



Raising Laying Hens



Predator Apron

Supplies

- ❑ Secure Chicken Coop
- ❑ Bedding/Litter (e.g., pine shavings, shredded paper, sand, etc.)
- ❑ Feeder
- ❑ Waterer
- ❑ Layer Feed

Egg Care

- ❑ Hens will begin laying eggs when they are approximately 20 weeks old.
- ❑ Gather eggs daily.
- ❑ Eggs can be washed immediately or left unwashed for up to three months.
 - ▶ When hens lay eggs, the eggs are covered in a protective layer called a bloom.
 - ▶ To wash eggs, use lukewarm water and store them in a refrigerator.

Housing

Coop Requirements

- ❑ 3 sq ft of space per bird
- ❑ Absorbent clean litter: 3 to 4 inches to begin. During cold weather the litter can reach a depth of 8 to 10 inches. Add clean litter as needed to keep it as dry as possible.
- ❑ Adequate ventilation during hot weather
- ❑ One nesting box per hen to lay eggs
- ❑ A roost bar
 - ▶ A roost bar where chickens sleep is raised off the ground to provide security.
- ❑ Run Area
 - ▶ A run is a caged area that allows chickens access to sunlight, fresh air, and ground.
 - ▶ Each hen should have at least 8 square feet of room in the run.
- ❑ Predator Fences
 - ▶ It is recommended to cover the top and sides of the coop as well as add a predator apron to prevent animals from tunneling under the sidewalls.

Hen Care

- ❑ Wash hands before and after interacting with the hens.
- ❑ Feed
 - ▶ ¼ lb or 100 to 150 g of feed per bird per day
- ❑ Water
 - ▶ Daily access to fresh water
 - ▶ Approximately 1 to 2 cups per bird per day
- ❑ Place the feeder and water on blocks or suspend to help keep clean.
- ❑ Check around the perimeter of the run to ensure that it is predator proof.
 - ▶ Hens have the natural instinct to go inside at sunset.
- ❑ Clean the coop and provide fresh bedding weekly to help prevent illness.