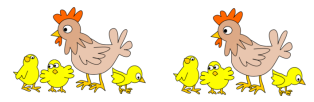


CHICKENS



Preparing Your Chicken for Calf Club Day.

You are going to take home a baby chicken that is less than one week old (from school it is only one day old). It is covered with fluffy down. Very quickly you will see your chicken grow and change, if you feed it regularly and look after it carefully. They will arrive at school on Monday 3rd July 2017.

On the day of your chicken arriving you need to bring a named shoe box or similar with some hay / shredded paper and some breathing holes poked in it to school.

IMPRINTING IS VERY IMPORTANT - newly hatched chickens tend to follow the first large moving object they see after hatching. In the natural situation, the big moving thing would be the mother hen, but young chicks will imprint on almost anything, colour and shape do not appear to matter. The chickens form a lasting attachment for this object (or person.)

Imprinting should be carried out in the first day of the chicken hatching. It works best if carried out between 6 and 18 hours and if the object (person) makes a sound while moving away from the chicken that the chicken relates to and then the chicken will follow this sound..

The sensitive period for imprinting is over in about 36 hours. So it important for your child to do this the night the chickens arrive at your home. After this the chicken cannot be imprinted.

ADOPT A CHICKEN

1. Have each child adopt their chicken after receiving it.
2. Children should name their chickens,
3. The chicken should be allowed to spend time with its adopted parents each day.
4. Each child is to put his/her chicken down on the floor and allow it to run around and investigate as follows -



*Emphasise the importance of children washing their hands after handling their chickens because it is important to wash **after handling any pet.***

HOUSING

How to Make a Brooder



Until your chicken is about 4 weeks old, it has to be kept warm in a brooder. The light should be kept on at night and during the day too. If the weather is warm the light can be turned off during the day providing the brooder is kept in a warm place until the chickens get their feathers. It is also beneficial to have more than one chicken for warmth and company.

The light provides heat for the chickens. They will come close to it when they are cool and move away when they are hot. If they huddle near the light you may need to add a second one for added warmth or increase the wattage of the bulb or increase the insulation of the box.

Both the crumpled newspaper and the external box provide insulation so that the temperature inside the brooder does not fluctuate with the outside temperature.

The straw or hay also provides extra warmth for the chicks and allows for easy cleaning of the brooder.

A thermometer could be used to check that the temperature is correct and stable.

At 33 degrees C to start with reducing to 15 degrees C.

To make a brooder you will need -

- ◆ A carton or polystyrene box about 30 cm x 24 cm x 24 cm high. This can be enlarged to a bigger box as the chickens grow.
- ◆ A light bulb with a flex and plug (an old bedroom lamp is ideal) with a 60 or 40 watt bulb, and later a 25 watt.

The brooder should contain:

- ◆ A heavy water container, not too big as the chicken could drown.
- ◆ A food container. This could be a dish or jar lid.



Cleaning the brooder

A layer of wood shavings, or dry sand can be used and changed every two days. However you can use newspaper instead but this most likely will need to be changed morning and evening.

Remember to wash your hands after cleaning the chicken's brooder.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO PURCHASE A BROODER PLEASE SEE GARY AT SCHOOL TO DISCUSS THIS

WHAT TO DO WITH YOUR CHICKEN

Make sure it has food and water available all the time.

Chicken crumbs are designed to be a complete food for chickens. This crumble or crumbs can be obtained from Hammer Hardware or R D 1. Introduce chopped grass after a week. Handle it **carefully**. It can be killed with rough handling. Make sure you don't drop it. Keep the brooder, and later the cage **clean**.

If the weather is warm, take your chicken outside on the grass for half an hour (longer as the chicken grows). You can make a pen to protect it from cats or dogs or have a cage that it will use later when it is bigger

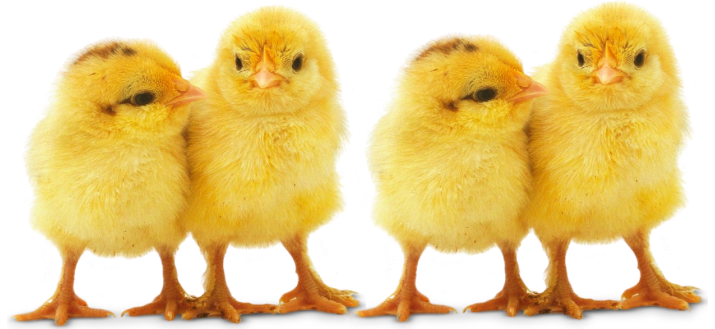


DIARY

NOTE: ALL children having Chickens must complete a written diary on how you raised, fed & looked after your chicken etc. including photos. These must be completed and handed in on Monday 25th September, last Monday of Term 3 for judging so it can be back by Thursday for Calf Club display. Some copies of last year's diaries can be viewed at the library to give you some ideas. Diaries must be of a high quality and are worth points which go toward the overall chicken winner. Diaries can be done in a clearfile or just a standard exercise book.

Observe your chicken

- How does it eat?
- How does it drink?
- How does it behave outside on the grass?
- Listen to the different sounds it makes.
- What are its eyes like?
- What are its feet like?
- What happens to the yellow down?
- What colour are the feathers?
- What do the new feathers feel like?
- What grows on its head?



Draw your chicken showing the changes in your Diary.

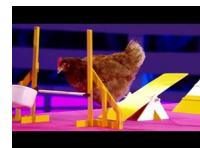
Weigh and measure your chicken each week and keep a record in your diary of all your findings.

JUDGING

Chickens are judged in five sections:

1. Child/Chicken relationship – this is how your child relates to its chicken
2. Rearing – the health and looks of your chicken
3. Calling – you will be asked to call your chicken to you but you **CAN NOT use food to encourage it.**
4. Trick – children will be asked to do a trick with their chicken (e.g. jumping over something, acting dead, sit on the child's head and turning around or whatever else they may think of that is clever. **YOU CAN NOT use food to help encourage your chicken with the trick**
5. Diary – children must complete a diary about raising their chicken. This must be of high standard and include everything the child does with their chicken! **Diaries must be handed in by Monday 25th September to be eligible to win trophies. Children who do NOT complete a diary will lose points which goes towards the trophy for overall best chicken.**

For new students, examples can be viewed at the Library.



Suggestions for Training

- ◆ Initially, train your chicken to come to you for food, when called.
- ◆ Continue to practise calling your chicken without food, as you will not be allowed to encourage your chicken with food at Calf Club.
- ◆ Your chicken should come straight to you when called and you should not have to grab or chase it.

