



University of Connecticut
College of Agriculture and Natural Resources

Department of
Animal Science

SMALL POULTRY FLOCK OWNER CHECKLIST

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Selecting the bird:

- Type of poultry: Layer, meat type or show (ornamental)
- Purchase disease free stock (from NPIP source, Pullorum and AI free)
- Plan for all-in - all-out flocks

Before the birds arrive:

- Draft free coop or housing, cleaned and disinfected
- Brooder stove or heat lamp (red bulb type, if needed) set to 95°F for first week.
- Dry litter, (pine shavings preferred), 3-4 inches on clean floor.
- Roosts (use clean tree branches)
- Nest boxes (if needed) 1 for every 4-5 hens
- Feeders and Waterers, cleaned and disinfected
- Fresh Feed, appropriate for age and type of bird

When the birds arrive:

- Check for symptoms such as coughing, sneezing, watery eyes, labored breathing, diarrhea, or pasty butt. Check for external parasites
- Provide water for first couple of hours, then add feed. (if birds have been shipped overnight, then make a 5% sugar water solution for first day)
- Check waters, feeders, heat source, eliminate drafts, etc.
- Wild bird and rodent proof coop, set bait stations, traps, etc., as needed.
- Biosecurity - foot dips, clean shoes or boots, limit visitors and traffic, set up a quarantine area.

General Management:

- Check birds daily for signs of disease.
- If disease is suspected get a reliable diagnosis and treat as necessary.
- Cull very sick or injured birds, use proper disposal (burn or bury deep)
- Establish a regular de-worming program
- Keep litter clean and dry, replace wet litter. Do thorough clean out every six months including disinfection.
- Proper disposal of manure such as composting.

General Biosecurity/Sanitation Program for Poultry

- Do not expose your flock to birds from other flocks.
- Buy chicks from known sources.
- Buy chicks from pullorum-clean flocks.
- Keep young chicks away from older birds.
- Burn or bury dead birds.
- Allow no contaminated equipment to be brought on your premises.
- Keep visitors away from your poultry houses or ranges.
- Keep chickens that have left the premises from getting back into the flock.
- Dispose of sick chickens.
- Should disease appear, seek authoritative advice promptly.
- Use preventative and control medications with extreme caution.
- Treat droppings as potential disease spreaders.
- Try to eliminate rats, lice, and other pests.
- Handle vaccines properly. Follow the manufacturer's directions.
- Keep different species of fowl segregated.
- Do not sell birds known to be diseased.
- Clean poultry buildings carefully and thoroughly.
- Enforce a strict program of sanitation and quarantine.

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