



Basic Care for your Chicks, Turkey Poults, Pullets, Ducklings and Goslings

The following are simple, step by step, instructions that SHUR-GAIN recommends for starting and growing meat type poultry and pullets successfully.

Starting Materials:

- 1 water fountain of 5 litre capacity for every 25 chicks, poults, ducklings or goslings.
- Feeders – 1 metre of feeder space per 75 chicks or poults, 1 meter per 50 ducklings or goslings.
- Heat Lamps – 1 per 50 chicks or 1 per 40 poults and 1 per 30 ducklings or goslings.
- Litter (bedding) – wood shavings, chopped straw or sawdust are best.

Brooding:

1. At least 2 days before the newly hatched birds arrive, clean and disinfect the floor and walls of the pen (Contact your local SHUR-GAIN Dealer for available cleaning and disinfectant products.)
2. Spread the litter 7 cm (about 3") thick throughout the pen. It is a good practice to fill the waterers before the poultry arrive so the water will be at room temperature. **Stress-Aid™** should be added to the drinking water for the first 5 days to aid the young birds through the stress of brooding.
3. Confine the young birds to a circular brooding area using a brooder guard. This will prevent the birds from huddling and smothering each other. It will also confine the birds to the heat source, water and feed. The guard ring should be large enough to allow three feet of space between the ring and the outer edge of the brooder.
4. Start the poultry in a warm pen. The temperature should be 32°C at bird level for the first week. Use a heat lamp 50 cm (20") above the birds. Decrease the temperature 3°C per week until the birds are feathered. After that, ensure that the temperature does not drop below 20°C. Adjust the temperature by raising the heat lamps.
5. Use a SHUR-GAIN Homestead starter feed that is recommended for the type of poultry being grown. It is a good practice to provide additional feed in egg trays to make it easy for the young birds to locate feed and begin eating. A typical layout for brooding is shown.
6. Provide 2.5m² of area per 100 chicks, 75 poults or 50 ducklings/goslings. Begin to increase the pen area by moving the chick guard after one week. If the birds crowd to one side of the pen, there is a draft. If the birds are huddled all along the chick guard, the pen is too hot, so raise the heat lamps. If the birds are huddled below the heat lamps, the brooding area is too cold, so lower the heat lamps slightly or add more lamps. Ideally, the birds should be spread evenly throughout the pen.
7. Coccidiosis is a common parasitic disease that can have devastating effects on a poultry flock. The mortality resulting from a coccidiosis outbreak can reach 90% in a young flock, so it is strongly recommended to feed young birds a feed containing an anticoccidial medication. SHUR-GAIN chicken starting feeds are medicated to prevent coccidiosis. Birds will develop a natural immunity to coccidiosis and thus medicated feeds are no longer required after 10 weeks of age.

