Harrod Buhner has studied the antiviral properties of plants for many years. In this comprehensive guide, he profiles the plants that have proven most effective in fighting viral infections and provides in-depth instructions for preparing and using formulations to address the most common infections and strengthen immunity safely and naturally.

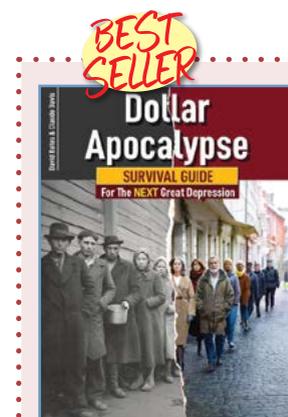
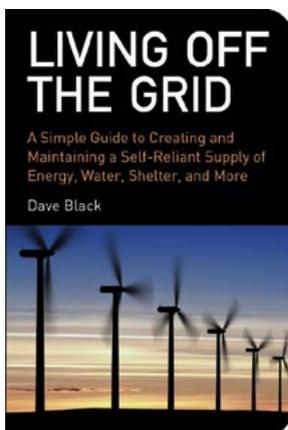
#11315 \$24.95 **Sale Price:** \$21.21



**LIVING OFF THE GRID**

Dave Black describes alternatives for eco-pimping your home and lifestyle for independence, economy, and a more integrated way of life. Equally valuable for the urban dweller vaguely concerned about the size of his or her carbon footprint and the rural self-sufficiency enthusiast, *Living Off the Grid* can help anyone take control of his or her life and way of living.

#8546 \$12.95 **Sale Price:** \$11.01



**DOLLAR APOCALYPSE: SURVIVAL GUIDE FOR THE NEXT GREAT DEPRESSION**

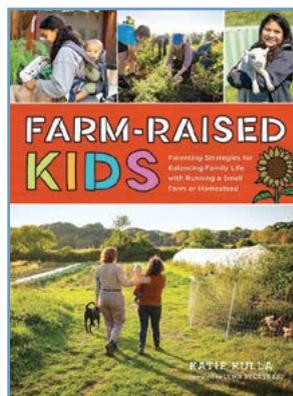
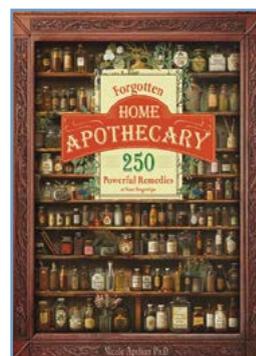
This is the first-ever survival guide to prepare you for the chaos that follows the fall of the U.S. dollar as the world's reserve currency. The place we now call "home" will be unrecognizable once that happens and the dollar's value collapses. It will be filled with poverty, unemployment, rampant crime, new authoritarian rules, and threats never imagined. To survive this full-blown economic meltdown and avoid ending up on the street like so many will, you'll need emergency food, first aid essentials, defensive home fortifications, disaster preparedness, and many other emergency supplies revealed only in this survival manual.

#12694 \$37.00

**FORGOTTEN HOME APOTHECARY**

Rediscover the art of herbal healing through a comprehensive collection of 250 remedies, thoughtfully organized by specific ailments. Upon opening the book, you'll immediately find your new apothecary, where the appendix clearly displays each remedy along with the corresponding page numbers for easy navigation. Each remedy includes step-by-step instructions, color pictures, measurements, and dosages, making it simple for you to prepare them at home.

#12556 \$37.00



**FARM-RAISED KIDS**

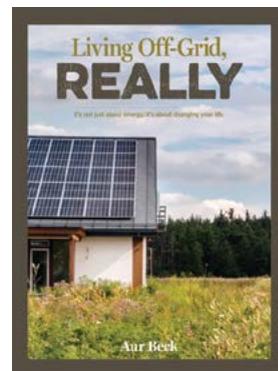
In this first-ever book on the topic, author Katie Kulla offers her own hard-won wisdom, gleaned from more than a decade of raising kids while running a CSA farm with her husband. The book also features invaluable advice and insights from other farmer-parents and a wealth of practical tips and ideas for how to engage children on the farm — including activities for learning and play, and suggestions for how to enlist kids in chores and other farm responsibilities.

#12590 \$24.99 **Sale Price:** \$21.24

**LIVING OFF-GRID, REALLY**

With a wide range of topics, *Living Off-Grid, Really* is part how-to and part memoir as author Aur Beck recounts his journey living off-grid. Within these pages, you'll discover the story of Aur's childhood and learn how to live, learn, and be entertained off-grid, all with little to no money, and find housing, food, and medicine off the beaten path. These topics are, to Aur, the crux of living off-grid, rather than focusing solely on energy. He does, however, include a chapter all about energy.

#12606 \$17.99 **Sale Price:** \$15.29



**TO ORDER, CALL 970-392-4419 or visit [shop.iamcountryside.com](http://shop.iamcountryside.com)  
FREE SHIPPING on book orders of \$50 or more! Mention Promo Code: MBPPARZ3 • Sale Ends 3/10/26**

# COUNTRYSIDE

& Small Stock Journal

# Fun & Frugal



Enjoy Family-Focused  
Country Living  
and Money-Saving  
DIY Projects in  
Every Issue!

- Savory and sweet recipes
- Small-scale livestock care
- How to improve your harvest
- Crafts and gift-giving ideas
- Food preservation techniques
- Tips to live off the land
- Kid-friendly projects
- *And more!*



RSVP Today!

Promo Code: HCSHRZ1

**COUNTRYSIDE**  
& Small Stock Journal

1 year (6 issues + benefits) for \$39.97

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Payment enclosed

Bill me

Canada: \$47.97/year | International: \$52.97/year

**MAIL TO:** Countryside & Small Stock Journal  
1503 SW 42ND ST  
TOPEKA, KS 66609-9911



**FOR FASTER PROCESSING AND INSTANT ACCESS ...**  
[IAmCountryside.com/All-Membership](http://IAmCountryside.com/All-Membership)

**Choose *All-Access* for exclusive perks, including digital access, bonus content, discounts on books and resources, and more!**

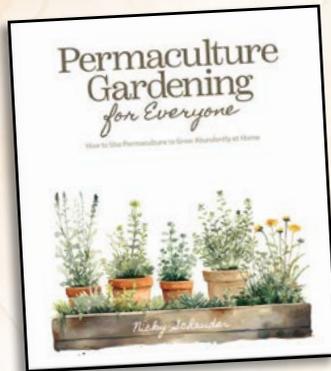
**IF YOU'RE  
READING  
THIS, SO  
ARE YOUR  
CUSTOMERS.  
ADVERTISE  
WITH US!**

To advertise  
in marketplace,  
email  
**adinfo@  
ogdenpubs.com**  
or call  
**800-678-5779**



**CONNECT  
ONLINE WITH  
BACKYARD  
POULTRY:  
backyardpoultry.  
iamcountryside.com**

How to Use  
Permaculture to  
**Grow  
Abundantly**  
at Home



Having been there and done that, Nicky Schauder offers her insights in *Permaculture Gardening for Everyone* with the intention of making the concept user-friendly for any level of gardening skill. Take the opportunity this book provides to start your own journey on growing food to help keep your family happy and healthy while becoming more self-sufficient and less reliant on a commercial food chain.

**#12618, \$17.99**

.....  
Find out more at  
**Shop.IAmCountrySide.com**  
or call **970-392-4419**.

Promo code: **MBPPARZ2**  
Price does not include shipping and handling.

# Borotto® Egg Incubators

***Ideal for the  
new user!***



**5 sizes  
to suit**

- ✓ **Automatic Turning**
- ✓ **Humidity Pump**
- ✓ **Professional Results**



**Premier1Supplies.com**  
**800-282-6631**

Advertise in the BACKYARD POULTRY Breeders Directory or Classified Section

Call 918-939-8568 or e-mail ksantone@ogdenpubs.com

*(Approval of an ad does not constitute an endorsement.)*

**BRESSE**

New Jersey



**NJ BRESSE FARMS LLC.** Millstone Township, New Jersey. Specialized in White American Bresse day old chicks or hatching eggs NPIP NJ-451. www.njbressefarms.com 609-500-6417 Mike. Mention this ad get 1 free chick. (Applies to 10 chick orders or more.)

**FREEDOM RANGER**

Pennsylvania

**FREEDOM RANGER HATCHERY, INC.** 187 N. Windy Mansion Rd., Reinholds, PA 17569. 717-336-4878, Fax:717-336-3711. sales@freedomrangerhatchery.com www.freedomrangerhatchery.com Black & Red Freedom Ranger chickens and gray Kosher King broiler chicks and turkeys. Non-GMO option.

**GAME BIRDS**

Indiana

**WOODSIDE AVIARY,** James Kotterman, Peru, Indiana. 765-985-2805. PHEASANT ENTHUSIASTS check this out! Displaying full color. Temminck, Satyr, and Cabots Tragopan Pheasants. NO CATALOG AVAILABLE. GIVE ME A CALL AND WE'LL TALK ABOUT THE BIRDS

Texas

**HARPER'S GAMEFARM,** Bobwhite Quail and Ringneck Pheasant, Day Old Chicks and Flight Birds. Call 806-435-0528 or 3495 or check out www.harpergamefarm.com!

**ICELANDIC**

Wisconsin

**ICELANDIC CHICKEN,** 6885 Bartlett Rd, Iron River, WI 54847. Long-time breeders and most trusted source, maintaining quality, genetic diversity, pure Icelandic landrace chickens in North America. www.icelandicchicken.com. Ph: 715-372-5255. email: davidwgrote@cheqnet.net

**JERSEY GIANTS**

Indiana

**MARIA'S JERSEY GIANTS,** Since 1977. Blue, Black, Splash, White Jersey Giants Quality APA/4-H winners/ brown eggs/meat. AKC Miniature American Shepherds (Mini Aussies). Text 502-548-1075. http://www.mariasjerseygiants.com

**VARIOUS**

Alabama

**VALLEY FARMS HATCHERY,** PO Box 2201, Muscle Shoals, AL 35662. 256-314-2282. www.valleyfarmshatchery.com. sales@valleyfarmshatchery.com Cornish Cross Broilers, Brown Sexlinks, White Leghorns, Rhode Island Reds, and more! NPIP Certified and Hatching/ Shipping Weekly January-November!

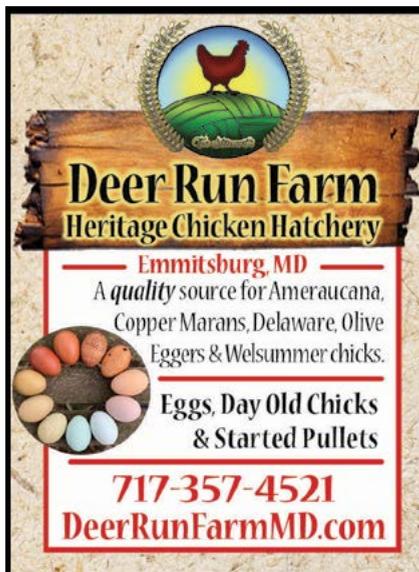
Iowa

**COUNTY LINE HATCHERY,** 2977 Linn Buchanan Rd., Coggon, IA 52218. 319-350-9130, Find us on Facebook: County Line Hatchery. Rare and fancy peafowl, guineas, chickens, ducks, turkeys, geese, bantams, and more. Featuring Showgirls and Silkies. Most economical and diverse poultry assortment available.

Iowa

**TURKEYS, RED PULLETS, CORNISH ROCKS.** Schlecht Hatchery, 9749 500th Ave., Miles, IA 52064 563-682-7865 www.schlechthatchery.com

Maryland



**Deer Run Farm  
Heritage Chicken Hatchery**  
Emmitsburg, MD  
A quality source for Ameraucana, Copper Marans, Delaware, Olive Eggers & Welsummer chicks.  
Eggs, Day Old Chicks & Started Pullets  
717-357-4521  
DeerRunFarmMD.com

**VARIOUS**

Missouri



**Ideal Poultry Breeding Farms, Inc.**  
Supplying quality backyard poultry since 1937.  
www.idealpoultry.com  
1-800-243-3257.

Missouri

**CACKLE HATCHERY®,** PO Box 529, Lebanon, MO 65536. 417-532-4581. help@cacklehatchery.com www.cacklehatchery.com 88 years of hatching and shipping baby chicks. Over 230 varieties.

Ohio

**SNOWFALL POULTRY (FARMS)** Kellie Snow, 10176 Lisbon Rd., Canfield, OH 44406 www.snowfallfarms.com www.facebook.com/snowfallfarms/ Breeds: Langshan, Hedemora, Sebastopol Geese

Pennsylvania

**HOFFMAN HATCHERY, INC.** PO Box 129, Gratz, PA 17030. 717-365-3694. www.hoffmanhatchery.com Chicks, turkeys, ducklings, goslings, guineas, gamebirds, bantams, equipment. FREE CATALOG.

Pennsylvania

**RHODE ISLAND REDS, BARRED ROCK LAYING HENS AND LAYER CHICKS, VARIOUS AGES.** Felton, PA. 717-927-6705, leave a voicemail.

Wisconsin

**SUNNYSIDE HATCHERY,** Beaver Dam, Wisconsin. 920-887-2122. Shipping to North Central U.S. only. Jumbo broilers, Rangers, Leghorns, Commercial brown layers, Dual-purpose blacks and reds, Rainbow Eggers, Delawares, various heritage breeds, turkeys, and started pullets.

**WATERFOWL**

California

**METZER FARMS,** 26000 Old Stage Road, Gonzales, CA 93926. Year-round hatching. Nationwide shipping from California and Tennessee. Free catalog, 800-424-7755. www.metzerfarms.com Ducklings: Pekin, Jumbo Pekin, Rouen, Khaki Campbell, Golden 300 Egg Layer, White Layer, Blue Swedish, Buff, Cayuga, Mallard, Welsh Harlequin, White Crested & Runners (Black, Chocolate, Blue, Fawn & White), Saxony, Silver Appleyard, Muscovy (White, Black). Goslings: Embden, White Chinese, Brown Chinese, Toulouse, Dewlap Toulouse, Buff Toulouse, African, Super African, Buff, Sebastopol, Pilgrim, Roman Tufted. French Pearl guineas. Cornish Cross chicks.

## ASSOCIATIONS

AMERICAN EMU ASSOCIATION, 510 West Madison St., Ottawa, IL 61350. info@aea-emu.org www.aea-emu.org

## FREE

### FREE MATERIALS

WHEN CHURCH/ GOVERNMENT UNITE,  
ENFORCING SUNDAY LAW,  
THE MARK OF THE BEAST IS HERE!  
DON'T BE DECEIVED, BE INFORMED!  
LEAVE MAILING ADDRESS ONLY  
TBSM POB 374, ELLIJAY GA 30540  
TBSMADS@YAHOO.COM  
1-888-211-1715

## MEALWORMS



Save 20% on your first order using Coupon Codes BYPao

**Mealworms**  
Live or Dried

Grown and raised in Eugene, Oregon

PLANET BUGS®

US-Grown Mealworms from Planet Bugs, a small family farm in Oregon.  
Go to [www.planetbugs.net/BYP20](http://www.planetbugs.net/BYP20)  
or call (734) 328-2847

## MUSIC

Gospel Piano CDs Hymns, gospel songs from days gone by! All instrumental (no singing). Great for retirees, housewives, quilters, farmers, travelers, everyone! Free brochure. Jacky Campbell, 216 Spokane Rd, Natchez, MS 39120.



## WOMANSWORK DIGGER GLOVES

These best-selling garden gloves are doubly reinforced at the fingertips, so they hold up to lots of digging in the garden and look good even after repeated washings. Palm is lightly padded for extra comfort. A more extended cuff with Velcro wrist closure gives the gloves a snug fit and keeps soil from getting inside. These multi-purpose "Digger" gloves offer agility and protection for all your chores. Available in sizes small, medium, and large.

Green: S 11653; M 11654; L 11655  
Magenta: S 11656; M 11657; L 11658  
Purple: S 11659; M 11660; L 11661  
Teal Blue: S 11662; M 11663; L 11664  
**\$19.95 each**

Order today by calling  
970-392-4419  
or by visiting  
[Shop.IAmCountryside.com](http://Shop.IAmCountryside.com)

Promo Code:  
**MBPPAR22**

Prices do not include  
shipping & handling.



## 20 FUN-TO-MAKE PROJECTS *For Happy, Healthy Chickens!*

In *Chicken DIY*, aspiring chicken farmers will find creative plans and easy-to-follow construction tips for making a safe and healthy environment for their fine-feathered friends. Veteran farmers and poultry enthusiasts Samantha and Daniel Johnson provide complete and easy-to-follow instructions for 20 essential projects, from coops and feeders to runs, ramps, roosts, and incubators. Clear step-by-step color photographs guide the reader through each hands-on project. #8647; \$19.99

Order today by calling 970-392-4419 or by visiting  
[www.shop.iamcountryside.com](http://www.shop.iamcountryside.com).

Promo code: MBPPAR22; Price does not include Shipping & Handling.



IF YOU'RE  
READING  
THIS, SO  
ARE YOUR  
CUSTOMERS.

ADVERTISE  
WITH US!

To advertise  
in marketplace,  
email [adinfo@ogdenpubs.com](mailto:adinfo@ogdenpubs.com)

or call  
**800-678-5779**



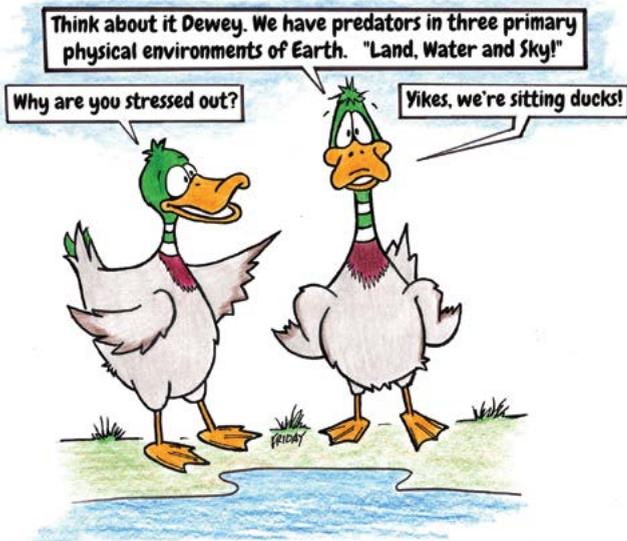
CONNECT  
ONLINE WITH  
**BACKYARD  
POULTRY:**

backyard  
[poultry.iamcountryside.com](http://poultry.iamcountryside.com)



# Backyard Poultry Word Scramble February/March 2026

1. CHIPAAT \_\_\_\_\_
2. RATGHIEE EEBDR \_\_\_\_\_
3. CHISCK \_\_\_\_\_
4. NAHAWAII OOCL OOCM \_\_\_\_\_
5. CITANHGH \_\_\_\_\_
6. SCYUSEFLSLUC DRBOO \_\_\_\_\_
7. RDWCOEN NOPIGE \_\_\_\_\_
8. HRERWADA OTCLH \_\_\_\_\_
9. NAALACTA \_\_\_\_\_
10. OENDASSE EFBE PTEIATS \_\_\_\_\_
11. IGETSNN \_\_\_\_\_
12. GDUUAN \_\_\_\_\_
13. RYESAL \_\_\_\_\_
14. ESLEHTRS \_\_\_\_\_
15. IDNRUEGC ESRTSS \_\_\_\_\_
16. ERXOL \_\_\_\_\_
17. OUGSINH SURYEKT \_\_\_\_\_
18. VNTNIAETIOL \_\_\_\_\_
19. ECNIAANEMTN \_\_\_\_\_
20. IOGCKON TWIH KUDC GGSE \_\_\_\_\_



## Answer Key

1. CHIPAAT CHABATI
2. RATGHIEE EEBDR HERITAGE BREED
3. CHISCK CHICKS
4. NAHAWAII OOCL OOCM HAWAIIAN LOCO MOCO
5. CITANHGH HATCHING
6. SCYUSEFLSLUC DRBOO SUCCESSFULLY BROOD
7. RDWCOEN NOPIGE CROWNED PIGEON
8. HRERWADA OTCLH HARWARE CLOTH
9. NAALACTA CATALANA
10. OENDASSE EFBE PTEIATS SEASONED BEEF PATTIES
11. IGETSNN NESTING
12. GDUUAN UGANDA
13. RYESAL LAYERS
14. ESLEHTRS SHELTERS
15. IDNRUEGC ESRTSS REDUCING STRESS
16. ERXOL ROLEX
17. OUGSINH SURYEKT HOUSING TURKEYS
18. VNTNIAETIOL VENTILATION
19. ECNIAANEMTN MAINTENANCE
20. IOGCKON TWIH KUDC GGSE COOKING WITH DUCK EGGS

# Show us your art skills by coloring this picture!

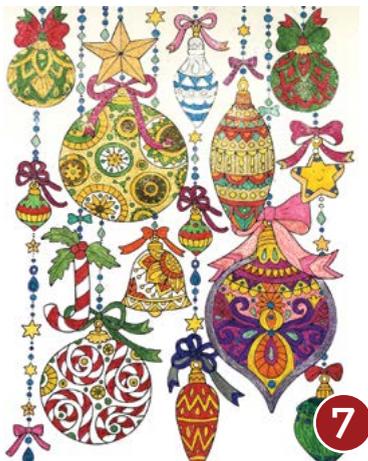
Enjoy this coloring page! Once you're done, snap a picture and send it to us via email at [editor@backyardpoultrymag.com](mailto:editor@backyardpoultrymag.com) or via snail mail at *Backyard Poultry*, Attn: Coloring Pages, 1503 SW 42nd St, Topeka, KS 66609.





## A colorful selection of art submitted by our readers!

Color the picture on the previous page and your picture could be published in the next issue!



1. Elizah Edwards, age 12; 2. Francesca Jones, age 6; 3. Mary Stahl, age 70;  
 4. Ruetta Sullivan, age 84; 5. Vanessa; 6. Elizah Edwards, age 12;  
 7. Lauri Smith; 8. Vera Matadobra, age 7; 9. Ruetta Sullivan, age 84

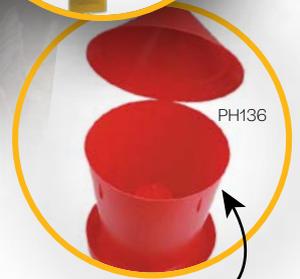


# GIVE YOUR BABY CHICKS THE BEST START IN LIFE!

Upgrade your chick-rearing equipment today for healthier, stronger flocks tomorrow.



The adjustable bracket for the baby chick nipple waterer ensures it is always at the right height for your chicks.

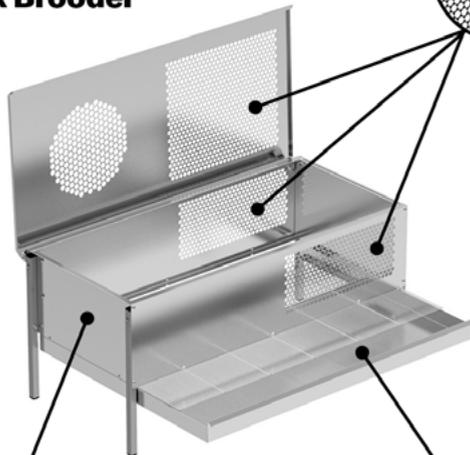
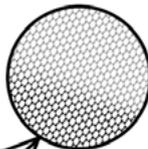


Messy chicks? Switch to our number one top-loading nipple waterer to keep your chick's number two out!

Use this high capacity top loading chick feeder which reduces waste and keeps your chicks feed clean!

PP957  
**Stand Up Chick Brooder**

MULTIPLE PERFORATIONS  
For easy monitoring & airflow



SPACIOUS DESIGN  
Allows plenty of room for your chicks to grow

REMOVABLE TRAY  
For quick & simple cleaning

The first few weeks of a chick's life are critical for their growth and future health. With Stromberg's high-quality chick-rearing equipment, you can provide a safe, warm, and nurturing environment to help your baby chickens thrive. From brooders to feeders, waterers, and everything in between, our products are designed to meet the unique needs of young chicks, ensuring they grow into productive, healthy adults.



**POULTRY SUPPLIES**  
for a thriving flock



**STROMBERGSCHICKENS.COM | 800.720.1134**

# IT'S TIME TO PUT YOUR FOOT DOWN.



## MEET THE

## DONG TAO

Available NOW at  
[greenfirefarms.com](http://greenfirefarms.com)

Order your spring chicks today. Hatching eggs ship year-round.  
call us: 866-954-2968 | text us: 850-900-6355 | @greenfirefarms

