Beneficial Poultry Topics

Some of the topics you will find on the University of Maryland’s Extension Poultry website (www.extension.umd.edu/poultry) to aid in your Small Flock Production include the following:

- Basic Small Flock Management
  - Before Starting a Flock
  - Buying Birds
  - Raising Young Birds
  - Recordkeeping
  - Disposal of Dead Birds

- Raising Your Home Chicken Flock
  - Why Have a Small Flock
  - Before You Plan a Flock

- Housing Your Small Flock
  - Construction - General Requirements
  - Free Ranging Birds

- Diseases

- Small Flock Nutrition

- Cracking Open the Egg
  - Selling Eggs - Rules and Regs.
  - Synopsis of Maryland Egg Law

- Home Processing

(Please Note: Maryland requires all poultry flocks to be registered. Check local, county, state, and even federal zoning and environmental regulations as some may prohibit poultry flocks in your area. Talk with your county Extension office or representatives of government agencies for information when planning a flock.)

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The University of Maryland Extension has produced a new weather resistant **Biosecurity Area** sign for chicken growers to post at the entrances of their properties to discourage unwelcomed visitors. University of Maryland Extension Poultry Specialist, Jon Moyle, developed the sign along with DPI President, Jenny Rhodes, in her capacity as the Queen Anne’s County Agricultural Educator. Please contact either of them to get signs. Jon Moyle at 410-749-6141 or jmoyle@umd.edu and Jenny Rhodes at 410-758-0166 or jrhodes@umd.edu

**Trivia**

- Poultry is the largest animal and agricultural industry in Maryland, with over $1.7 billion in total output, almost 7,000 individuals employed, and $500 million in value added.
- Approximately 36% of Maryland’s cash farm income was from meat chickens in 2011.
- Maryland ranks 8th among the states in chicken production.
- Urban poultry is becoming extremely popular. More and more city ordinances are being changed to allow for back yard flocks.
- The direct ancestor of the domestic chicken is believed to be the Red Jungle fowl, which is a tropical member of the Pheasant family.
- Chickens are subject to parasites including lice, mites, ticks, fleas and intestinal worms.
- Bird Flu is a virus known as Avian Influenza.
- Roosters are not necessary for hens to produce eggs.
- “Which came first, the chicken or the egg?” Recent studies show that the chicken came first, because of the methodology of evolution. An egg cannot occur unless a chicken is able to lay that egg.
- 8 billion - Number of chickens consumed in the United States each year.
- 21 - Days required for chicks to hatch from eggs
- 28 - Days required for ducks and turkeys to hatch from eggs.

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**In Your Back Yard**

Interested in owning a small flock? Do you already have a small flock? Raising a backyard flock can be very rewarding for the entire family. There is an activity for every member of the family to participate in when raising poultry. Small flock owners raise birds for several different reasons.

- Meat
- Shows & exhibitions
- Eggs
- 4-H
- Game birds
- Business
- Pets
- Poultry clubs
- Fun!