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Topics

- Avian Flu: "Let's have a Biosecurity Plan"
- Poultry Housing and Management Issues
- Molting a Flock
- Getting the Most Eggs from My Flock
- Best Breeds for Production
- Vaccinations and Health Care

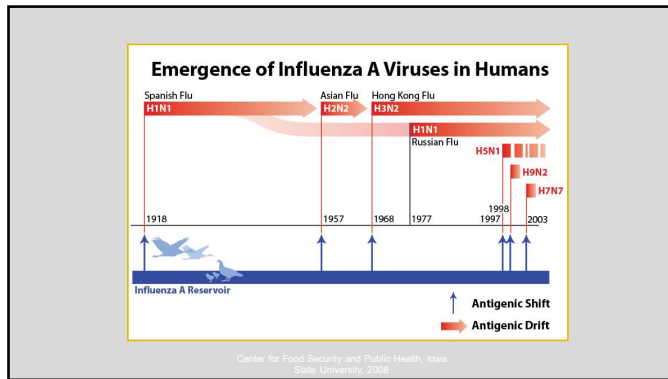


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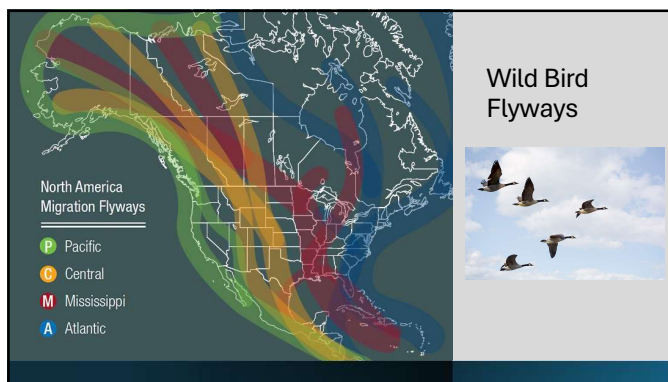




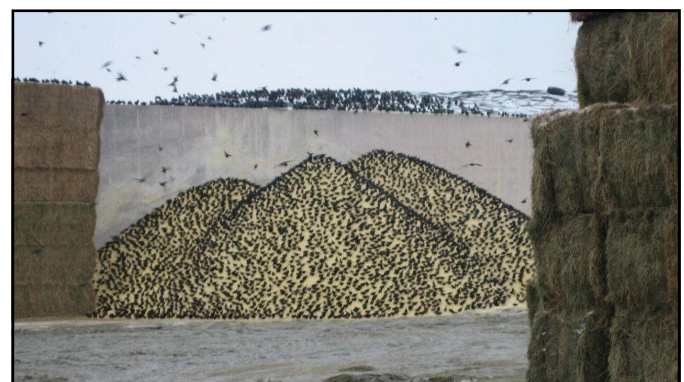
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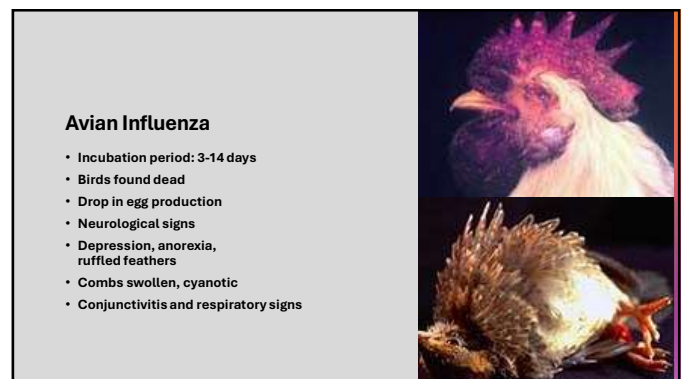
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Post Mortem Lesions

- Lesions may be absent with sudden death
- Severe congestion of the musculature
- Dehydration
- Subcutaneous of head and neck area edema

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Current Policy

- Eradicate ALL forms of AI through testing and elimination in ALL birds
- Pay indemnity to encourage participation
- Prohibit vaccine use
 - Will not stop the spread or mutations
 - Will stop poultry meat exports, will lower corn prices too


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Misunderstanding and Misinformation

- Corporate vs small farms
- The vaccine issue
- Flock disposal
- Meat consumption

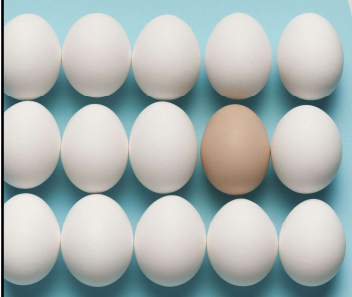
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Let's be realistic – what can we really do?

- Biosecurity of course
- Keep waterfowl away, everywhere you can
- Keep wild birds out
- Buy from clean sources
- Run a "closed flock"


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Q. Can I get avian influenza from eating poultry or eggs?

- A. No. Poultry and eggs that are properly prepared and cooked are safe to eat. In addition to proper processing, proper handling and cooking of poultry provides protection from viruses and bacteria, including avian influenza. As we remind consumers each and everyday, there are four basic food safety steps to follow: CLEAN, SEPARATE, COOK, and CHILL

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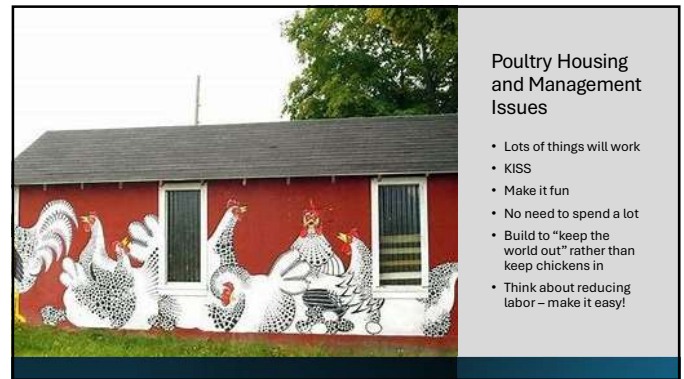
Vaccinating Home Flocks

- Buy chicks vaccinated against Marek's Disease.
- Vets won't vaccinate – market too small
- Vaccines packaged in large quantities for industry
- Smaller packages – questions of efficacy
- SHOULD you vaccinate?
 - For example, fowl pox

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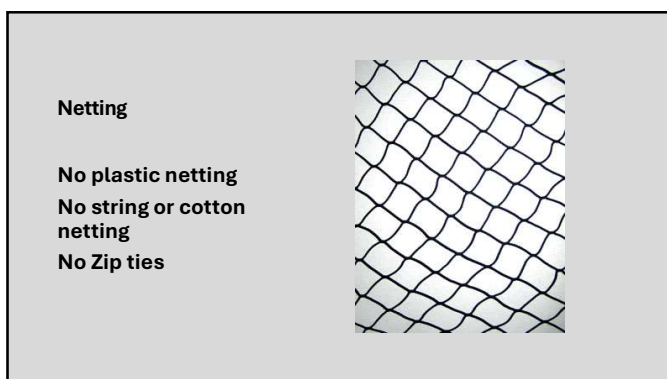
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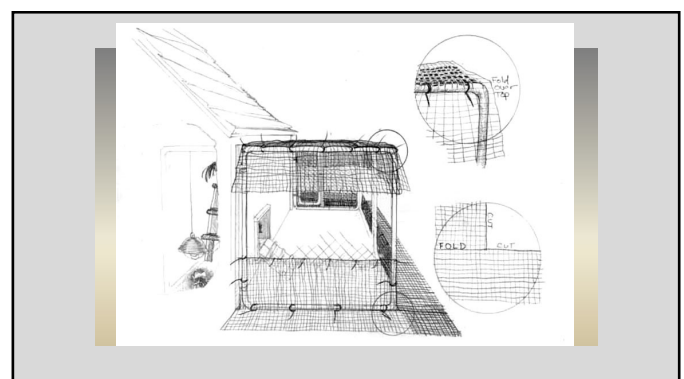
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Solar Power

- Don't be too cheap:
- Look for high power output
- Look for a long lasting charge



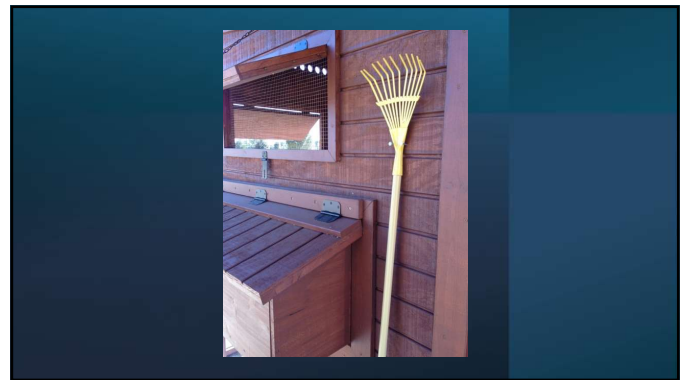
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Tip #2 – Make it Easy to Service

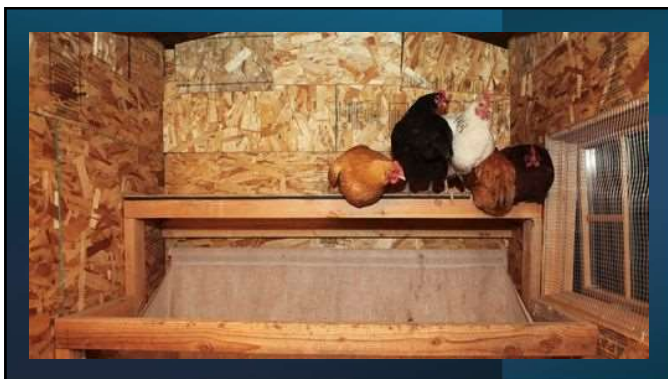
- Staying out of the pen saves time and improves biosecurity
- Easy to remove litter and manure
- Easy to feed
- Easy to water
- Easy to collect eggs



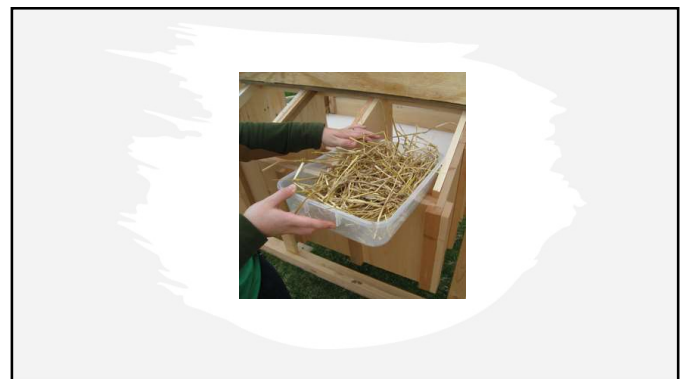
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Water

- Never limit water intake
- Never let water become contaminated



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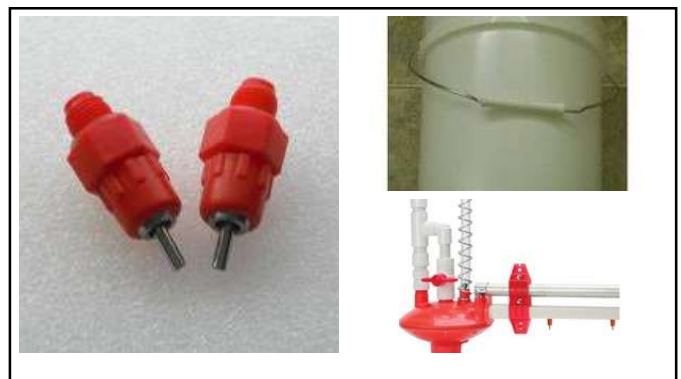
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Poultry Need Light to Lay Eggs

- 16 hours per day of total light, natural + artificial
- Low intensity
- Get a timer

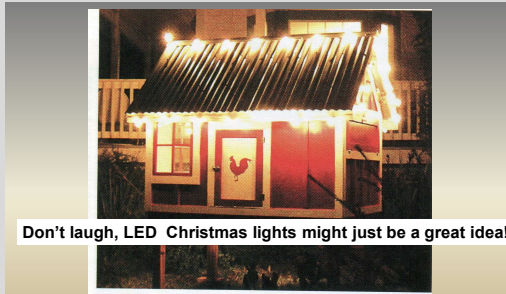


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Solar Powered Christmas Lights!



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Don't laugh, LED Christmas lights might just be a great idea!

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Light Timers – 16 hours total light per day for maximum egg output!



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Automatic Doors – Fantastic!



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Tip #3 – Heating and Cooling

A rule of thumb to remember is that keeping heat out of the coop is more important than keeping heat inside.

More birds have probably been killed in Kansas by soaring summer temperatures than by the coldest temperatures in the winter.

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Winter Cold

- In winter, Keep out of the wind – keep them dry



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Frostbite



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Summer Heat

- Summer heat is probably the bigger concern in Kansas.
- A Cornish – Rock Cross meat chicken, will be stressed in temperatures starting at 80°f at the end of their growth cycle.
- The biggest heat source in the summer is the roof of the coop and this is where many coop designs are weak.
- Every coop should include a layer of rigid foam between the trusses and roofing material.

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Ventilate, Ventilate, Ventilate!



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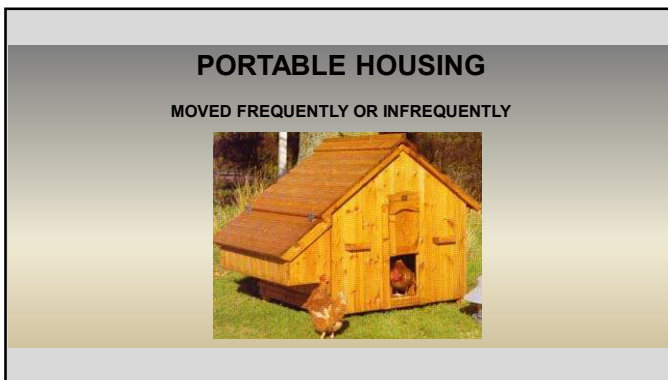


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Tip -
Consider
Coop
Portability

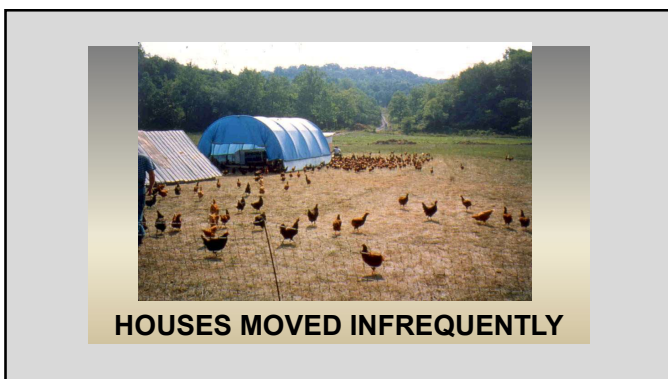
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Moving Coops

- Small poultry flocks can easily be moved from place to place with coop on skids or wheels
- Chickens are very destructive to their range area
- Consider plans that have outdoor runs that can be easily moved along with the house
- Parasites will begin to building up in the soil, but moving the pen from time to time may reduce the bird's exposure.
- A moveable coop also allows you to seek shady areas in the summer or protection from harsh winters.

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Where's the Range???



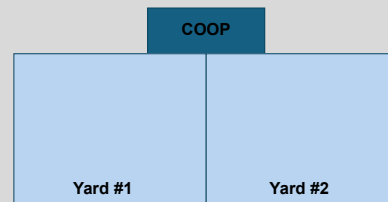
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How Do I Keep My Range Green?

- Get more yard.
- Keep fewer Chickens.
- It's just math!!!
- Fenced areas within?

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Can't move the Coop? Then move rotate the yards!



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Tip #5 – Don't Overbuild!!!

- Many small flock housing designs seem overly complicated.
- Build a small coop by trial and error.
- An unwritten rule should be that salvaged materials must be included!
- Old doors, windows pulled from a house, vents, etc. make good poultry house materials.
- Just be sure that salvaged items are free of lead paint and asbestos that may have been used long ago.



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Easy to Collect Eggs?

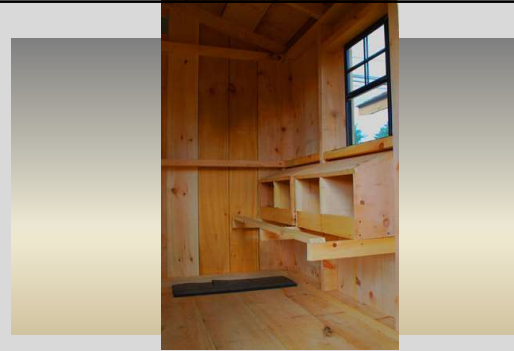


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Don't Cook Your Eggs - Use Interior Nest boxes!



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Chicken Tractors Love them or hate them

Ever been at the top of the hay loft in you barn in the summer?



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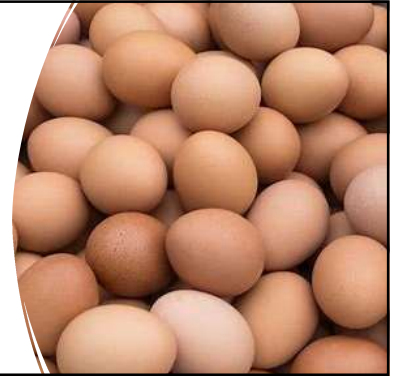
USE OF ELECTRO-NET FENCING



Can it hold out if the power is off?!?!?!?!?

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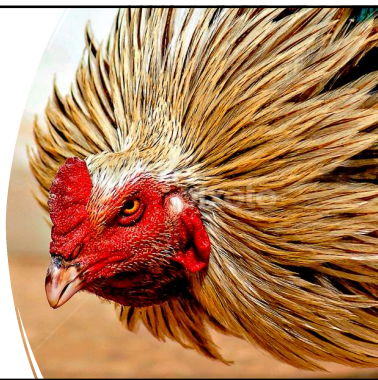
Getting the Most Eggs from your Poultry Flock



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Getting More Eggs

- Keep only females!
- Buy only pullet chicks
- Buy only egg type hybrids
- Dispense of roosters, ducks, geese, ostriches, etc!
- Cull
- Don't feed hen scratch
- Manage their egg cycles - molting



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Getting More Eggs

- Feed layer rations, do not give choice
- Give 16 hours total light per day
- STOP them from going broody!
- Pick up eggs and/or have a system that rolls eggs away
- Realize that old age and high temperatures will cause thinner shells. There is nothing wrong with these eggs but the USDA quality grade is lower



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Collect Eggs Often

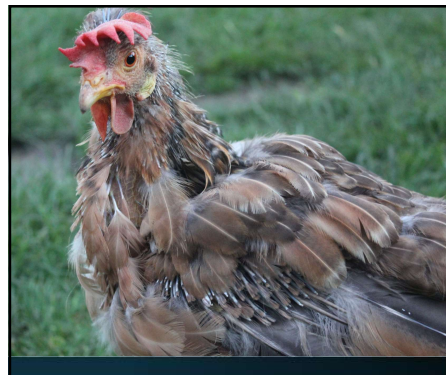
- Reduces broodiness, decreases breakage, b quality.
- Use roll away next box



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What is Molting?

- When birds molt, they replace their old feathers
- Replacement is in a pattern, and is linked to food availability and light exposure
- Takes about 4-6 weeks, affected by condition and breed



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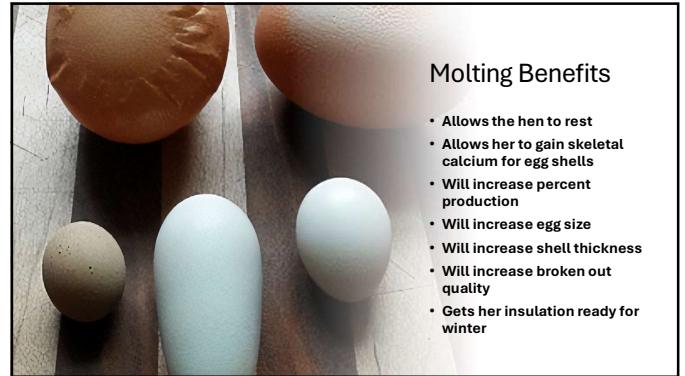
Molting?



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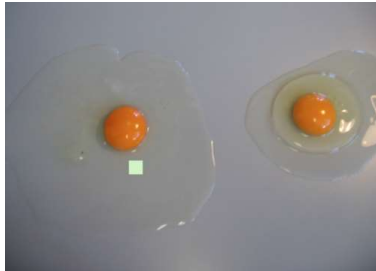
Molting Benefits

- Allows the hen to rest
- Allows her to gain skeletal calcium for egg shells
- Will increase percent production
- Will increase egg size
- Will increase shell thickness
- Will increase broken out quality
- Gets her insulation ready for winter



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Thin, runny eggs? Could be age, hot temps, or a need to molt



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How to Molt

- Force Molt: Remove feed
- Natural Molt: turn off lights



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Natural Molt

- On the longest day of the year, pull the plug on your artificial lights (June 21)
- Around Kansas State Fair time, or when you see significant feather drop, feed henscratch
- About 4-6 weeks after you see the feather drop, return to layer feed
- You can either use no lights and wait till Feb/Mar for eggs, or you can turn your lights back to 16 hours total per day

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Molting Ideas

- Will not lay during molt – great time to worm them!
- Molt once per year – every fall
- Do NOT molt your new pullets or spring chicks, get them laying and keep them laying until the 2nd June 21
- If you plan to show fall birds – keep lights at 16 hours until the show
- Never force molt in winter

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What Breed Should I Choose?



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Best Breeds for Egg Production

Stay with the Mediterranean

Mediterranean Class			
Breed	Varieties	Usage	Egg Color
Leghorns	12	Egg	White
Minorcas	5	Egg	White
Andalusians	1	Egg	White
Anconas	2	Egg	White
Sicilian	1	Egg	White
buttercups	1	Dual	White
Catalanas			

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Production Leghorns

- White eggs
- Hybrid crosses
- Most number of eggs, several seasons
- Less feed
- Does better in heat.
- Not show breeds
- Flighty



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Production Browns

- Brown eggs
- Hybrids lay good numbers
- Eat a bit more feed than leghorns
- OK in hot weather
- Not show birds
- They are pets
- BEWARE of what you get in 2025!!!



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Vaccinations and Health Care



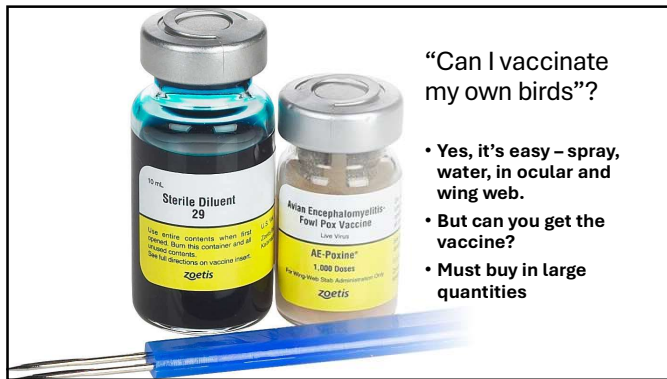
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"I bought vaccinated chicks"

- Probably Marek's Disease
- Usually ONLY Marek's Disease
- If hybrid Cornish or layers, vaccinated could be for 1-2 additional vaccines since they are vaccinated in ovo
- There are many many more vaccines than Marek's!



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“Can I vaccinate my own birds?”

- Yes, it's easy – spray, water, in ocular and wing web.
- But can you get the vaccine?
- Must buy in large quantities

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“Can my vet vaccinate my birds?”

- Unlikely due to package size
- Probably cost more than the birds
- Little experience

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Signs of a Sick Bird

1. Inactivity
2. Changes in Appetite
3. Abnormal Droppings
4. Respiratory Issues
5. Abnormal Posture
6. Ruffled Feathers
7. Swelling
8. Changes in Eyes or Beak
9. Decreased Egg Production
10. Pale or Discolored Combs/Wattles
11. Unusual Vocalizations

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Standard Vaccines

1. Marek's Disease
2. Infectious Bronchitis
3. Newcastle Disease
4. Infectious Bursal Disease (Gumboro)
5. Fowl Pox
6. Avian Encephalomyelitis
7. Mycoplasma gallisepticum
8. Laryngotracheitis
9. Salmonella (specific strains like Salmonella Enteritidis)
10. NOT AVIAN FLU

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The New Vet Directive Eliminated OTC Antibiotics

- Your personal vet **may** give you a broad spectrum antibiotic if they are your family or farm vet
- There are no antibiotics at the farm supply store, even if it claims to be an antibiotic
- Most local vets have little experience with poultry
- It becomes a matter of what the value is of the flock, or an individual bird
- Many let them 'self vaccinate' then move on

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Biosecurity!
Biosecurity!
Biosecurity!

- Don't buy and sell - EVER
- Keep wild birds out
- Keep waterfowl away
- Keep birds in good health with good care and feed



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