

Maungatapere School
RAISING CHICKENS – FACT SHEET

To be eligible for Agricultural Day your chick must be hatched on or after July 1st. If you are raising a chick for the chicken section, the following information may be of assistance to you.

Your Chick Will Need:

- Chick starter feed
- Shallow water dish
- Lamp or hanging light bulb (100w) over a box or fish-bin
- Newspaper

Housing:

You will have to provide a dry, draft free area, which can be cleaned easily.

For the first few weeks, you will have to keep them in an old cardboard box or fish bin indoors. By using newspaper as a floor or a cardboard box, you can simply throw it out and replace it with clean sheets of paper or a fresh box.

They will need a lamp for warmth. Make sure it is secure so it cannot burn the chicks or start a fire. How long you keep them under the lamp will depend on how many chicks you have and what the weather is doing.

They will need access to fresh chick starter feed and clean water throughout the day.

As the chicks grow, they will enjoy being put outside to have a scratch around. Be sure that they are safe from prey (including pet cats and dogs). As they get bigger you can leave them in a sheltered place in a rabbit/guinea pig run with a house for shade and warmth during the day, bring them in at night.

By about 8 weeks the chicks should be in a run with a draft free chook house. Once they are outside overnight, don't bring them back in.

If you are putting them into an existing chicken run with other older chooks, never add a single bird. One bird will be picked on by the others and probably killed. It is better to add a number of new birds together. Or put them in a smaller cage within the chicken coop overnight to let them get used to each other.

Feeding should be little but frequent. In the first few weeks, feed your chick starter pellets or mash. After about 4 weeks you can add pellets or wheat to their diet and feed them 3-4 times a day. Put a large rock in the water container so it can't be tipped over and also the chick can't fall in and drown.

Agricultural Day Judging

On Ag Day, you will be judged on Best Pet Farm Bird, Best Reared Farm Bird and Knowledge.

Best Pet Farm Bird: The friendliest and easily handled. This can be accomplished by handling the bird as much as possible. A chicken will happily sit on your lap for long periods.

Best Reared Farm Bird: Farm birds are judged on general condition.

Knowledge: The judge will also ask the child questions regarding their farm bird, these will be dependent on the child's age.

This information has been compiled from reliable sources; however, we recommend you seek expert advice about any aspect of chicken rearing that you are not familiar with.

Maungatapere Transport, Farmlands, Farm Source and your local vet are good sources of information.