

# Keeping Chickens

(the basics for raising a healthy flock)

1. **Do** keep your *newly hatched chicks* under a red, non-ceramic, heat lamp that is **rated for animal use**. Use a heat bulb for only the first 6-8 weeks. **Do not use a white bulb.**
  - Older birds.** If there is light in the coop, keep food and water under it. Adult birds may have a 40w bulb (or less) for 14-16 hrs a day. **Do not use a heated bulb for older birds.**
2. **Do** provide fresh water and feed daily. **Do not give cold water to new chicks.**
3. **Do** use bedding; either white shavings or pine. Keep bedding clean and dry. **Do not use cedar.**
4. **Do** implement the appropriate treatment to guard against coccidiosis. (*Amprolium*)
5. **Do** follow USDA guidelines for introducing new birds to an existing flock by **keeping them separate for 4 weeks (all ages)**. Clean all equipment before using. **Do not mix chicks or mature birds together immediately.** *We do not recommend keeping baby chicks from different sources in the same brooder.*
6. **Do** provide grit daily. **Do not feed your birds grass clippings.**
7. **Do** keep feeding your chicks an appropriate, protein-based, "starter" feed up to 6-8 weeks. Then transition grower/developer feed until your birds start laying eggs. You will then transition to a layer feed. **Do feed your birds a quality poultry feed. (Follow directions on feed tags)** **Do not allow more than 10% of your birds' diet be in the form of treats!**
8. **Do** continue to give your birds an *Acidifier-Probiotic-Vitamin-Electrolyte Supplement* (Acid Pak, Chick Boost) every 7-10 days. During times of stress (ie moving, introducing new birds, extreme weather, illness) **do** give additional treatment per supplement instruction. **Do not let water run out or freeze!**
9. **Do check your birds for worms, mites and other parasites.**
10. **Do** continue to watch your birds for signs of illness ie:
  - Lethargy
  - Loss of color in comb
  - Fluffed feathers
  - Loss of appetite
  - Not drinking
  - Changes in social behavior
  - **Do not let a blocked vent (poopy butt) go unattended.**

Wash hands! Use caution when handling.

## Don't Kiss The Chicks!

We know they're cute. We know you love 'em

**Practice Poultry Safety!**

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