



Star Milling Co.®



## POULTRY CARE



### Who is Star Milling Company?

Star Milling Company is a local family-owned company in Southern California. We are proud to be a Certified Safe Feed/Safe Food Facility. All ingredients are sourced from the U.S.A. and Canada, not from China. The owner of Star Milling and his family have been raising commercial poultry and in egg production for nearly 80 years and feed Kelley's products to their own birds.

### Terms you need to know

A **flock** is a "bunch" of chickens. A **pullet** is a female under one year old and a **cockerel** is a male under one year old. A **hen** is a female over one year and a **rooster** is a male over 1 year.

### Feed program for maximum health and egg production

Feed Kelley's Chick Starter Mash until 8 weeks of age. Then feed Kelley's Grow Mash until they are 18 weeks old, or if they have started laying eggs. Then it's time to switch to Kelley's All Purpose Lay feeds. Adult hens eat approximately ¼ pound of feed per day.

- You do not have to use a different feed for the roosters housed with your hens.
- Feed chicken scratch only as an occasional treat. It is low in protein without the vitamins or minerals your hens need to reach their laying potential.
- Do not feed moldy or wet feed.

### Poultry Management

**IMPORTANCE OF WATER:** Chickens must have water to digest their feed properly. Chickens drink water in small increments, frequently throughout the day.

A chicken is more than 70% water and a large chicken will drink 1 to 2 cups a day, depending on the weather. Hens that do not get enough water will not lay properly because eggs are 65% water.

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## Tips For Healthy Chickens:

1. Do not house new chickens in facilities previously used by another flock until the facilities have been thoroughly cleaned and disinfected.
2. Never mix chicks or growing birds with adults.
3. If you must mix birds of another flock with your existing flock, quarantine the new birds for a few weeks to ensure they are disease free.
4. Avoid exposing your flock to wild birds and vermin.
5. Provide spacious coops with adequate ventilation.
6. Isolate sick birds from the rest of your flock.
7. Vaccinate against disease common to your area.
8. Do not indiscriminately administer antibiotics as a preventative health care practice.
9. Chickens are susceptible to worms and should be routinely de-wormed
10. Bring any health concerns to the attention of your veterinarian.

**HEAT:** The temperature should be around 90-95 degrees the first week your chicks are home, reduced about 5 degrees every week until they're feathered. A good source of heat is a 250-watt bulb. Red bulbs are better than white because they cause less picking. Place the bulb 18 inches from the floor. The temperature directly under the bulb will be higher than 90 degrees but the birds will adjust themselves to the area they like. Make sure that the enclosure is big enough to allow the birds to get away from the heat if they need to.

**PICKING:** Birds that pick at each other are probably too hot, too crowded, or need fresh air.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **My hen has laid eggs and is setting the nest, why don't I have any baby chicks?**

Your hen can lay eggs without the help from a rooster, but you'll need a rooster to fertilize the eggs to get baby chicks. Chicks are hatched about 21 days after the eggs are set.

### **Why are they so noisy in the morning?**

It's natural for hens to "sound off and cluck" after laying an egg.

### **Why has my hen lost her feathers?**

Hen's feathers fall out and new ones grow (called molting) once a year in fall.

### **When will my hen start laying eggs?**

Pullets will generally start laying eggs at 6 months old. Experts say a chicken is in their prime from 1 to 2 years old and 4 to 5-year-old chickens are considered old. You will receive eggs out of a 5-year-old hen. If a pullet reaches maturity during the winter months, it is possible she will not lay until the weather warms up.

### **Why did my hen stop laying eggs?**

Hens stop laying for various reasons, many of which are not cause for concern. Moving hens to an unfamiliar location, changing the feed or feeding routine, or extreme and sudden weather changes in temperature can cause temporary interruption in laying. Hens also stop laying during the molt, as they need all of their energy to make new feathers. Some breeds will start back laying immediately after a molt and others won't start laying until spring. It is irregular, however, for a laying hen to stop during the period of mild weather between spring and mid-fall.

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