



Star Milling Co.®



POULTRY CARE



Your Chickens are in Good Hands

Ace Hi Feeds are made by Star Milling Co., a family-run company known throughout the Western US for its poultry feed. We are avid chicken-keepers ourselves and offer a personal commitment that only quality ingredients go into our feeds. Star Milling Co. is proud to have a medication/drug-free facility that does not blend antibiotics, anthelmintics, ionophores, or coccidiostats into any of the feeds it produces.

Terms to Know

- 🦆 Flock – a group of chickens
- 🦆 Pullet – a female chicken under 1 year old
- 🦆 Hen – a female chicken over 1 year old
- 🦆 Cockerel – a male chicken under 1 year old
- 🦆 Rooster – a male chicken over 1 year old
- 🦆 Molting – the natural shedding of old feathers and growth of new ones
- 🦆 Broody – describes a hen that is determined to sit on a nest and hatch eggs



Feeding for Health and Egg Production

Choose a complete feed that is specifically formulated for your chickens' ages and nutrient requirements. This will be Ace Hi Chick Starter, Grow Mash, Starter/Grow Crumble, or Big Feeder Lay Feeds, depending on the life stage of your birds. View the Ace Hi Poultry Product Sheet at starmilling.com for a guide on which feed is appropriate for your birds' life stage.

- 🦆 Roosters can eat the same feed as hens.
- 🦆 Ace Hi Scratch is intended to be fed as an occasional treat. Scratch is a simple blend of grains, and does not contain the protein, vitamins, and minerals your hens need to reach their egg laying potential.
- 🦆 Do not feed moldy or wet feed.

Fresh, clean water should be available at all times. Chickens require water to properly digest their feed. They drink small amounts of water frequently throughout the day. If deprived of water, chickens will easily become dehydrated.

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More Tips for Healthy Chickens

1. Provide spacious coops with adequate ventilation.
2. Do not house new chickens in facilities previously used by another flock until the facilities have been thoroughly cleaned and disinfected. If you must mix new birds in with your existing flock, quarantine the new birds for a few weeks to ensure they are free of diseases.
3. Do not mix chicks or growing birds with adult birds.
4. Vaccinate against diseases common to your area, practice regular routine de-worming, and avoid exposing your flock to wild birds and vermin. If a bird becomes sick, isolate it from the rest of the flock.
5. Do not indiscriminately administer antibiotics as a preventative health care practice. Bring any health concerns to the attention of your veterinarian.

Frequently Asked Questions

Are my chicks boys or girls?

Newly hatched chicks all look the same, so how can you tell which are male and which are female? Chicks that come from large hatcheries will most likely be female because they hire specialists who can identify the subtle differences in males and females when chicks first hatch. However, they can't be 100% correct all the time! For those of us not trained in those arts, we will begin to see distinguishing characteristics around 3 to 10 weeks of age.

When will my hens start laying eggs?

Pullets will generally start laying eggs at 6 months old. If a pullet reaches maturity during the winter months, she may not start laying eggs until the following spring. Experts say a hen is in her prime from 1 to 2 years old, but older hens will still lay plenty of eggs.

My hen laid eggs and is sitting on the nest. Why don't I have baby chicks?

Your hens will lay eggs without the presence of a rooster, but a rooster is required to fertilize eggs. Only fertilized eggs have the potential to be incubated and develop into baby chicks. What are the differences between the two? Not much. You won't notice any difference at all when gathering, storing, or eating eggs. Fertilized eggs and unfertilized eggs look and taste exactly the same, and have the same nutritional value. The only difference is that if you incubate a fertilized egg for at least 24 hours, a chick will begin to develop. And if you incubate it for 21 days, you'll have a tiny new beak to feed!

Why did my hens stop laying eggs?

Hens stop laying eggs for various reasons, many of which are not cause for concern. Moving to an unfamiliar location, changes in feed or feeding routine, or sudden changes in weather or temperature can all cause temporary interruption in laying. A hen's laying cycle will naturally slow down or even stop during the winter months with less daylight. During this time period, she will also experience a molt. Once spring arrives, hens will get right back to their regular laying routine.

Why has my hen lost all her feathers?

In fall or winter, as daylight decreases, it is natural for chickens to shed their old feathers and grow new ones. This process is called molting. During a molt, hens will typically not lay eggs, as their bodies are using all energy and resources for the growth of new feathers. This process also makes chickens very sensitive to the touch, and being handled can be painful. It is best to let them be until they have fully replaced their feathers.

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