



Brooding and Space Requirements for Poultry

Fact Sheet No. 2.502

Livestock Series | Health

by H. L. Enos*

Brooding Temperatures

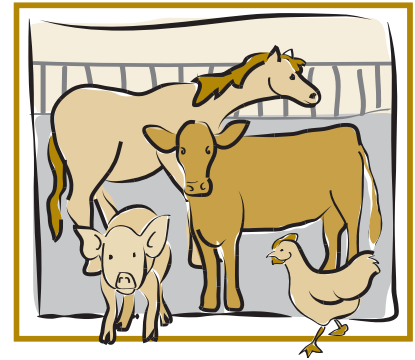
Proper conditions are necessary for baby poultry changes during the first weeks of life. Ensure baby poultry are dry and bedding materials are not wet. Hypothermia due to wet conditions is one of the most common causes of baby poultry deaths in small farms. Poultry flock owners should strive to follow the suggested temperatures in the chart below by regulating heat in the brooding unit. The temperatures should be measured at the outer edge of the hover (a canopy type brooding unit/lamp) 4 to 6 inches (10.2 to 15.2 centimeters) above the floor. Room temperature should not be over 75°F (23.9°C) during the first few weeks. It is advisable to keep room temperature in the correct range to encourage rapid feathering of the chicks. If weather conditions change outside of the brooding unit, attend quickly to temperatures to see if adjustments need to be made.

Age	Brooding Temperature
0 to 1 week	93° to 95°F (33.9° to 35°C)
1 to 2 weeks	88° to 90°F (31.1° to 32.2°C)
2 to 3 weeks	83° to 85°F (28.3° to 29.4°C)
3 to 4 weeks	78° to 80°F (25.6° to 26.7°C)
4 to 5 weeks	75°F (23.9°C)
5 to 6 weeks	70°F (21.1°C)
6 weeks and over	Comfort Zone 50° to 70°F (10° to 21.1°C)

Space Requirements for Poultry

Chickens Per Bird

	Weeks of Age	Square feet* of space		Linear inches* of trough/100 birds	
		Floor	Cage	Feeder	Waterer
Brooding	0-4	1/2	1/2	1 1/2	24
Growing	4-12	1	3/4	2 1/2	48
Roasters	8-12	2	1	2 1/2	48
	12-16	2	1	3	48
Replacements	8-12	2	1	3	48
	12-21	2 1/2 - 3	1	4	60
Layers					
Leghorn type	21+	2 1/2 - 3	1	4	60
Dual-purpose	21+	3 - 3 1/2	1	4	60



Quick Facts

- Proper brooding temperatures are necessary for chicks to be healthy and to rapidly feather. The brooder temperature will decrease with each week of age.
- All poultry requires a minimum amount of square feet in coops, runs and cages that increases with age to maintain health and to prevent social problems. They also require a certain amount of space at feeders and waterers.

©Colorado State University Extension. 8/79. Revised 10/18.

extension.colostate.edu



*H. L. Enos, CSU extension associate professor poultry science (revised 8/1/79)

Robin Young, Archuleta County Director; Travis Hoesli, Grand County Director; Todd Hagenbuch, Agriculture Agent Routt County; Sharon Bokan, Small Acreage Coordinator Boulder County (Revised 10/18).

		Size of cage (inches)* W X D X H	Birds per cage (Number)
Typical laying cages (dependent on breed)	21+	9 X 14 X 18	1
		18 X 14 X 18	2
		32 X 30 X 18	3 - 5

Turkeys
Per Bird

	Weeks of Age	Square feet* of space		Linear inches* of trough/100 birds	
		Floor	Cage	Feeder	Waterer
Brooding					
Small type	0-8	1	--	1 1/2	30
Grow-out	8-18	2 1/2	--	3	60
Brooding					
Large type	0-8	1	--	2	30
Grow-out	8-18	2 1/2	--	3	60
Finishing					
Hens	16-20	3	--	4	80
Toms	16-24	5	--	4	80

Exterior Yards/Runs		
		Sq. Ft.
Chickens	Mature	10
Turkeys	Mature	20

*To convert to metrics, use these equivalents – 1 square foot = .083 square meter; 1 inch = 2.54 centimeters.