

Exciting Eggs

Farmers raise chickens to provide **eggs** or **meat**. Female chickens are called **hens**. Male chickens are called **roosters**. Roosters have larger combs and wattles than hens and their feathers are more colorful.



A female chicken that is raised for laying eggs is called a **laying hen**. Hens can lay an egg every 24-26 hours. The hen must sit on that egg for about 21 days if it's to hatch. The color of an eggshell depends on the breed of hen. Hens with white earlobes lay white eggs. Hens with red earlobes lay brown eggs. Rhode Island Reds and Plymouth Rock chickens lay brown eggs. White Leghorns and Brown Leghorns lay white eggs.

Chickens raised for their meat are called **broilers** or **fryers**. The meat from these chickens provides chicken patties, chicken nuggets, and whole roasting chickens.

Chickens eat chicken feed. The main ingredients are corn, wheat, sorghum, or another grain. Vitamins and protein supplements, such as soybean meal, are added to their feed. The types of supplements and the amount of feed depend on the type of chicken the farmer is raising. **Broilers** eat one pound of feed each week, but **laying hens** eat four pounds of feed for every dozen eggs they lay.

Today, Americans eat more than 80 pounds of chicken per person per year! In 1960, it was less than 30 pounds. Chicken is a delicious, low-fat source of protein for healthy diets. How do you like to eat your chicken?



The Bouncing Egg



Materials: One hard cooked egg, white vinegar, and a clear container or jar with a lid

1. Without breaking the shell, examine the hard-cooked egg carefully. Record your observations.
2. Place the egg in the container. Cover it with the vinegar. Place the lid on the container. Predict what will happen in one hour, one day and one week. Record your prediction.
3. Observe the egg at the designated times. Record your observations.
4. At the end of one week, rinse and dry the egg. Drop it. What happens?
5. What amazed you most as you did this experiment?





Career Corner

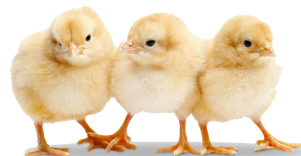
Poultry House Manager - Poultry House Managers watch over chickens that are living in poultry houses. They oversee daily activities such as feeding and watering as well as delivery/pick-up of the birds that are ready for processing.

How Poultry House Managers Benefit Agriculture:

- Grow healthy chickens safe for eating
- Provide safety/health checks for chickens

Poultry House Managers Study:

- Agribusiness
- Biology



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Farm Facts

- About 240 million laying hens produce about five-and-a-half billion dozen eggs per year.
- Pennsylvania is the 4th top producer of eggs and is 8th in turkey production nationally.
- Most eggs produced today will be at the grocery store within 72 hours.



What Do You Remember?

1. How long does a hen have to sit on her egg for a chick to hatch?

2. Male chickens are called what? _____
3. The color of the eggshell is a result of what?

4. According to the text, which type of chicken eats more feed per week? _____
5. If you had a chicken operation, what type of chicken would you raise? How many would you have? Why? Support your answer with evidence from the text.
