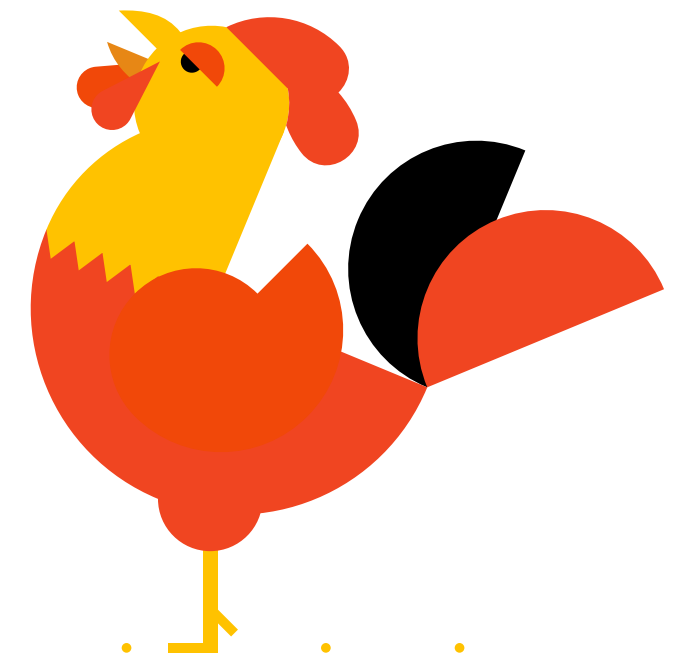




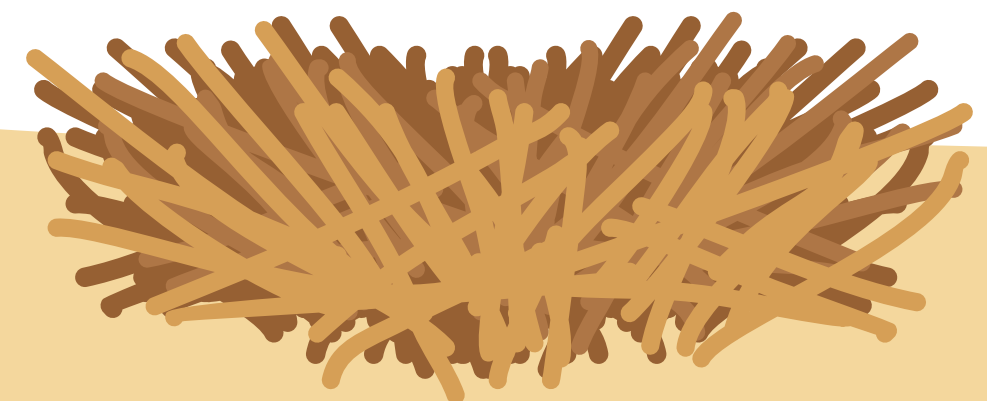
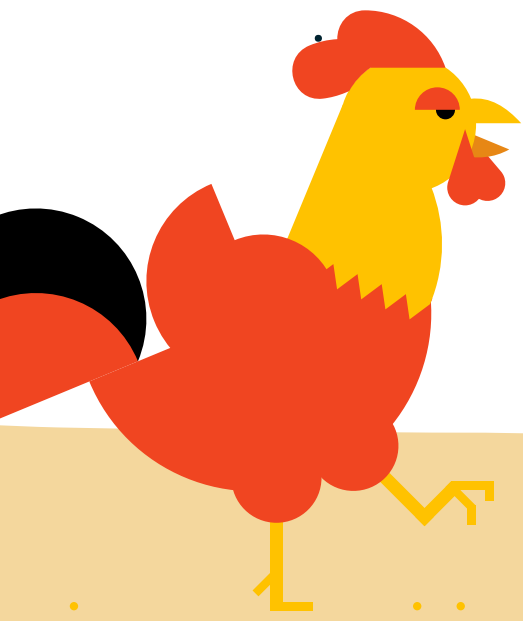
Austin Resource Recovery (ARR)

Backyard Chicken Keeping Guide



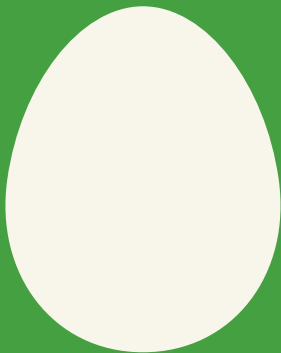
The City of Austin Has a Zero Waste Goal

- By 2040, our community will keep at least 90% of our discarded materials out of the landfill.
- How will we reach this goal? By choosing to turn these materials into valuable resources through reuse, repair, repurposing, and more!



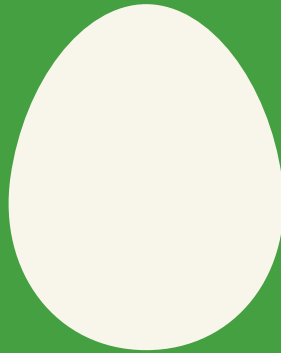
Austin Resource Recovery (ARR)

A City of Austin Department turning waste into resource.



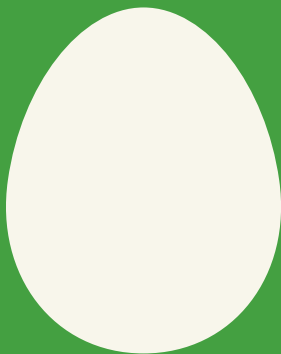
Curbside Collection

We service your residential recycle, compost, and landfill carts.



Essential Services

We handle street sweeping, hazardous waste, large brush pick up, and dead animal collection.



Recycle & Reuse Drop Off Center

We accept drop off of 'hard to recycle' materials like: lightbulbs, batteries, old paints, styrofoam, electronics, and more!



Zero Waste Programs & Rebates

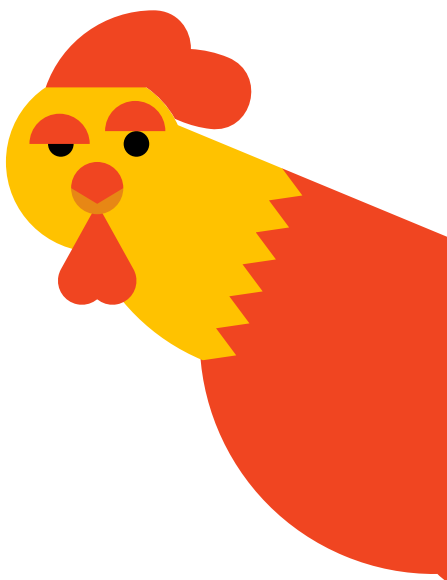
We create and share a variety of Zero Waste initiatives and opportunities in our community.

What's This Got To Do With Chickens?

In the US,
40% of our waste is
food waste.

The average American
throws away a half
pound of food
EACH DAY.

The average chicken
eats a quarter pound
of food each day.



Why does this matter?

Impacts of Food Waste

Wasted food is a BIG challenge.



It costs us \$165 billion dollars in the US every year.



It's a significant source of methane gas emissions.



1 in 9 Americans are food insecure, including more than 11 million children.



Chickens Divert Waste in a BIG Way!

If just 1% of households (3,100) in Austin kept chickens... we could divert 1 million pounds of food from the landfill each year!



What Does Less Waste Mean?

You Save Money!



96 Gallon
\$48.00*



64 Gallon
\$27.55*



32 Gallon
\$22.40*



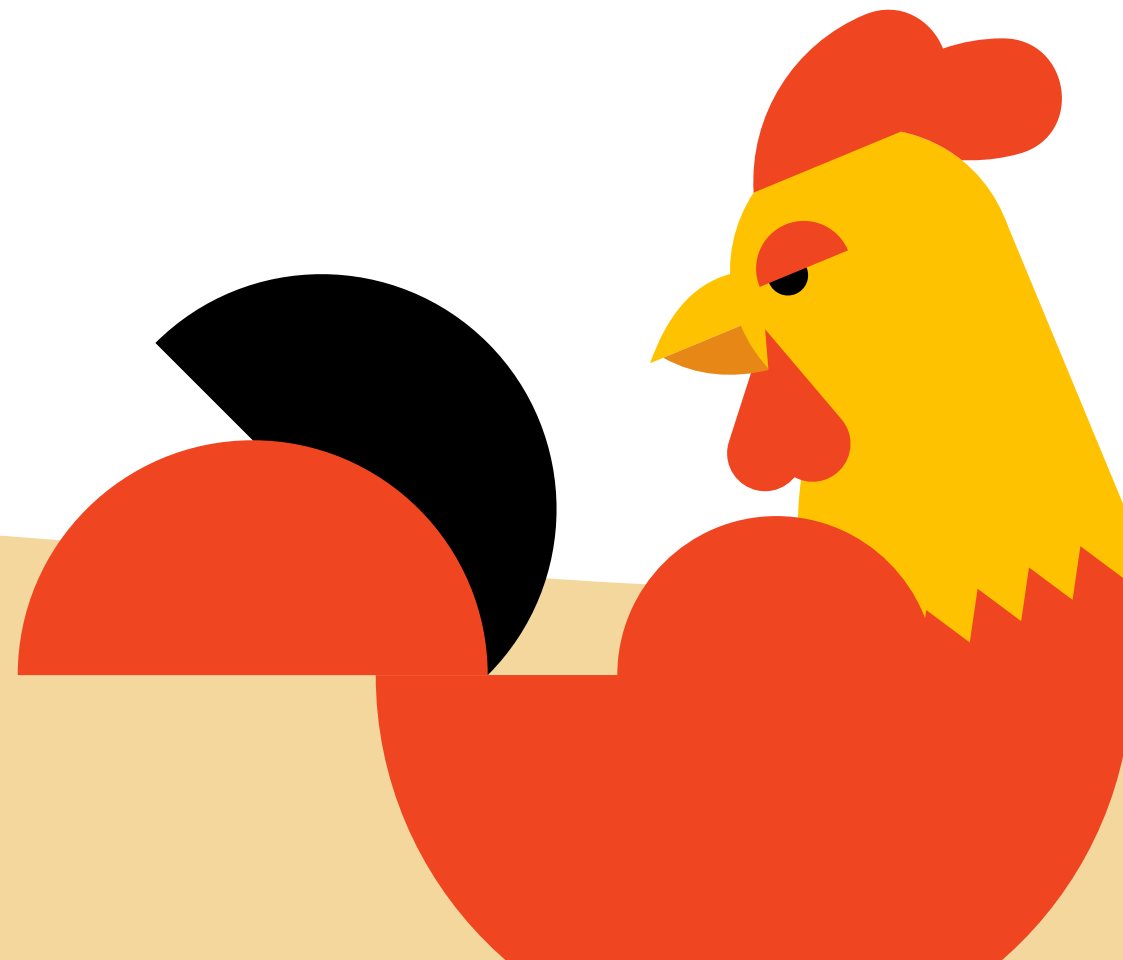
24 Gallon
\$21.15*

Call **512-494-9400** to change your landfill cart size!

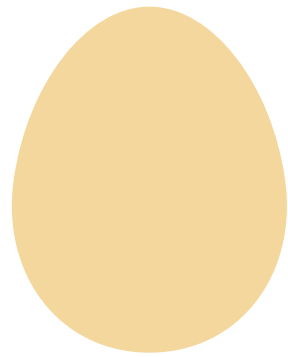
*Includes base rate of \$17.30

Let's Get Started:

Chicken Keeping Basics

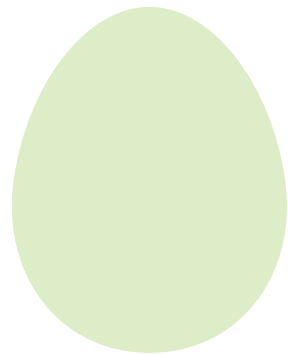


Why Keep Chickens?



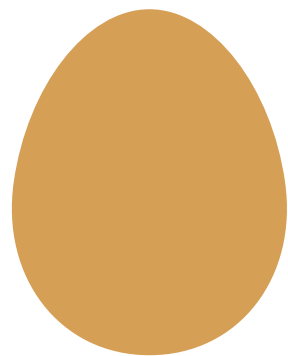
For Our Planet

Chickens are a "gardener's best friend". They are natural insect control. Their manure builds great topsoils and compost. They help us reduce food waste and support Austin's Zero Waste goal.



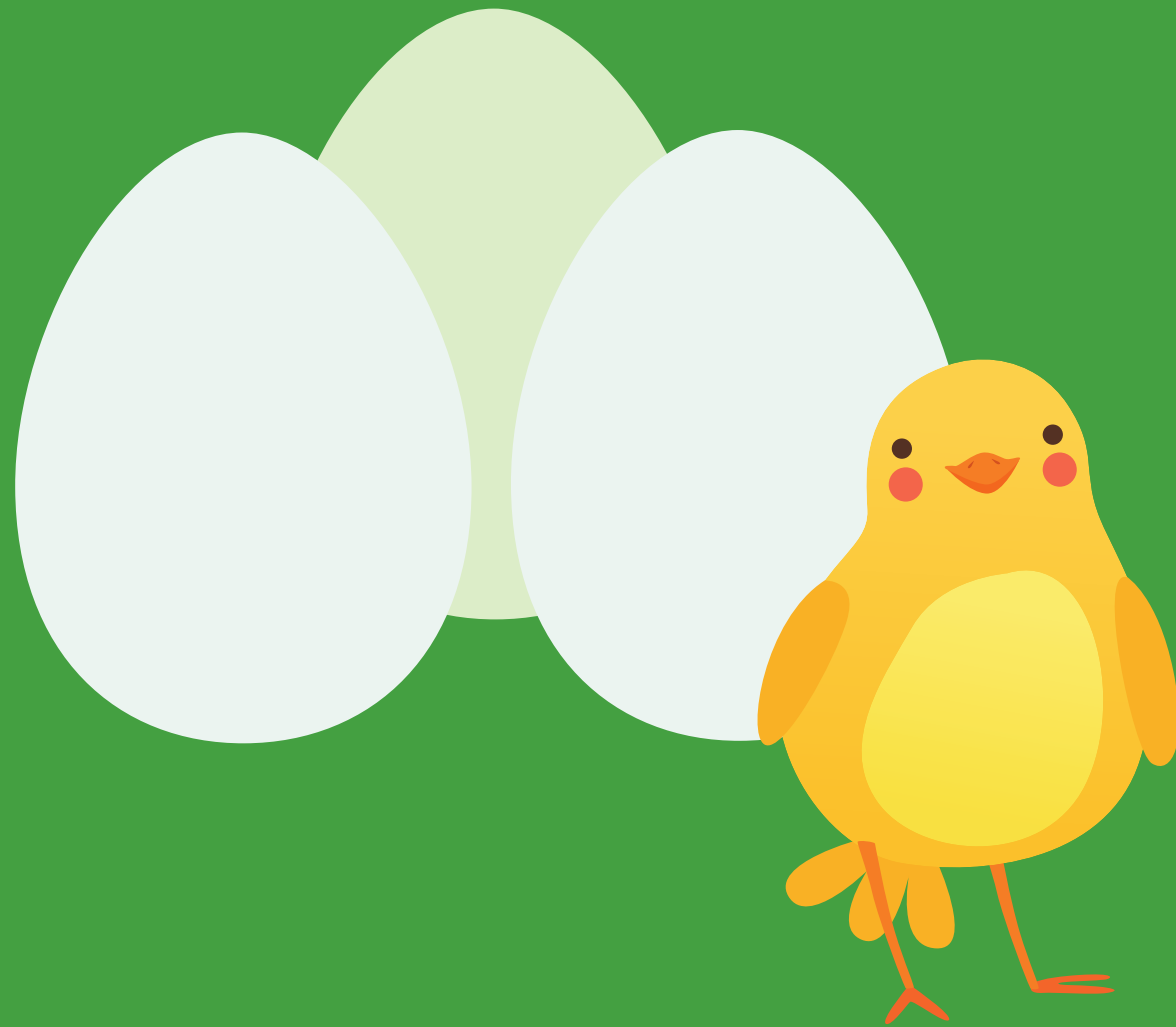
For Our Pocketbook

Chickens can eat a lot of our food scraps, in turn reducing what ends up in our landfill carts. This may save us money on monthly waste service bills. Chickens also provide us fresh eggs and even meat in our own backyards!



For Our Education

Chickens can teach us about responsibility and awareness of our food systems. Children can easily learn where our food comes from and respect for our environment. PLUS chickens are entertaining ! Have you ever heard of chicken TV?



Know The Code

Keeping chickens is a responsibility.

It's important to understand the City Of Austin Codes for livestock.

Important Code Definitions

Fowl

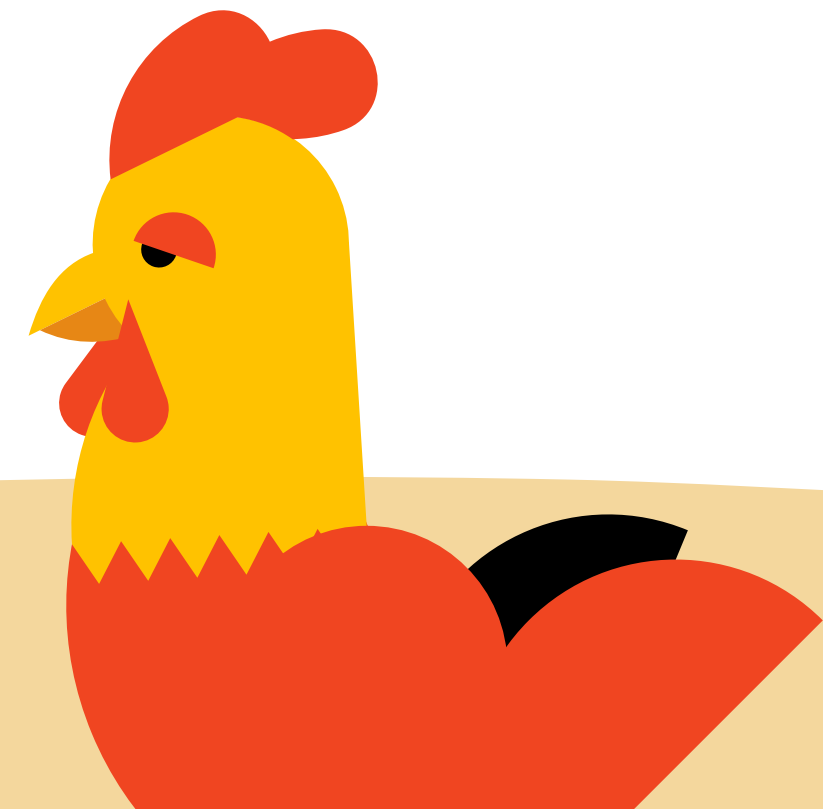
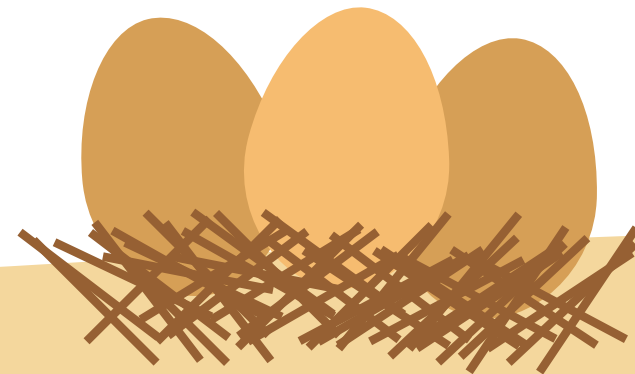
includes a chicken, turkey, goose, guinea hen, or duck.

Enclosure

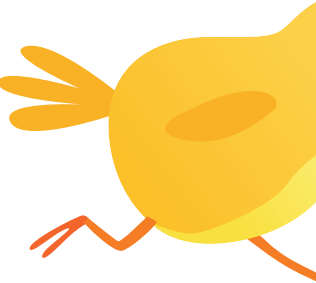
means a pen, cage, coop, loft, stable, shed, structure or enclosure used to house a bird, fowl, livestock, or other animal.

Running At Large

means an animal not:
(a) under the direct physical control of its owner or handler; or
(b) physically restrained within the premises of its owner or handler.



Austin Code: Title 3 (Animal Regulation)



3-2-1: Can't Roam Free

You may not allow your fowl to run at large. Thus, your chickens must stay on your property and cannot freely roam your neighborhood.



3-2-5 & 10-5-21: Clean & Sanitary

You must keep your fowl in a clean, sanitary, and healthy condition. You are responsible for clean water, food, adequate shelter, and addressing any illness & injury.



3-2-2: Excessive Noise

You may not keep fowl that makes frequent or long, continued noise that is disturbing to a person of normal sensibilities.

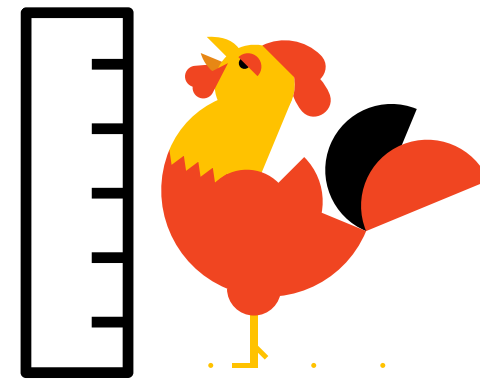


3-2-16: Appropriate Enclosure

An enclosure used to keep fowl must be located at least 50ft from a neighboring residence or business structure, excluding your personal residence or business.

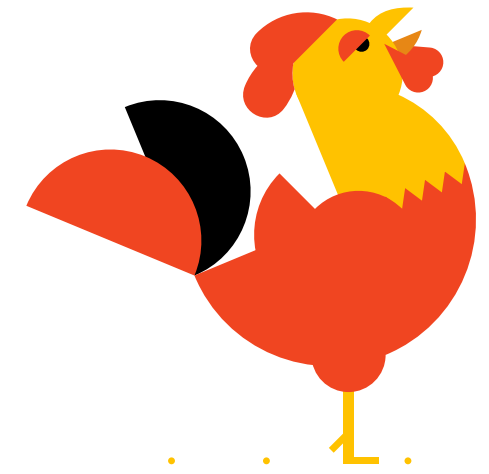
Choosing Your Chickens

There are hundreds of different chicken breeds. Here are a couple things to consider when picking your flock:

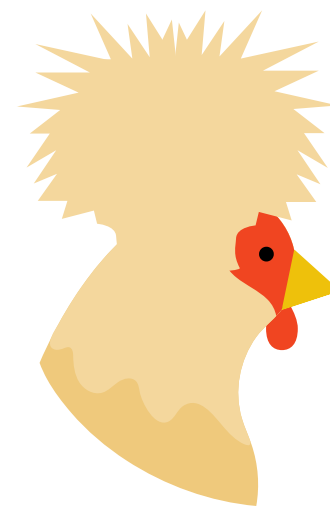


Smaller birds.
Eat less. Smaller eggs.

Size
Bantam vs. Standard

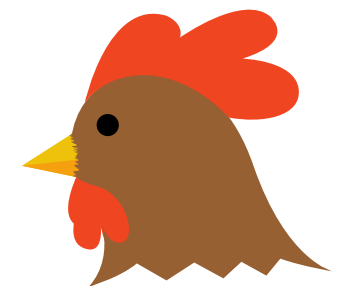


Eat more. Medium to
large eggs.



Fit niches. Specific egg
colors, feather patterns
& features.

Type
Purebred vs. Hybrid



Crossbred sex-linked
chickens. Often
better egg layers.

Age & Gender



Chicks

- Less than a week old.
- Broader breed selection.
- More intensive "early care".
- Longer time until first egg (18 weeks).
- Chance of mis-sexing, have a back up plan.



Pullets & Cockerels

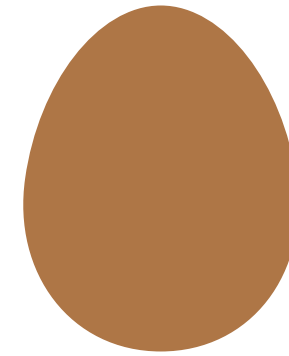
- Under a year old.
 - Pullets = Female; Cockerels = Male.
- Less variety and purchase sources available.
- Shorter wait time to first egg.
- Less chance of mis-sexing.



Hens & Roosters

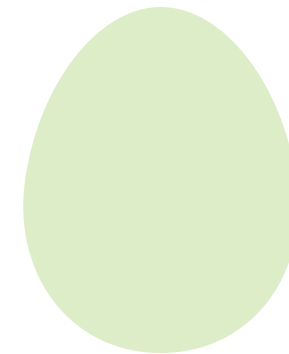
- Over a year old.
- Hens = Female; Cocks/Roosters = Male.
- Less variety and purchase sources available.
- Already laying eggs.
- Consider if you want fertile eggs or not.

Other Considerations



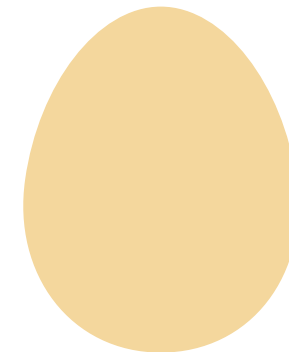
Climate

Some chicken breeds do better than others in varying climates & temperatures.



Egg Production & Meat

Some chickens lay eggs more often or for longer seasons, other chickens are bred for higher meat production.

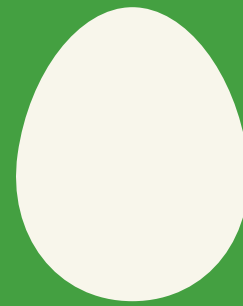
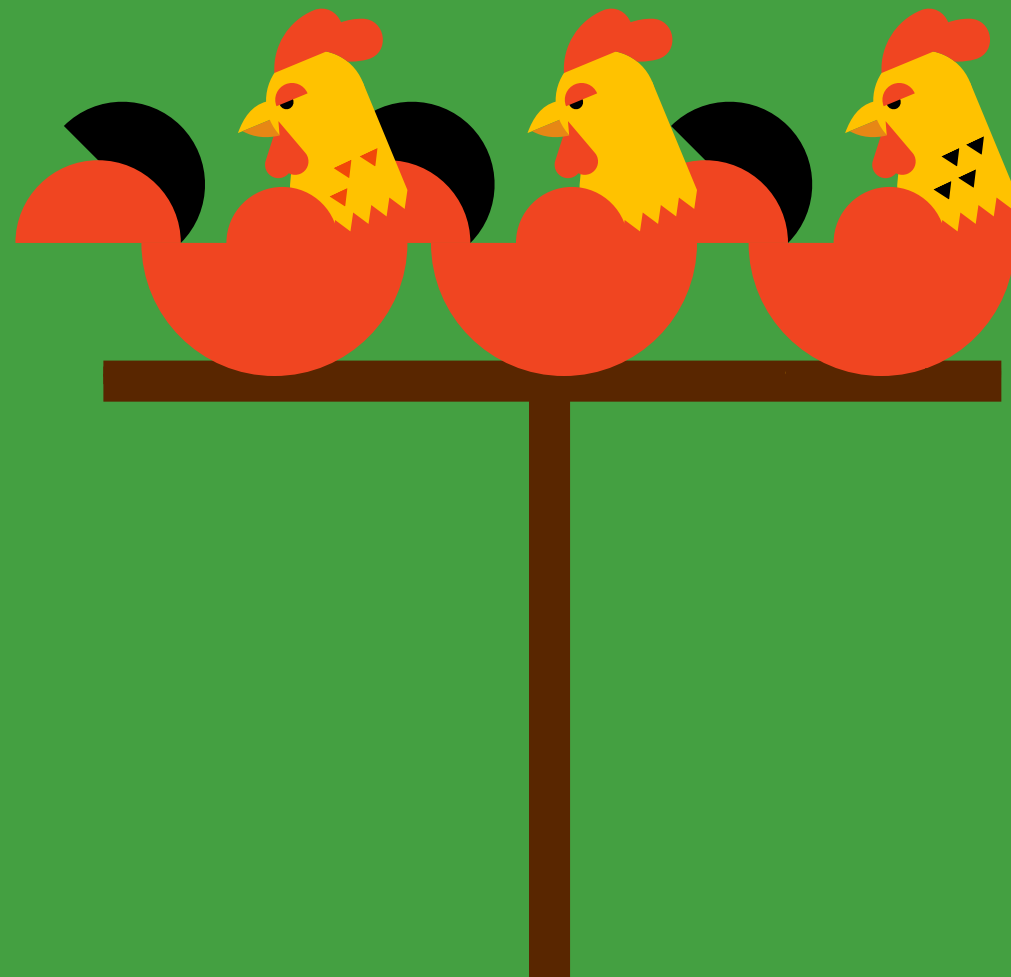


Temperament

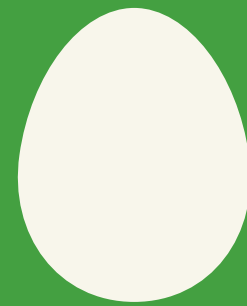
Each chicken will have it's own personality, but generally some chicken breeds have calmer temperaments than others. This is important if you have kids and/or limited space.

Chicken Buddies & Flock Integration

Chickens are social creatures and they need friends, just like us!



At minimum your flock should include 3 birds. Chickens maintain a 'pecking order' and thrive on social structure. Birds without companions can become stressed and lonely. This can affect egg laying and shorten a chicken's lifespan.



Quarantine new birds from your flock for at least 28 days. Never introduce sick birds to your flock. Introduce a minimum of 2 birds at a time. Integrate chickens of a similar size. Night introductions while roosting is recommended.

What To Expect:

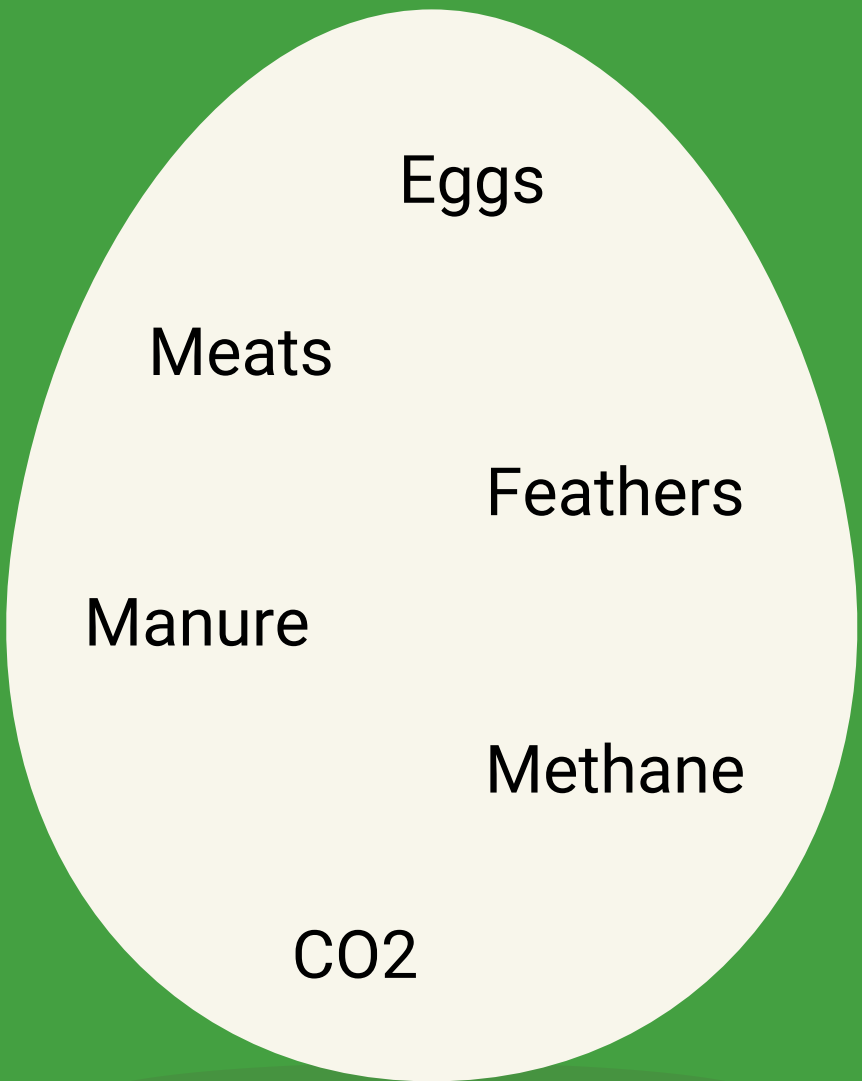
Caring For Your Chickens



Chicken Care Breakdown



Needs



Produces

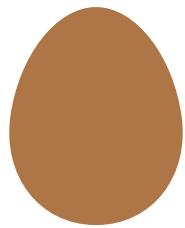


Behaviors

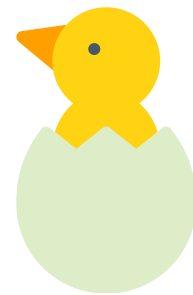


Chicken Feed

The type of feed you provide your birds is based on age and purpose. Feed should always be fresh, not moldy. Your flock needs:



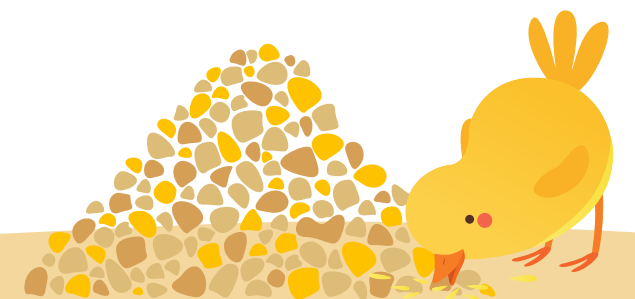
Carbs & Fats for energy.



Proteins to develop.



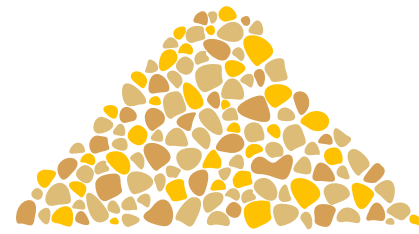
Grit to process feed.



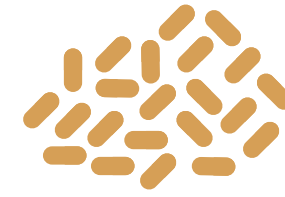


Types Of Feed

There are a variety of feeds your chickens can eat. Some provide complete nutrition (carbs, fat, & proteins). Others should just be used as treats and supplements.



Course Grains



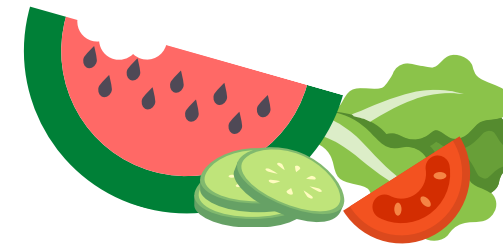
Pellets



Crumble



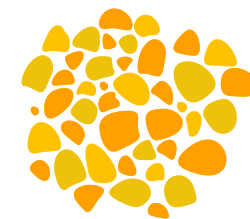
Mash



Food Scraps



Green Forage



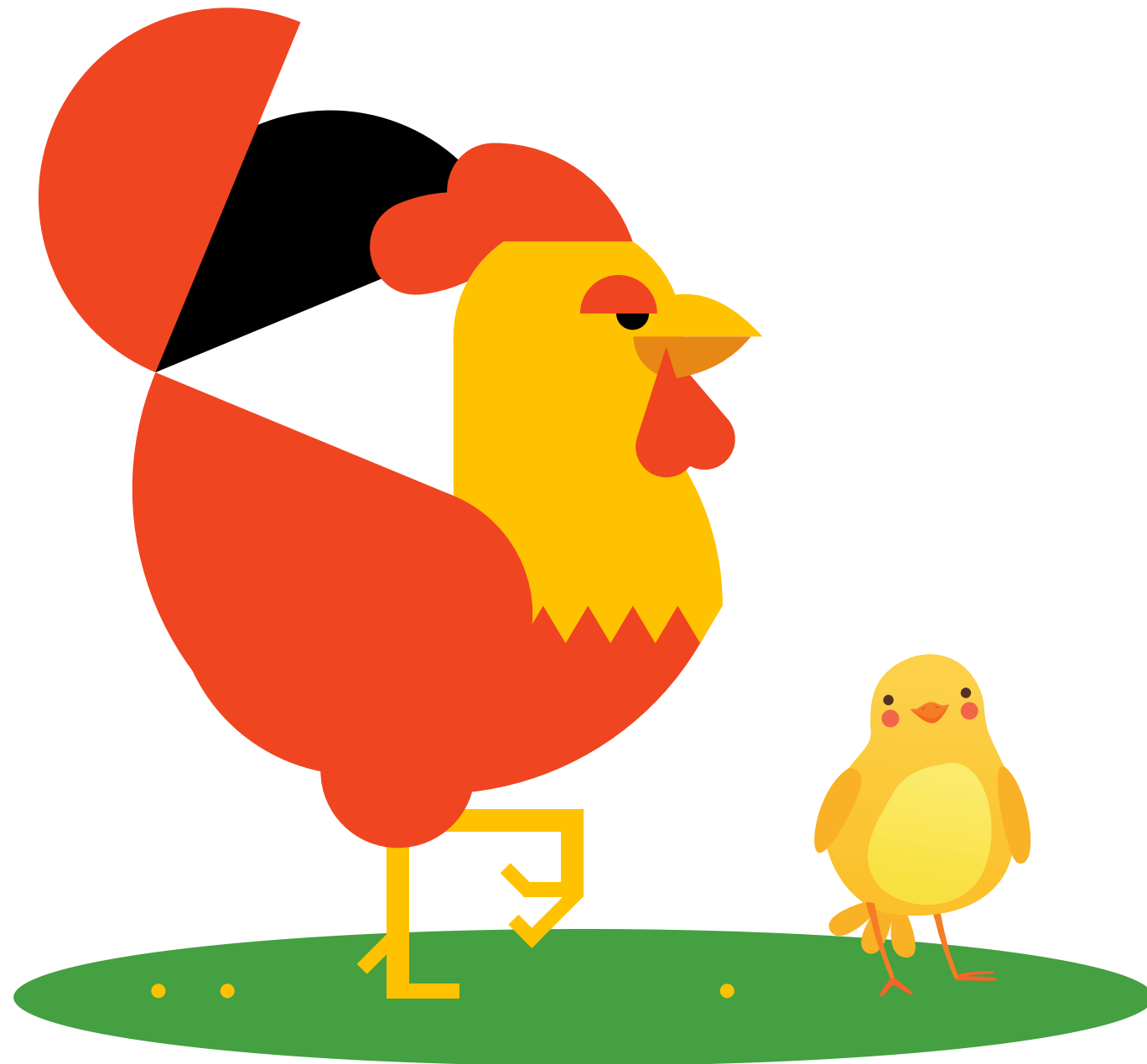
Chicken Scratch



Insects

Feeds By Age

Chickens need to be fed different feed based on age. Ratios for nutrients vary by life stage.



Chick Starter

For chicks between 0-6 weeks old.
Medicated vs. non-medicated.



Grower & Pullet Developer

For pullets between 6 weeks until first egg lay.

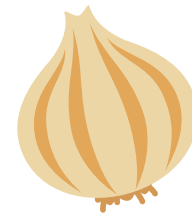
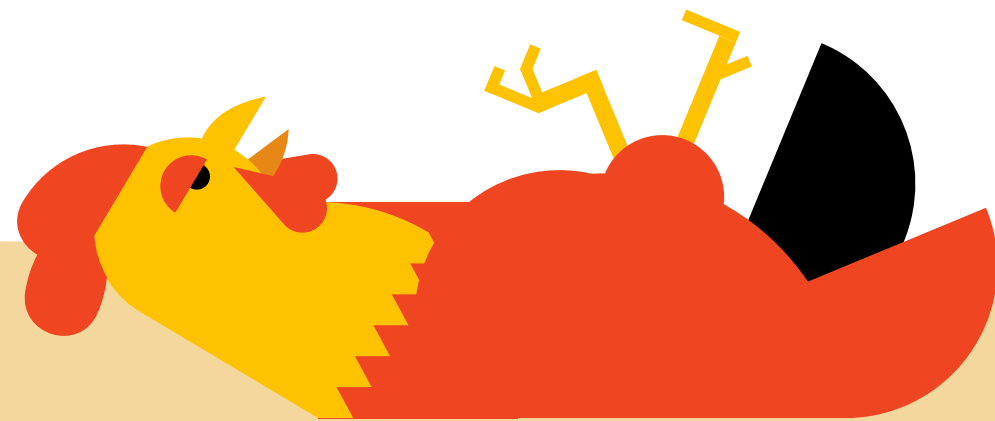


Layer or Broiler

Different feeds for different purposes. Layer feed for egg laying hens. Broiler feed for meat birds.

Food Scraps To Avoid

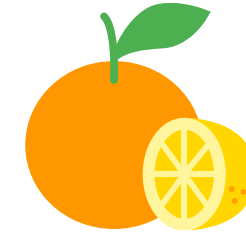
Food scraps can be a great supplement for your flock and help you reduce your food waste! Do your research before feeding scraps as some can be poisonous to your birds. Here are a few to avoid:



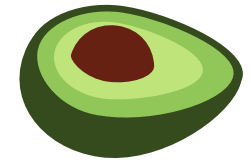
Onion



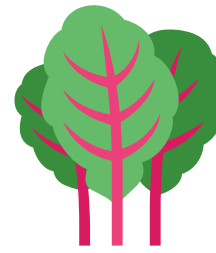
Garlic



Citrus Juice
& Peel



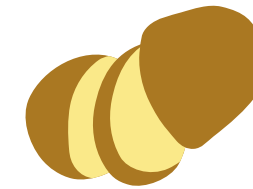
Avocado Seed
& Peel



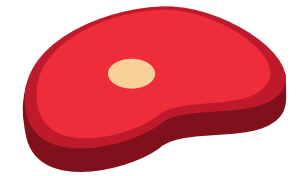
Rhubarb



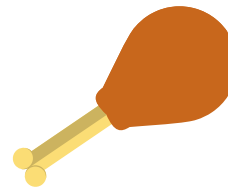
Dried Beans
& Rice



Raw Potato
& Peels



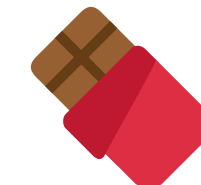
Raw Meat



Chicken



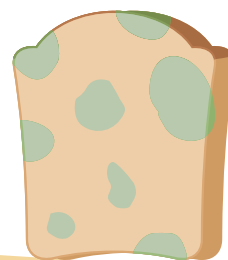
Salty Products



Chocolate



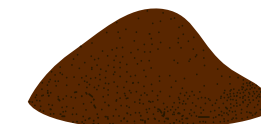
Junk Foods



Moldy Foods



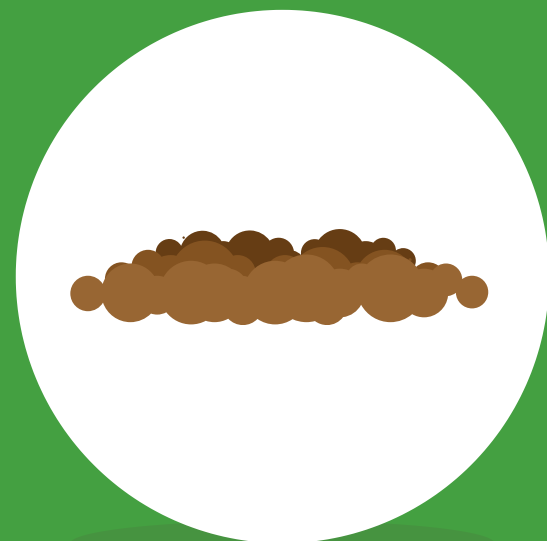
Tea Leaves



Coffee



Nightshade
Plant Leaves



What Is Grit?

Chickens don't have teeth. They have a complex digestive system. Grit is insoluble bits of sand, small stones, decomposed granite, oyster shells, etc. that allow your bird to grind up food in its gizzard.

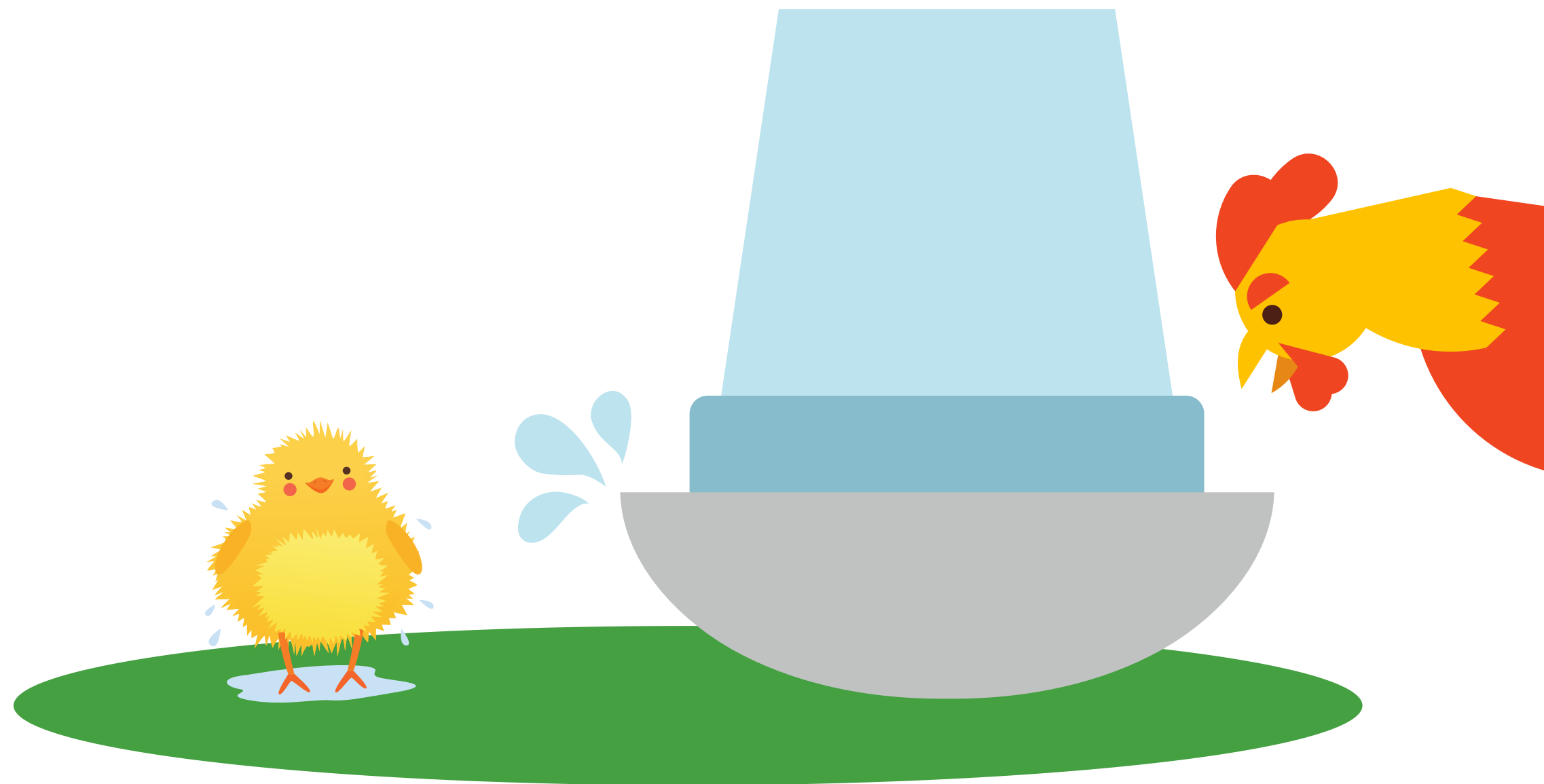


Water & Air

Must be clean, fresh, and easily accessible at all times.

Just like us, chickens need air and water to survive. In the summer months keep water in a shaded area. Ensure that you're coop has air ventilation for heat and methane to escape, but isn't drafty.

For chick care, don't use a deep open water dish. Chicks can easily drown. Use a shallow dish and pebbles or marbles, if needed.



Types of Shelter



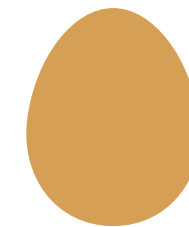
Brooder

Temporary housing with a reliable heat source for chicks until they 'feather out'.



Coop

Permanent housing for chickens that keeps them safe and secure, especially at night.



Coop & Run

Permanent housing for chickens that also includes an enclosed outdoor fenced space for day use.



Chicken Tractor

Mobile housing for chickens that includes a coop and small run space.



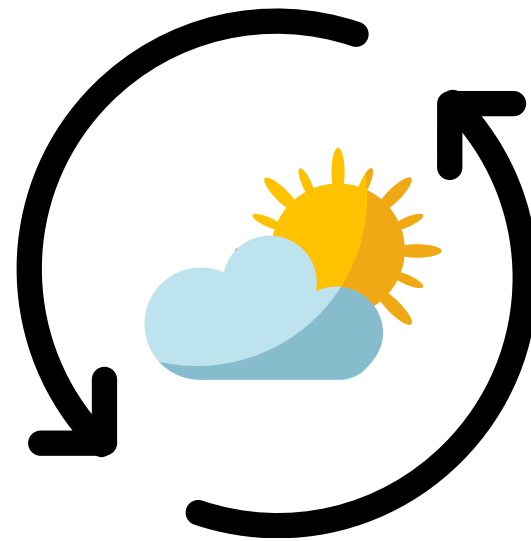
Space Availability



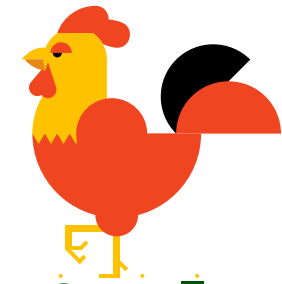
Yard Access



Predators



Climate & Seasons



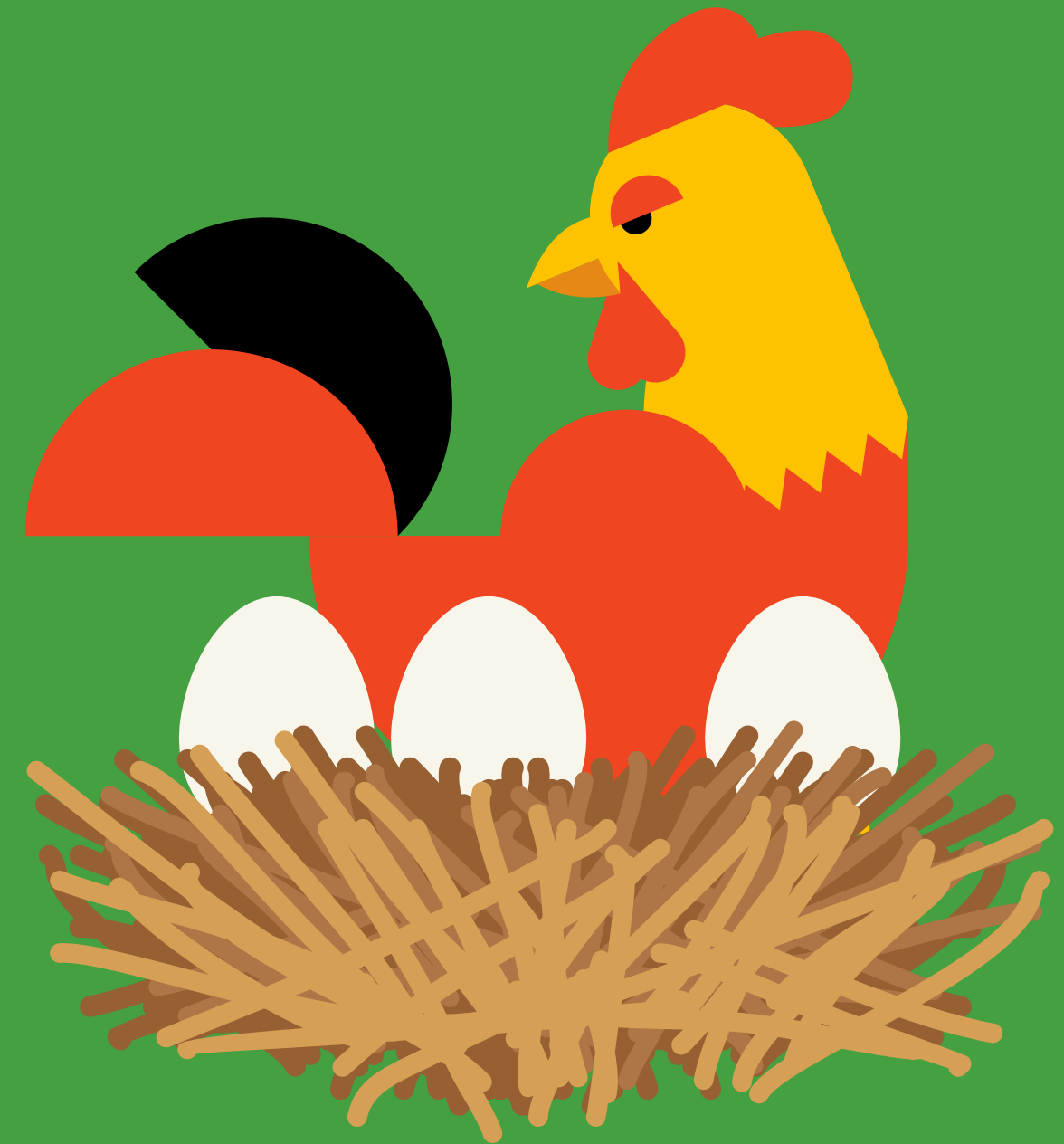
Shelter Essentials

When choosing the best shelter option for your flock, consider a few things:

Space Availability

Ensure appropriate space and light.

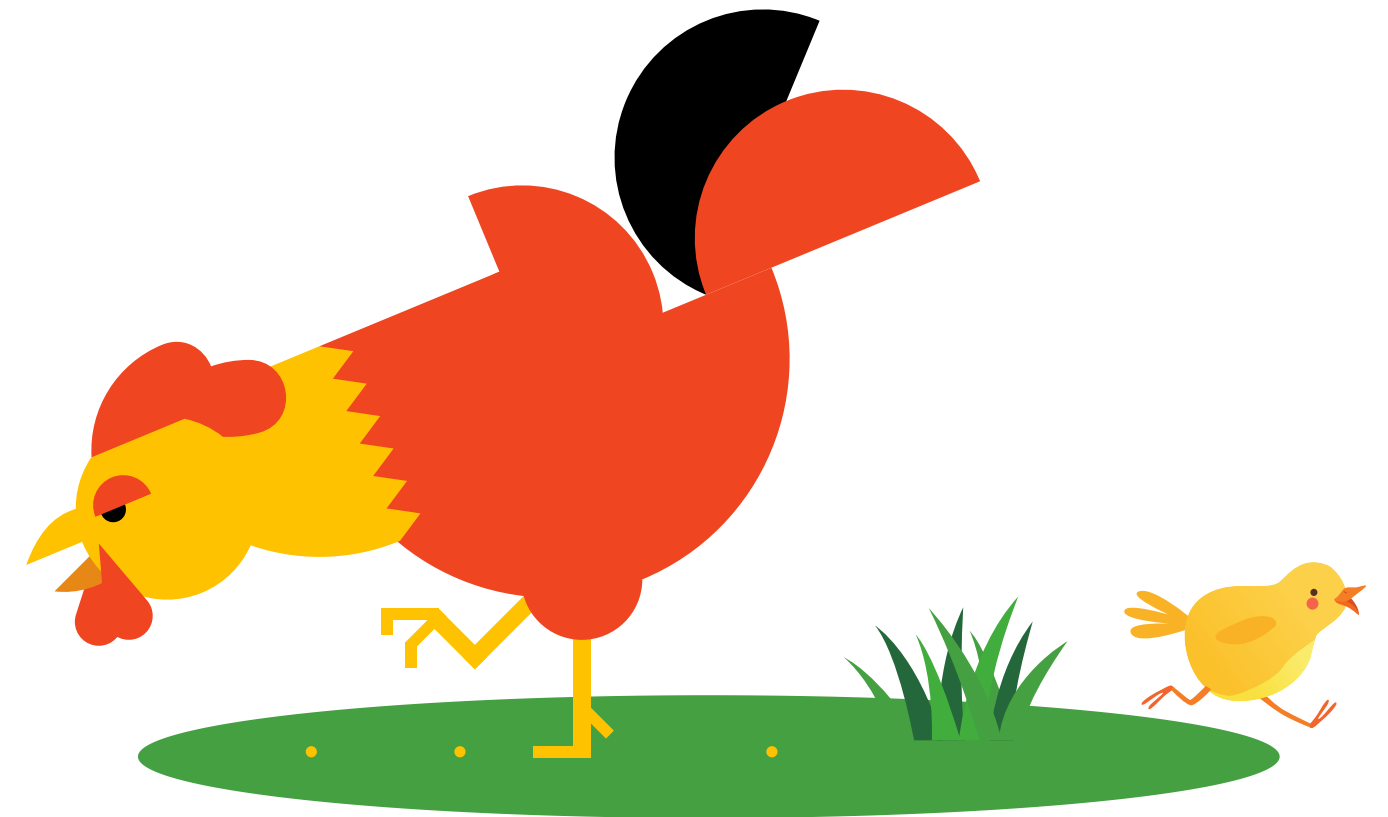
- Minimum 2-3 square feet per chicken in coop.
- Minimum 8-10 square feet per chicken in run.
- Nest boxes 12x12 inches.
 - 1 nest box per 4 birds.
- Roosts 18-24 inches from ground.
 - Highest perch point in coop.
- Easy access for both chickens and humans!



Yard Access

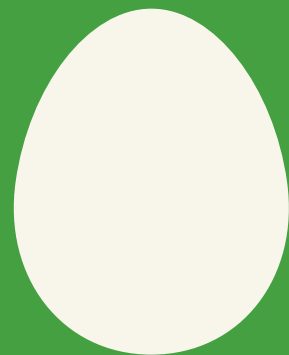
Consider if you want your chickens to stay in a designated run, have free range of your yard, or a combination. There are different ways your chickens can have access to space for foraging.

- "Victory Garden" Style
- Chicken Moat
- Chicken Tunnels
- Chicken Tractor
- Open Run vs. Closed Run
- Compost Pile in run



Predator Protection

The **KEY** to a successful backyard flock!



Consider the different predators in your area. Raccoons, possums, foxes, snakes, and even other pets can be predators, so ensure your chickens have a safe space.



Climate & Seasons

Ensure your flock is protected for different seasonal and weather changes. Consider:

- Moisture and rain
- Ventilation vs. drafts
- Fresh, dry bedding
- Shade





Recap: Shelter Checklist

No matter what type of shelter you choose, your chickens must have:



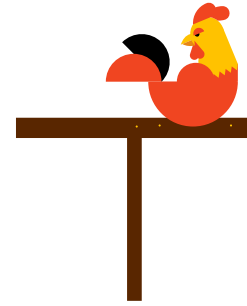
Predator Protection



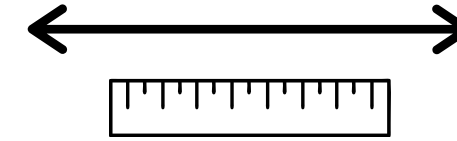
Ventillation



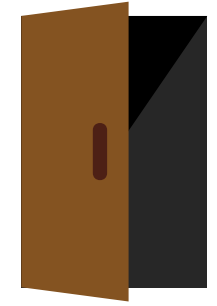
Nest Boxes



Roosts



Adequate Spacing



Access



Weather Protection

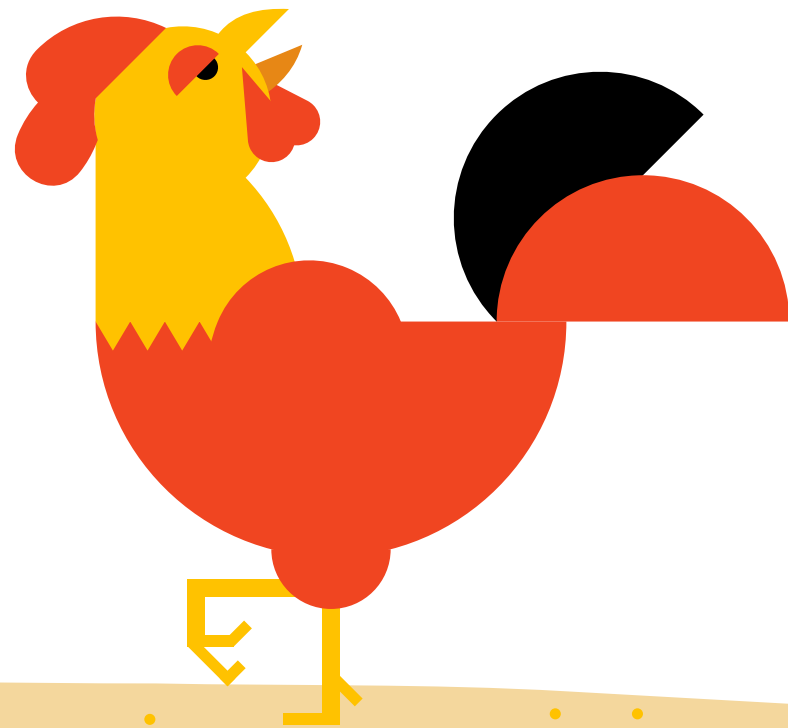


Ordinance Compliance

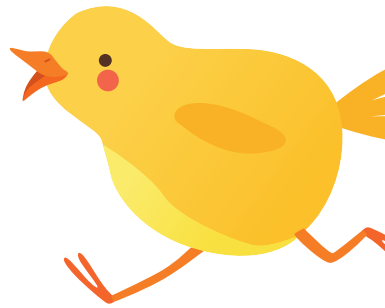


Health & Illness

Keeping your flock healthy.



Quick Guide: Chicken Health



Dust Baths

This is how chickens keep clean. Be sure your flock has access to fine sand, dirt, or peat moss for bathing.



Biosecurity

Practice good hygiene. Wash hands before and after handling chickens. Minimize coop visitors. Regular coop cleaning.



Clipping Wings

Optional to help keep birds safe in your yard, especially if you have a shorter fence. Clip only flight feathers, one or both sides.



Pecking Order

Birds peck one another to arrange social status in flock. Do not intervene unless blood is drawn or there is serious injury.

No Cause For Concern



Broody Hens

A hen who has decided to incubate eggs for hatching. If there is no rooster in flock, take steps towards "breaking" broody to ensure the health of hen.

Egg Laying Changes

Hens may stop laying during certain times in the year. Young layers = no shell or thin shells. Older layers = wrinkled, rough, or thin shells.

Molting

Normal feather loss for mature birds. This may occur every year, most often as daylight gets shorter.

Sick Chicken Guide

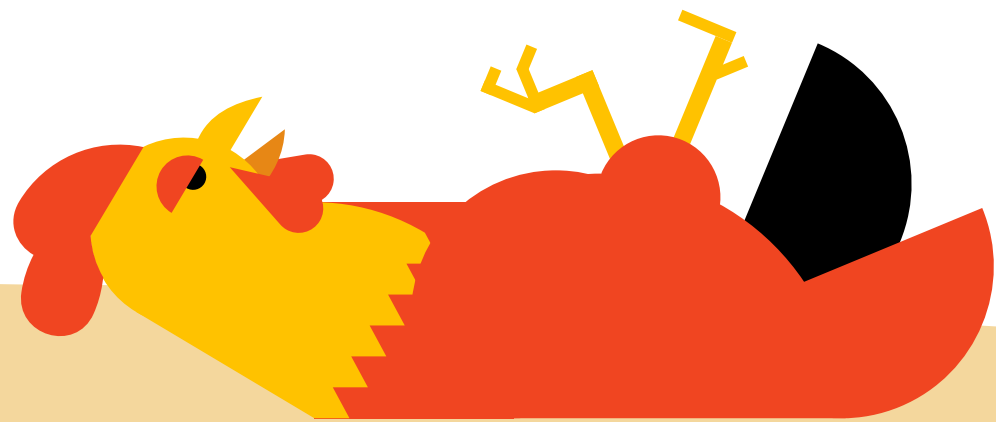
**Chickens don't get colds,
they get diseases.**

Chickens are hardy animals, but it's important to pay close attention to their normal habits and personalities. As prey animals, chickens hide signs of illness for as long as possible. This means if you notice something off, there could be something seriously wrong.



Sick Chicken Symptoms

These are some key symptoms of sick chickens to keep your eyes out for:



Lethargy

**Comb
Discolor**

**"Dirty
Pants"
(Diarrhea)**

**Stool
Discolor**

**Not
Eating or
Drinking**

**Crop
Issues**

**Fluffed Up
Hunched
Over**

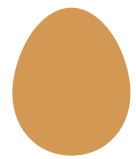
Puffy Face

Limping



Sick Chicken Resources

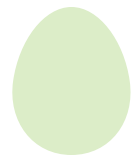
It's important to decide what you will do when and if your chickens get sick. Approaches to illness can range from paying for vet care to culling ill birds. You choose what is right for you and your flock.



Chicken First Aid Kit



**Chicken Keeping
Reference Books**



Online Forums



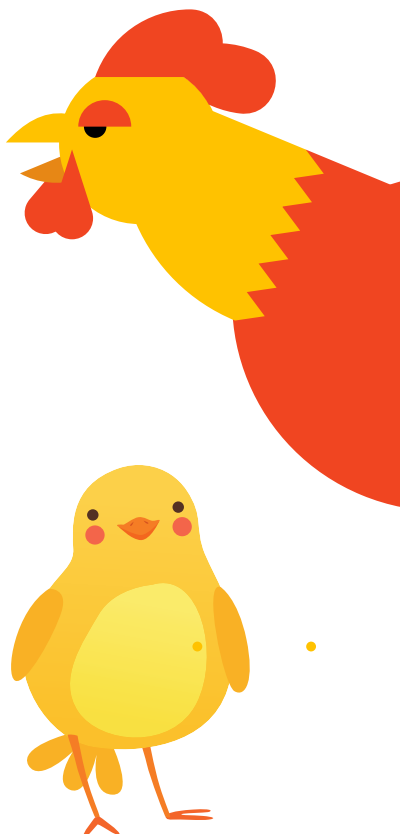
Feed Store- Livestock Advice



Bird or Livestock Veterinarian



Culling Sick Birds





Questions?

Contact Us

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