

Popular Farming™ Series: Chickens

Preview Contents

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All About Chickens

Chickens are the icon of farming. The rooster's early morning call wakes the fields and the hens' soft "cluck-cluck" announces the arrival of a new egg. From farm-fresh eggs to nutritious meat to the joy of watching chicks hatch, chickens are undoubtedly a farm favorite. There are chicken breeds galore, so whether looking to add to a flock or start a new one, there are myriad poultry choices to strike your fancy. The Popular Farming Series: Chickens has everything you need to know to start raising chickens or to embark on a new adventure with your flock. With beautiful photos and in-depth articles, Chickens is a must for any poultry enthusiast's or small farmer's library.

What You'll Find

The Popular Farming™ Series is a collection of magabooks™ that covers farming topics of interest to small farmers today. The series is designed to provide valuable information to those who already have a small farm as well as those who are pondering the big move to the country. As an all-encompassing guide to raising poultry, you'll find helpful and interesting information about all aspects of chicken husbandry, breeds, hatching, daily chores, protection from predators, and even some advice on how to understand chicken behavior in "Chicken Psychology 101."

"When given the opportunity, chickens move around a great deal during the day. Scientists have put pedometers on hens to discover that they can walk and run close to a mile and a half a day, though it is usually all within a few hundred feet of their home turf or roost area. Although they are not great flight birds, chickens like to roost in high places and will fly onto a barn rafter or tree branch to sleep or rest." –Carol Ekarius

Hatch A Love for Chickens

One of the greatest joys of raising chickens is watching a chick break free of its egg and make its first "peep" in the outside world. For some, the wonder of hatching chicks never gets old. Popular Farming's Chickens issue gives you all the dirt on how to hatch your own chicks. From choosing a breed and a hatchery to caring for and incubating your eggs, Gail Damerow's article, "Crack Open the Joy of Hatching," uncovers what you need to know to experience the joy of hatching chickens.

"Hatching eggs may come from your own flock or they may be purchased from someone who keeps the breed you want. Buying hatching eggs is fun, but risky. The eggs may be too old to hatch. They may have been stored or handled improperly. They may not be fertile. Few sellers guarantee their eggs will hatch. Sometimes you can arrange with a breeder to share the hatch from eggs the breeder provides, giving you a good chance of getting quality hatching eggs plus an inexpensive start on your flock. Trying to hatch eggs purchased from a grocery store is nearly impossible. These often come from caged layers and therefore are not fertile; even if they are fertile, they are likely to have been stored at too low a temperature to remain hatchable." –Gail Damerow

How to...

Hatching chicks is not the only how-to information contained in the pages of Chickens. Get detailed plans on how to construct several different chicken coops that will protect your birds from predators, keeping them happy and healthy. Also, get a veterinarian's advice on how to recognize sick birds as well as how to treat and prevent illness in your flock in "Top 12 Chicken Ailments."

"An important step in prevention is to observe your chickens' health and interaction daily. When you become familiar with their healthy appearance and behavior, you'll be able to recognize quickly when something is wrong. In general, a sick chicken is less active, retracts its neck close to its body and has an unkempt appearance, but not all diseases have the same presentation. Keep in mind that diseases are caused by many different factors and organisms." –Dr. Jose A. Linares and Dr. John El-Attrache

Find out how to care for your flock, build your own coop and raise chickens organically, plus much, much more in

chickens.

A Little Chicken Fun

Sure there are chores to be done when you raise chickens, but there is also a lot of fun to be had and a number of ways to do it. Learn some tricks of the poultry-show trade to take your birds on the road to 4-H competitions, state fairs and other poultry exhibitions. After you're comfortable with raising chickens, why not try a little poultry breeding? Popular Farming's Chickens can give you the basics to get started. How about volunteering with your favorite hen as a therapy animal in a retirement home? And of course, all chicken connoisseurs love to find poultry collectibles, such as vintage photos, figurines, plates or crates. Discover the many ways to have fun with a favorite feathered friend.

There's a lot to know about chickens; and Popular Farming's Chickens is loaded with information from chicken lingo to breeder resources and associations to hatcheries and chicken supply houses—it's an essential resource for anyone interested in raising poultry.

Contents

Around the World in 80 Centuries

From India to the Plymouth Rock of America, learn a little chicken history.

By Pat McKnight

Chicken Breeds A to Z

Get a sample of the vast variety of chicken breeds.

By Maria del Carmen Martinez-Tennessee, PhD

Pickin' Chickens

Learn how to get started with chickens. From choosing the breed right for you to knowing the signs of a healthy bird, discover how to pick your chicks.

By Sue Weaver

Chicken Psychology 101

Why do chickens do what they do? Find out what chickens are really thinking about.

By Carol Ekarius

Crack Open the Joy of Hatching

Experience the awesome joy of hatching your own chicks.

By Gail Damerow

Resources

Check out these handy resources for everything from hatcheries to chicken supplies to help you raise your own flock.

Chicken Chores: The Daily Scratch

Caring for chickens is simple if you have the right set-up. Find out what you need to make your chicken chore routine easy.

By Cherie Langlois

Stop Thief!

Protect your flock from predators. These tips will help you keep your birds safe.

By Carol Ekarius

Coop du Jour

A secure chicken coop is essential to your bird's health. Check out these coop designs—they're sure to keep your birds happy and healthy.

By Autumn Foushée

Takin' Care of (a Poultry) Business

Get tips on how to turn your hobby into a successful poultry business.

By Matt John

Top 12 Chicken Ailments

Chickens are prone to a variety of diseases. Get a veterinarian's tips about how to prevent them in your flock.

By Jose A. Linares, DVM and John El-Attrache, PhD

Gone Organic

Many poultry raisers are taking the organic plunge. Find out what you need to do to raise organic chickens.

By Cherie Langlois

Chicken Fun

Discover all the fun you can have with your feathered friends!

By Autumn Foushée

Country Classics & Lighter Fare

Chickens provide us with healthy, delectable food. Savor these recipes that celebrate the bounty of chickens.

By Autumn Foushée

Glossary

Get the chicken lingo.

We Love Chickens Because...

They bring beauty, laughter, love and imagination to our lives.