



## KNOW YOUR HENS

- Egg laying breeds of chickens typically begin laying eggs around 20 weeks of age.
- A good goal for first year laying hens is four eggs per week per hen.
- As your hens age, their nutrition requirements change.  
*Tip: switch to layer feed at 20 weeks of age.*

## CARING FOR YOUR FLOCK

- Clean, fresh feed and water should always be provided.
- Waterers and feeders should be kept clean.
- Nest boxes may be introduced at 17 weeks of age to help encourage hens to lay eggs in these clean spaces.
- Collect the eggs at least once a day, more often in hot weather.
- Control rodents, flies and beetles around your hens.
- Keep your coop's bedding and nest boxes dry.
- Change and refresh your hens' bedding weekly.  
*Tip: dedicate one pair of shoes for this task.*

## CLEANLINESS

- Do not use eggs that are excessively dirty.
- Wash all eggs before they are put in the refrigerator.  
*Tip: use a brush and water that is warmer than the egg.*
- Always wash your hands before and after you interact with your hens! Salmonella, a bacteria that can make people sick, can spread from your hens and their eggs to you.



## GET INVOLVED

- Michigan State University (MSU) Extension has many hands-on opportunities for youth (5-19 yrs. old) to learn more about poultry through 4-H.
- Contact your local MSU Extension office to find out about programs in your area. Visit [4h.msue.msu.edu](http://4h.msue.msu.edu) to explore opportunities, [msue.anr.msu.edu/county](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/county) to find your county office or call 888-678-3464.
- Sign-up for the MSU Extension Poultry Newsletter to get poultry-related news and events delivered right to your inbox. To subscribe, text "MSUE" to 22828 or visit [msue.msu.edu](http://msue.msu.edu) and click on "Newsletter Sign-Up."

## RESOURCES

- Small and Backyard Flock Resources:  
**[articles.extension.org/poultry](http://articles.extension.org/poultry)**
- Michigan State University Extension:  
**888-678-3464**  
**[msue.anr.msu.edu/topic/info/poultry](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/topic/info/poultry)**  
**[msue.anr.msu.edu/program/info/4h\\_poultry](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/program/info/4h_poultry)**
- Michigan Dept. of Agriculture and Rural Development:  
**800-292-3939**  
**[www.michigan.gov/aviandiseases](http://www.michigan.gov/aviandiseases)**