

Caring for Chickens in Spring



The Spring Cluckletter

A Seasonal Guide for Our Feathered Friends



Spring is in the air, and that means it's time to start thinking about baby chicks! If you've ever dreamed of having your own backyard flock, now is the perfect time to get started.

Why Spring is the Best Time to Get Chicks

- **Warmer weather:** Chicks are delicate creatures and need to be kept warm and dry. Spring provides the perfect conditions for them to thrive.
- **Longer days:** More daylight hours mean more time for your chicks to eat, grow, and explore.
- **Stronger chicks:** Chicks hatched in the spring are generally healthier and more robust than those hatched in other seasons.

What You Need to Prepare:

Before you bring your new chicks home, you'll need to make sure you have everything they need to be happy and healthy. Here's a checklist:

- **Brooder:** A brooder is a warm, safe space for your chicks to live in until they are old enough to move outside. You can use a cardboard box, plastic tub, or even a spare room.
- **Heat lamp:** Chicks need a heat lamp to stay warm, especially in the early weeks.
- **Bedding:** Pine shavings, straw, or newspaper make great bedding for your brooder.
- **Feeder and waterer:** You'll need a feeder and waterer that are designed for chicks.

- **Chick feed:** Make sure you get a chick feed that is appropriate for the age of your chicks.
- **Grit:** Grit helps chicks digest their food.
- **Gravel:** Gravel is used to make a run for your chicks.
- **Coop:** Once your chicks are old enough to move outside, they'll need a coop to live in.
- **Run:** A run is an enclosed outdoor space where your chickens can roam and get some exercise.

Suggested Books

- "The Chicken Chick's Guide to Backyard Chickens" by Kathy Shea-Smith
- "Storey's Guide to Raising Chickens" by Gail Damerow
- "The Backyard Chicken Keeper's Bible" by Andy Sharpe

Example Coop with Eight Chickens

- **Coop:** 8' x 8' coop with a run
- **Cost:** \$1,000 - \$3,000 (depending on materials and labor)
- **Tractor supply coops** are also a source to look at the wide range of coops.

Cost to Own Eight Chickens

- Chicks: \$50 - \$100
 - Feed: \$50 - \$100 per month
 - Bedding: \$20 - \$40 per month
 - Grit: \$10 - \$20 per month
 - Gravel: \$50 - \$100
 - Heat lamp: \$30 - \$50 (not for coop)
 - Electricity: \$10 - \$20 per month
 - Veterinary care: \$50 - \$100 per year
- Total cost: \$1,310 - \$3,610 (first year)**

Tips for Raising Chicks

- Keep them warm and dry.
- Provide them with fresh food and water.
- Give them plenty of space to roam.
- Protect them from predators is a must
- Be patient and enjoy the process!
- Know what to do if you accidentally get a Roo! Ask if they can be returned or find a place to rehome. No Roos are permitted.

Sources

- "Getting Ready for Spring Chicks" by Backyard Poultry
- "Best Time of Year/Month to Get Chicks?" by BackYard Chickens
- "Fall in Love with Spring Chicks" by Miller Manufacturing Company

Conclusion

Raising chicks is a fun and rewarding experience. With a little preparation, you can have a flock of happy and healthy chickens in no time. Please remember that you will need to obtain a license to have a backyard flock and attend a class.

Call to Action

If you're ready to get started, contact your local hatchery or farm supply store to order your chicks today! We also have recommendations for local chicken tenders (☺) for a place to get high-quality chicks.

I hope this newsletter is helpful. Please know if you have any questions or would like to discuss getting started. Reach out to us to help.

Thank you!

Lynn

