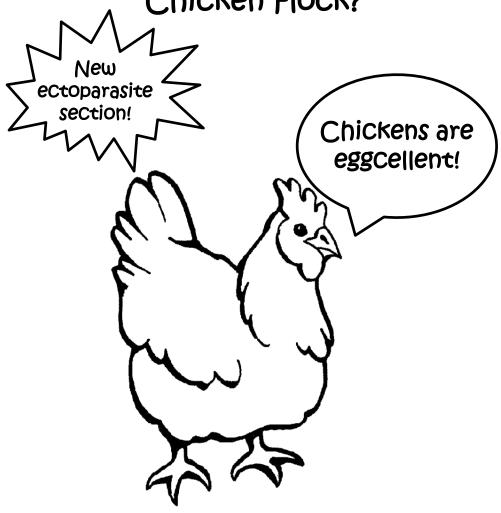
Building Your Own Backyard

Chicken Flock?



## 2016 Eggsercise Book!

**UC** Cooperative Extension

California Department of Food and Agriculture









## Meet Dr. Cluck

Hi I'm Dr. Cluck,
I'm a chicken veterinarian. I heard
someone say that you wanted some
backyard chickens. Well you came
to the right place. In this
eggsercise book, we'll discuss all
sorts of things including.



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Deep chicken thoughts: Chickens are fun, BUT please, please, please be responsible if you decide to raise them. Remember that if your chicken gets sick, she could spread her illness to other birds. Let's all do our part to keep all California chickens healthy!

1. Chicken giblets: How do you know the color of eggs that your chicken will lay?

Answer: By the color of their ears

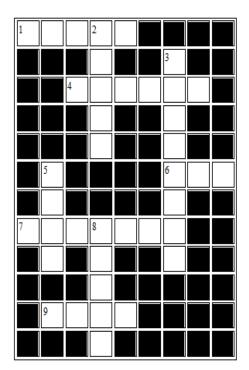
# Homework: Before buying chicks or chickens (aka don't count your chickens before they hatch)

- 1. First, find out if your city allows chickens.
- 2. Set up a prooder (home for the chicks).
- 3. Set up a coop and fence it off.
- 4. Purchase feed for chicks or chickens.
- 5. Have a secure storage container for the feed
- 6. Read as much as you can about chickens.



Note: Chickens are social butterflies, meaning they like to hang out with other chickens. So, if you want happy and healthy chickens make sure to buy more than one chick or chicken.

## Chickenword Puzzle



#### Across

- 1. Bunch of chickens
- 4. Name for a young female chicken
- 6. Name for a female chicken
- 7. Name for a male chicken
- 9. Part of an egg

#### Down

- 2. Chicken sound
- 3. All birds have
- 5. Where chickens live
- 8. The outside of an egg

## One more piece of homework...

Find a veterinarian who cares for chickens!



Not all veterinarians treat chickens! Plan ahead, find a veterinarian who routinely cares for chickens. Our UC Cooperative Extension Poultry website has a growing list of private veterinarians who treat poultry listed by county.

Some veterinarians specialize in birds. If you want an expert, ask if the veterinarian has the following credentials:

ACPV: American College of Poultry Veterinarians ABVP: American Board of Veterinary Practitioners, Certified in Avian Practice

\*\*Note: There is a shortage of veterinarians who specialize in poultry. If you like chickens, turkeys, and ducks AND you want to be a veterinarian, think about becoming a poultry veterinarian!

2. Chicken giblets: What does Alektorophobia mean?

## How to set-up and maintain a brooder

For the first 6-8 weeks of their lives, chicks need to live indoors (ex. your garage, laundry room or some other well-ventilated, temperature-controlled area).

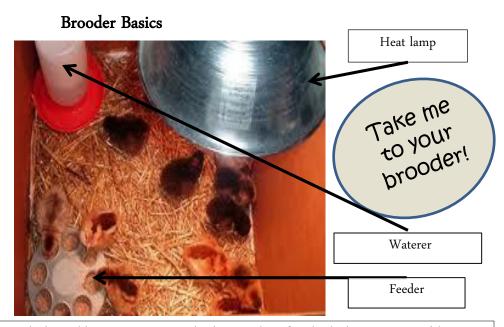
#### What is a brooder?

A brooder is a big box with minimum 18 inch sides, lined with 'litter' (wood shavings, straw, etc.). Change the litter frequently to reduce odor.

#### What is in a brooder?

- A heat source (usually a heat lamp)
- A water source
- 🥯 🗛 feeder with chick feed

Make sure pets and youngsters don't have access to the brooder area. The heat lamp is very hot! Work Carefully under adult supervision.



3. Chicken giblets: How many weeks does it take a female chick to mature and lay eggs?

Answer: Approximately 18-24 weeks

## How to set up a chicken coop

When the chicks are 6-8 weeks old, they are ready to live outside in a coop. A recent survey among chickens found out that 9 out of 10 happy chickens like a well designed coop and living area which contains:

Fencing – To prevent unwelcome visitors like rodents or other animals from getting in, and to make sure the chickens don't get out. Make sure there is fencing surrounding and covering the area where the chickens live.

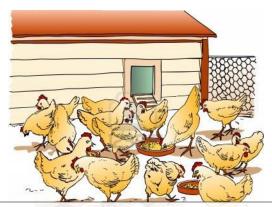
Shelter area - A shelter, such as a coop, protects chickens from extreme weather. Aside from shelter, chickens should have access to sun and shade in order to stay cool or keep warm depending on the weather.

**Nest box** - Inside the coop there should be a nest box where the hens typically lay their eggs.

**Scratch area** - Chickens like an area to peck and scratch with their feet.

**Perch** - Birds like an area to be off the ground to rest their 'bird brains.'

Feed and water area - Make sure there is enough room for all the birds to have access to both food and water.



4. Chicken giblets: Why don't eggs tell each other jokes?

Buy chicks from a hatchery, or a local feed store that buys chicks from a hatchery that is part of the National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP) or performs similar testing. This means they test the birds to make sure they are free of certain diseases.

Questions to ask yourself and the store before buying Chicks:

Rwall (bantams) or

Were the chicks Vaccinated against any diseases??? Chicken breeds?

How old are the chicks???

#### Popular Chicken Breeds

<u>Breed</u>

Cool Factoid

Ameraucana

Produce blue eggs

Australorp

Calm/docile

Leghorn

Economical eater

but Can be flighty

Rhode Island Red Ha

Hardy in heat and

cold



Yeah!!! The 'chick' is in the mail. Now lets talk about taking care of chicks...

5. Chicken giblets: How many different breeds of chickens are there?

Answer: Over 150

## How to take care of new chicks

Make sure the brooder is set up so the new chicks can be put right in the brooder.

Pave fresh water and clean chick feed available at all times.

Sash your hands with soap and water or use hand sanitizer before and after handling the birds.

🥯 Isolate (quarantine) any sick birds ASAP!

#### Unscramble the Scrambled Eggs 2. hne 3. KOY 1. geg Don't forget 5. lehls 4. htcah to name your **chickens!!!** 8. iecckhn 9. orcuibtna 7. aekb

10. ingsw



1.	7

(11. tapemertrue

8.\_\_\_\_

10.\_\_\_\_

12.

6. Chicken giblets: How many days does it take a chick to hatch?

6. oymrbe

12. izdeltirfe

## What to feed chickens

For the first 6-8 weeks, chicks in the brooder should be fed 'chick' feed, also called chick starter.

After 8 weeks of age, feed the chickens a standard layer 'Crumble' or 'pellet' feed.

As a treat, give chickens a small amount of chicken scratch (mixture of whole grains and cracked corn), but it should not replace their regular diet.

Keep your feed in a waterproof, secure container that won't attract other rodents and Vermin.

## Chicken Feeder



## Chicken Waterer



Always provide Clean fresh feed and water.

7. Chicken giblets: When are chickens more likely to lay eggs, as daylight increases or as daylight decreases?

Answer: As daylight increases

## What is biosecurity and why is it important?

Biosecurity - is any practice that reduces the risk of introducing disease to your flock or other flocks.

Basically, how we prevent chickens from getting 'cooties' (germs) and giving 'cooties' (germs) to other animals and humans.

Try thinking of your backyard flock as a farm...

Make sure you don't track germs between farms,
even if it's your neighbors 'farm'!

#### Sources of Disease

- Animals, both domestic and wild
- People
- Feed
- Water

Fomites: Objects, such as containers, shoes, tires, and tools that Can transmit germs



8. Chicken giblets: Why did the chicken cross the playground?

Answer: To get to the other slide

## Biosecurity for Backyard Chickens

How to keep your chickens healthy before they get sick

As my buddy Ben Franklin used to say "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. In other words **Biosecurity** is the best way to keep your birds healthy!!!



http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal\_health/birdbiosecurity/

## Here are some biosecurity tips:

Wash your hands with soap and water or use hand sanitizer before and after working with Chickens.

Use foot baths before entering and exiting the fenced off coop area. A foot bath is a container with an approved disinfectant to disinfect shoes. Make sure to maintain a clean footbath. Disinfectants don't work if the footbath is dirty!!!

...or have designated 'coop boots'. These will be the only shoes that go into your Chicken area, and they won't go anywhere else.

Don't allow wild animals to come in contact with your chickens!

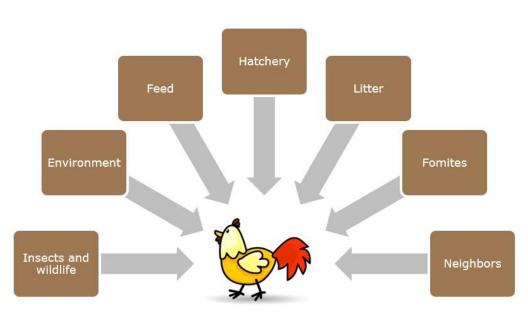
If you have a sick bird isolate it (quarantine) and contact a veterinarian (see page 12).

9. Chicken giblets: True or False: Chickens can get diseases from humans and humans can get diseases from chickens.

## It's dangerous out there!

It's dangerous out there. Viruses, bacteria, and parasites are all over the place.

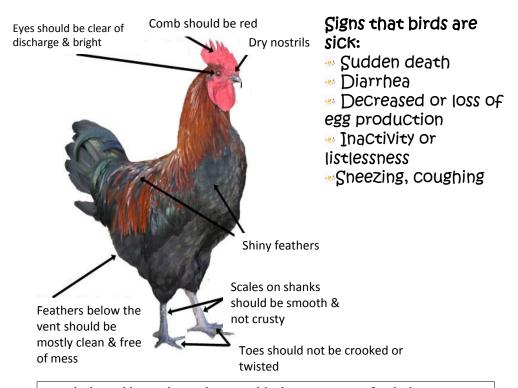
Are you practicing good biosecurity to prevent disease from entering your flock from these sources???



#### Who to contact about a sick bird

- Call your veterinarian (see page 3)
- Call the Sick Bird Hotline: 866-922-BIRD (2473)
- Call your local California Animal Health and Food Safety Lab (CAHFS). There are four laboratories in the state with veterinarians that are experts in diagnosing animal diseases (service may be free (page 33).
- Your local California Dept. of Food and Agriculture Office (CDFA): Offices throughout the state with Veterinarians who can help (page 33).

#### How to check the health of your bird



10. Chicken giblets: What is the normal body temperature of a chicken?

Answer: 102-103° F

## What diseases can my chicken get?

Too many to list. For purposes of this Eggsercise book we'll just focus on the biggies!



#### Common avian diseases:

- Marek's Disease
  - Avian Influenza
- Salmonellosis
- Newcastle Disease
- Avian Pox
- Infectious Bronchitis
- Necrotic Enteritis
- Coccidiosis

For purposes of public health, animal diseases can be broken down into 2 Categories:

**Zoonotic:** diseases that can be transferred to humans

Epizoonotic: diseases that can not be transferred to humans

Remember, regardless of the disease BIOSECURITY IS ESSENTIAL IN PROTECTING YOUR BIRDS AND YOUR FAMILY!

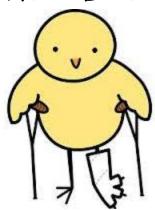






11. Chicken giblets: Chickens don't have teeth; the gizzard (formally known as the ventriculus) is used to grind up food in a similar way that teeth do.

# What diseases can my chicken get? Marek's Disease



- Marek's Disease (Caused by a virus)
  - Epizoonotic... What does that mean again??? (see page 13)
  - Most common disease of backyard birds
  - Transmitted primarily by feather 'dust'
  - Check to make sure your birds are vaccinated before you bring them home!
  - Signs: weakness or paralyzed birds

Good news! Marek's disease is almost 100% preventable if you:

Have your birds vaccinated against Marek's in the hatchery or at day 1 (ask your pet store or supplier of chicks if they vaccinate)

12. The town of Chicken, Alaska (population 7) was supposed to be named after a type of grouse, but the founders did not know how to spell it. Can you?

Answer: Ptarmigan

# What diseases can my chicken get? Avian Influenza



- Avian Influenza or "Bird Flu" (Caused by a virus)
  - There are many different types of Avian Influenza- some more serious than others.
  - All Chickens get very sick if they get it and it is often very contagious.
  - The United States of America has not had any types of Avian Influenza that has made people sick-but there is always a risk, so use proper biosecurity (what is this again? See page 9).
  - Wild birds are the biggest risk because they can Carry the Virus, but look completely healthy— so keep them away from your chickens!
  - Signs: depression, not eating, diarrhea, soft/misshaped eggs, mortality, or none.

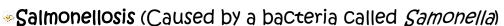
Do you think your chicken might have the flu? Call the Sick Bird Hotline at:

866-922-2473

14. Chicken Giblets: True or False: Birds are dinosaurs.

# What diseases can my chicken get? Salmonellosis

your chickens to other chickens and/or wild animals you increase the risk of Salmonella being transmitted to your chickens.



- There are many species of Salmonella bacteria that can live in your chickens
- Chickens can live without any signs of Salmonella, but people can get sick from coming into contact with it.
- Rodents can carry it and spread it to your birds.
- Signs: depression, not eating, diarrhea, lameness, mortality, or none.

Ever wonder if your chickens have pathogenic Salmonella? Contact your local CAHFS lab (page 33) to learn what you can do!

13. Chicken Giblets: What country has the highest egg consumption in the world?

# What diseases can my chicken get? Ectoparasites



What is an ectoparasite?

An animal that survives by feeding on or living on another animal without killing it. "ecto"=outside

Chicken Ectoparasites are insects or mites that uses chickens (not people) for food or shelter

There ar	e 2	main	types	Of	ecto	parasites
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On-Host

Off-Host

Live & feed on chicken Live in chicken house

Live in chicken house & feed on chicken

Northern Fowl Mite

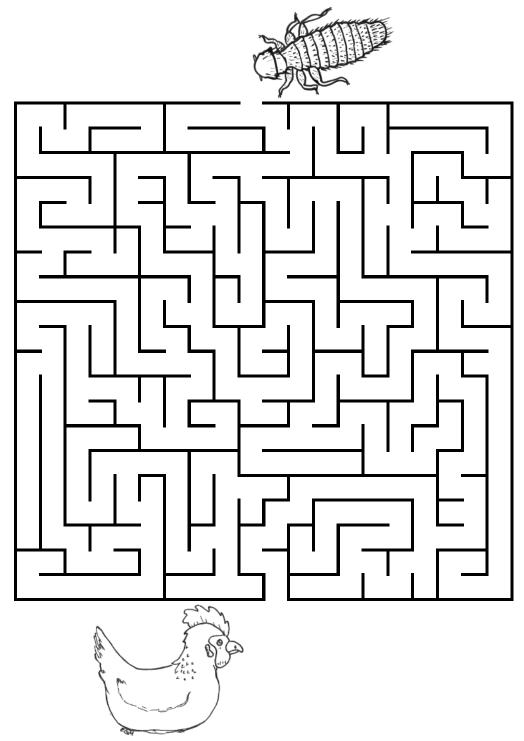
Chicken Red Mite

Lice

Bed bug

Sticktight Flea

Help the louse get to the host chicken!



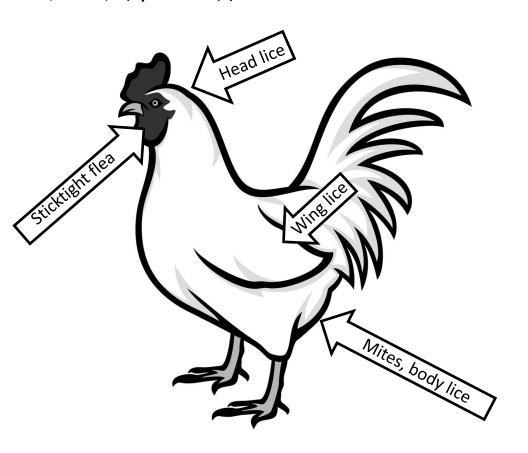
## **Ectoparasites**

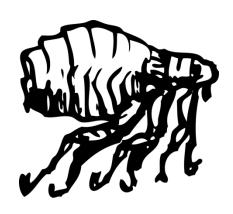
Where should you look for ectoparasites? Well, it depends!

Different lice are found on different chicken body parts. Most of them just feed on feathers, though some can blood feed.

The northern fowl mite is very common and is usually found in the vent. They feed on blood, lay their eggs, and develop in the feathers here.

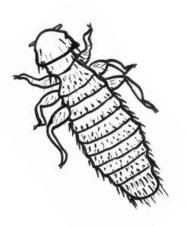
Sticktight fleas attach to the face of the chicken, where they feed on blood.

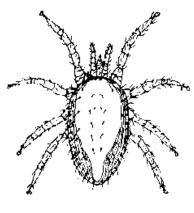




Sticktight flea adults live on Chickens, but the immatures (larvae) live in the bedding or litter of the hen's house. Clean this area regularly to help prevent fleas.

Chicken body lice and other lice species only live on chickens. Make sure you check new birds before introducing them to your flock!





Northern fowl mites and other mite species are found on lots of birds, and can be introduced to your chickens by wild birds and their nests. Keep your chickens away from these sources of contamination.

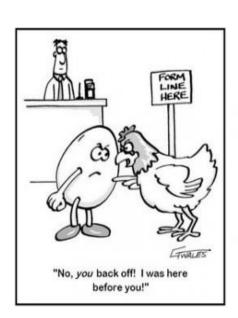
## Food Safety

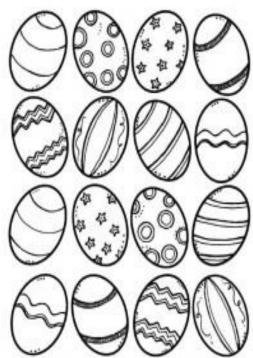
Like all foods, people can get food poisoning from eggs. Here are a couple of handy pointers for the safe handling of eggs:

Collection: Collect the eggs at least 2 times each day. Discard eggs with Cracks or holes.

Storage: Store eggs in a refrigerator at 35-40° F. Eggs that are properly refrigerated and handled can be stored and used for about 6 weeks.

**Preparation:** Cook eggs until yolks are firm and whites are 'set', and cook foods containing raw eggs to 160° F.





15. Chicken giblets: How often, in hours, does an average hen lay an egg?

Answer: Every 26 hours

# Lead (Pb) poisoning in chickens and the risk to humans consuming their eggs

#### Lead in the Environment

- Mining, refining, and lead pellets have resulted in increased lead levels in the environment.
- Lead particles can attach to dust, be carried long distances in the air, and deposit on surface soil where they can remain for many years.

#### Threat to Chickens

- Chickens can ingest Pb directly from pellets and fishing weights, or indirectly from the environment/soil.
- Pb particles can dissolve in the digestive tract and get into the blood, and build up in your chickens liver/kidneys. If Pb levels gets too high in a bird, it may lead to sudden death.



Get the Pb out!!! And consider calling CAHFS about Pb testing (pg. 33).

16. Chicken giblets: On which side does the chicken have the most feathers?

Answer: On the OUTSIDE!

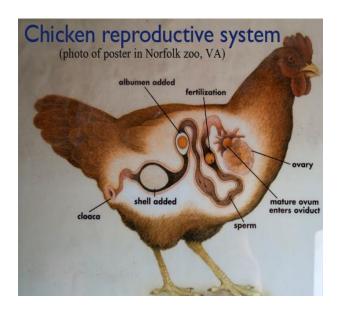
## Anatomy of a chicken:

## Where does the golden egg come from???

... I don't know, but here's where the eggs we eat come from...



Hens (female chickens) lay eggs with or without the presence of a rooster (male chicken). That's good to know since roosters are illegal to keep in many communities.



17. Chicken giblets: How big is a chickens bladder?

Answer: Trick question, chickens don't have bladders

## Eggnatomy of an egg

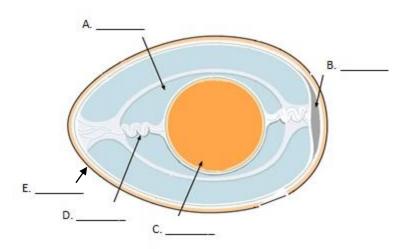
Structure	Why do developing chicks need it?	Why do we like it?
Egg yolk	Important source of nutrition for the developing chick	Gives baked goods a smooth and creamy structure
Egg white	Helps protect the developing chick	Essential for a good soufflé!
Shell	Helps protect the developing chick while allowing for exchange of oxygen and carbon dioxide	Good for composting
Chalaza	Holds the yolk centered in the egg	Looks like a bungee cord
Air Sac	Source of air for chick	Size indicates the age of the egg (older eggs have larger air sacs)

# Helpful Tidbits (How do I get more eggs from my hen?)

Healthy hens produce eggs while stressed and sick hens do not. So, keep hens healthy and keep them in a comfortable, Calm environment.

Broody' hens (hens that sit on their eggs for long periods of time) stop laying eggs. To prevent this behavior, remove the eggs from the nest box at least twice daily.

# Based on what you just read, identify the following parts of an egg



Extra credit: About \_\_\_\_\_ million laying hens produce some \_\_\_\_\_ billion eggs each year in the United States

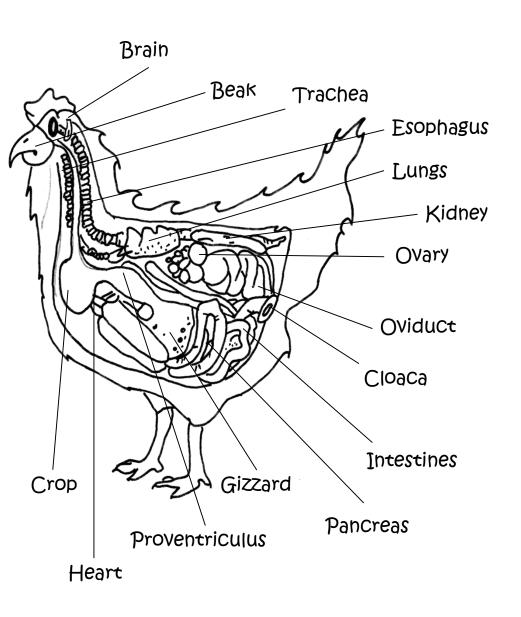
18. Chicken giblets: What are a male and female chicken called?

E. Shell

Answers: **Chicken giblet:** Rooster and hen. **Extra Credit**: 240 million hens and 50 billion eggs. **Matching:** A. egg white B. Air sac C. Yolk D. Chalaza

## Color my Parts

Then look at the next page to see what they do!!!



# These are the Functions of my Parts

BEAK: Picks up food, secretes saliva, moistens food since chickens don't have teeth to chew

**ESOPHAGUS**: Carries food from the beak to the crop

CROP: Stores food and water before it's goes to the proventriculus

PROVENTRICULUS: I'm where digestion begins

GIZZARD: Grinds food traveling from the proventriculus

LUNGS: Connected to the trachea and bring oxygen to the blood

INTESTINES: Completes digestion and nutrient absorption

**HEART:** Pumps blood and supplies oxygen to the muscles

22. Chicken giblets: Which of the 8 different "parts" are present in poultry and not humans? (Hint: there are four of them!)

Answer: Beak, Crop, Proventriculus, Gizzard

## Composting Waste

- Hens produce around ¼ lb of poop a day!!! That's a lot of chicken poop or 'black gold' for your garden if composted correctly!
- IF managed correctly the birds can compost the manure using their natural scratching behavior
- Make sure you have a carbon rich litter substrate such as straw or rice hulls where the birds live.
- IF you also garden, consider collecting the litter and composting the litter-manure mix.

## Types of composters





19. Chicken giblets: Why did the chicken cross the basketball court?

Answer: She heard the referee calling fowls!

## Be A Good Neighbor...

Every city has different rules for Backyard chickens. Here are some basic rules of comb:



- House your chickens in a clean and sanitary home.
- IF at all possible keep the enclosure at least 20 feet away from neighboring residences.

Understand and follow your local ordinances

Fun eggzperiments
Look on the next page
for some fun experiments
you can do with your
eggs! Make sure to get
permission before starting
any experiments!

20. Chicken giblets: What day of the week do chickens dis-like the most?

YAQ-Y87: r9wsnA

## Fun eggzperiments

Eggzperiment # 1: Spinning Eggs You need: four raw eggs, a pot and a bowl.

- 1. Boil two eggs in water for 10 minutes until they are hardboiled.
- 2. Cool the eggs under water and Chill in the refrigerator.
- 3. Spin the hardboiled eggs and then try spinning some raw eggs.



21. Chicken giblets: Which egg continues spinning after you stop spinning it and which one does not? Why do you think that's so?

attached to the shell.

Answer: The raw egg still spins because the liquid inside keeps turning since it is not

Eggzperiment # 2: Squishy Egg You need: one raw egg, vinegar and a large jar or lidded Container.

 Put a raw egg (in its shell) into the jar and cover it completely with Vinegar.

- 2. Wait two days, then drain off the vinegar.
- 3. When you touch the egg it will feel rubbery. Be careful not to break the egg membrane. Wash your hands after you touch the egg, since it is still raw.
  - 22. Chicken giblets: Why is the egg squishy?

Answer: Vinegar, an acid, dissolves calcium in the eggshell. You are 'squishing' the thin flexible membrane just under the shell.

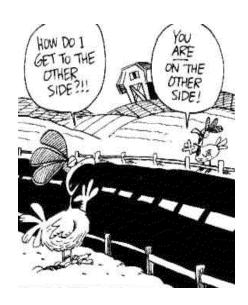


## Tidbits for Chicken Giblets

Brown egg or White eggs? As chicken giblet #1 states, we can figure out the color of the eggs the hen will produce based upon the hen's ear color. However, there are no nutritional differences between brown eggs and white eggs.

When will my hens start producing eggs? As chicken giblet #3 states, most hens become sexually mature and begin laying eggs between 18-24 weeks of age. However, most chickens lay eggs as daylight increases (see chicken giblet #7). In addition, certain breeds are more sensitive to light than other breeds. Consequently, it may take longer depending on the season and the breed for a hen to start laying eggs. Reading and practical experience are the best way to figure this out!

All birds including chickens have no bladder (Chicken giblet #17). This keeps them light which makes flying easier. Note: Most bird bones are hollow (pneumatic) for the same reason.



2	-
3	Z

Want a chance to have your art on our website? Draw your best chicken picture in the space above OR on a separate 8 ½" by 11" sheet of paper and mail it to the address below.

Want a Chance to have your bird photos featured in the CDFA Avian Health Calendar? Submit your best photos of birds (any kind) to the address below (more details on the CDFA website).

California Department of Food and Agriculture Animal Health and Food Safety Services Animal Health Branch Attn: Felicia De La Torre 1220 N Street Sacramento, CA 95814 (916) 900-5002

http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/ahfss/Animal Health/Avian Health Program.html

## Other Resources

Don't be a bird brain! Read and learn as much as you can!



#### Getting started and general information:

http://www.citygirlfarming.com/Chickens/GettingStartedChickens.html http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/ahfss/Animal\_Health/Avian\_Health\_Program.html

#### Coop and brooder information:

www.feathersite.com

#### Biosecurity information:

http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal\_health/birdbiosecurity/

#### Food safety information:

http://www.cdc.gov/Features/SalmonellaEggs/

http://www.foodsafety.wisc.edu/assets/pdf\_Files/Egg\_Safety\_and\_the\_Backyard\_Flock.pdf

#### Contacts if you have sick birds:

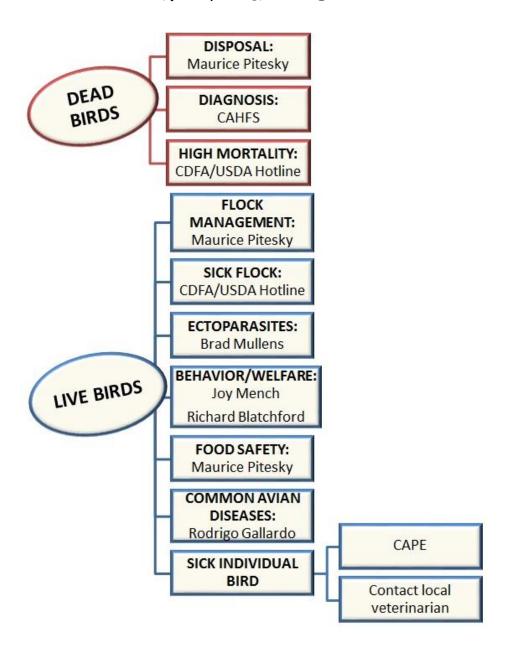
#### CDFA:

http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/ahfss/Animal\_Health/Avian\_Health\_Program. html or call the Sick Bird Hotline at 866-922-2473

CAHFS: http://cahfs.ucdavis.edu/contact/index.cfm (or call: 530-752-8700).

You can also email questions to Dr. Cluck at: mepitesky@ucdavis.edu

#### Who You Gonna Call?



For specific contact information go to: http://ucanr.edu/sites/poultry/contact/

## Chicken Skool!

Come join me and other bird brains at our next chicken skool. See below for all the details.



#### Let's talk AND learn Chicken.

UC Davis periodically hosts different types of "chicken skool" for vets and other interested parties. Go to <a href="https://www.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/CE">www.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/CE</a> for more information.



Center for Continuing Professional Education

# Interested in learning more about what University of California is doing with regards to poultry?

Sign up for our quarterly newsletter

# "Poultry Ponderings"





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#### Acknowledgements

Our flock of writers includes in no particular pecking order:

Evan Adler, Myrna Cadena, Jenna Celigja, Felicia De La Torre, Nancy Levine-Sinai, Asli Mete, Amy Murillo, Maurice Pitesky and Dennis Wilson

## THIS IS THE BACK OF THE ORIGAMI CHICKEN

