

ON ARRIVAL OF YOUR CHICKS

Thank you for ordering your chicks from the Marlborough Boys and Girls Agricultural Club. At this stage they are arriving 5th September and will be picked up by your school representative



who will have contacted you regarding pick up. To help you prepare for your chick's arrival here are a few suggestions.

Chicks must be kept warm! This is the most important thing. Chicks will not start to feed if they are cold. The best method of keeping them warm is to use a 40-60W lightbulb suspended over a suitable box about 30cm above the chicks. A wheat bag or hot water bottle under a towel also helps keep the chicks warm. By the fire in a secure box is great, however, unless you can keep your fire going all night it may not be suitable as fluctuations in temperature can be dangerous to chicks. If a chick chirps loudly in the first week or two it normally means they are cold. Please remember these chicks have had a big 24hrs....hatching, getting vaccinated, then two plane trips so they will need warmth and quiet to recuperate.

On arrival: Introduce to a warm, draught free spot. Your box doesn't need to be huge but remember it needs to be secure and dry. **Dip your chicks beak into some fresh water on arrival.** They will need 24 hr access to fresh water in a suitable container. At this age a shallow dish is needed so they don't drown. A jam jar lid (or a couple) is fine or a shallow dish with a stone in it so they don't tip it over. Do not offer food until they have had a drink.

Fresh food: Fresh food should be available at all times. The most suitable food at this stage is chick crumble which has all the vitamins chicks need. This is available at Kiwi Seed on Old Renwick Road, Farmlands and PGG Wrightson. Rolled oats and a hard boiled egg finely chopped is okay as an alternative from time to time.

Secure cage: All I need to say is that cats and dogs love chicks!

It is really important that their living area is clean at all times. Some people use shredded paper, wood chips or sawdust. Whatever you use, keep the living area dry so the chicks don't get wet feathers. The first 48 hrs are vital-please keep handling to a minimum and leave the chicks time to settle in.

Your school will have access to chicken diaries which must be taken to Pets Day, Group Day and the Marlborough A+P (which we hope you will attend!). This diary plays a major part in the judging. Please encourage all children to write in it regardless of age. If they are young just a few words/thoughts every now and again or maybe write the odd bit for them. We love pictures and photos too. Don't leave it till the night before which always ends in tears (both kids and parents). The holidays are a great time to start, although weights will need to start to be recorded on arrival.

Happy chicken growing!

Regards,

MBGAC committee.