

POULTRY MANUAL

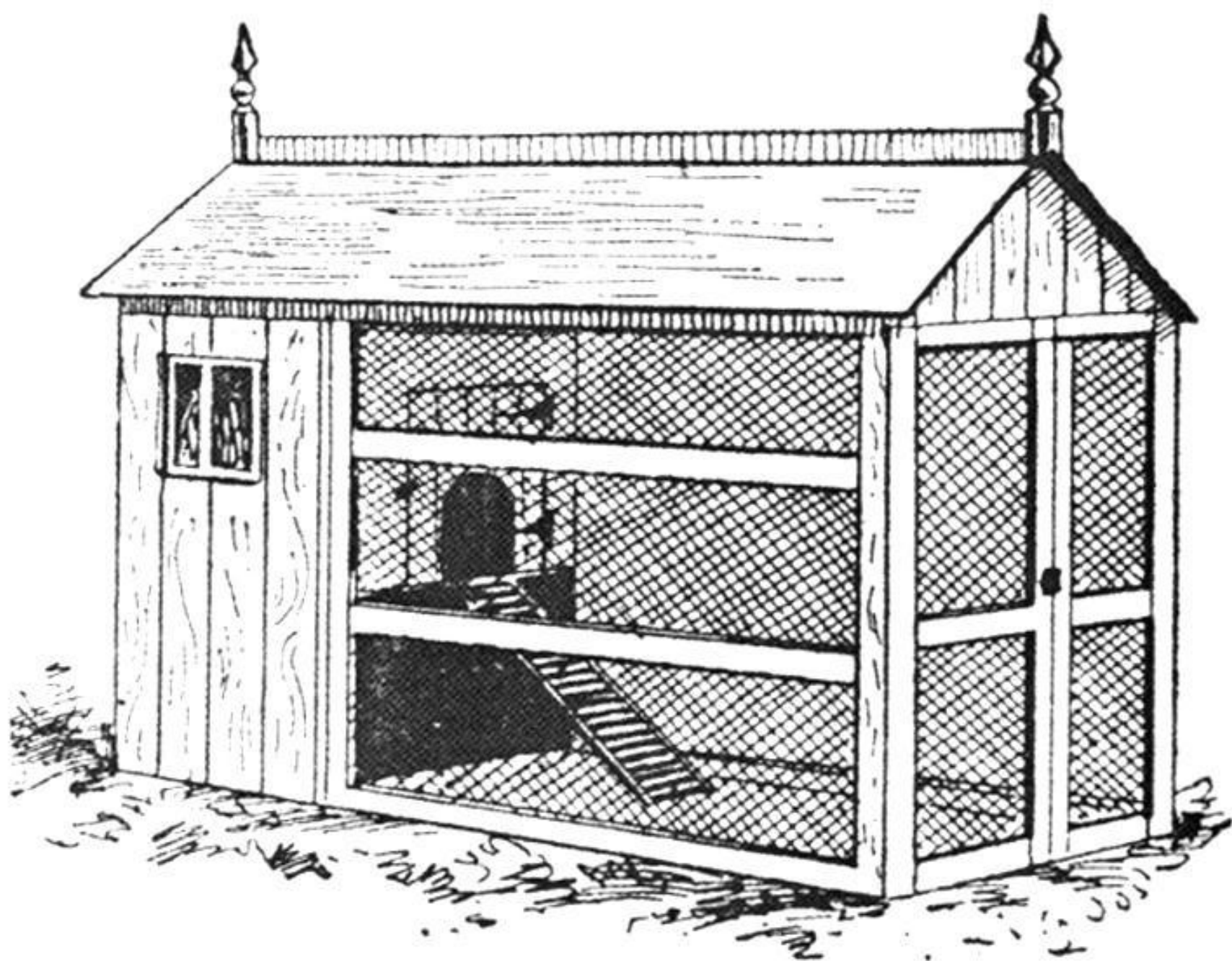
NHFI



BUILDING

- » Supply a building that will provide a mature bird 2 sq. ft. of floor space per bird.
- » 60 chickens require a 10 x 12 building.
- » Well built with no cracks or holes.
- » Windows with screen to keep bugs out and for ventilation.
- » Chicken wire for predators and birds.
- » Rodent and dog proof.
- » Must have hydro access for a light and a heat lamp.
- » Lockable door to keep people out.





No. 111.



CONSTRUCTION

- » You will also need your building big enough to store your feed and supplies for the chickens.
- » Rounded corners.
- » Roost – start 2" off the floor and 1' apart, gradually raising to 1' off the floor.



Approximate COSTS

Peavey Mart Swan River: Price List 2025

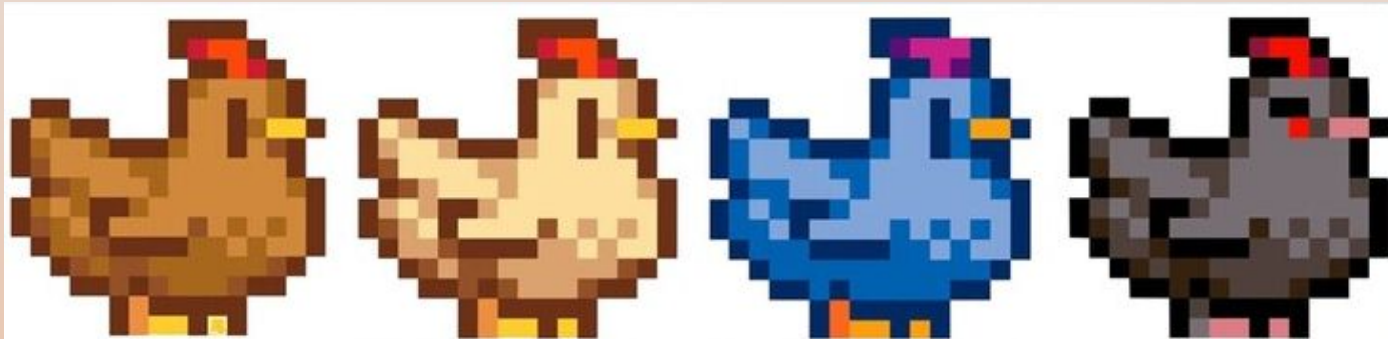
- » Feed -Starter 20 KG Bag @ \$\$19.99-\$34.00
- » Feed -Growing/Finishing 20 KG Bag @ \$20.99
- » Heat Lamp @ \$19.99 - \$27.99
- » Heat Bulb @ \$10.99/each
- » Water/Feeder @ \$34.99 - \$79.99
- » Food Feeder @ \$37.99 - \$59.99
- » Roll of chicken wire – \$49.99 (2ft x150 ft, Hexagonal) - \$87.99 (4ft x150 ft, Hexagonal)
- » Freight additional cost per region.



Approximate COSTS

» Cornish Cross Giants (from Berg's Hatchery)

Per Chick	Pullets	Mixed	Cockerel
100+	\$3.60	\$2.91	\$2.81
75 – 99	\$3.72	\$3.03	\$2.93
51 – 74	\$3.84	\$3.24	\$3.14
25 – 50	\$4.35	\$3.61	\$3.51
10 – 24	\$4.36	\$3.89	\$3.64



DAILY ROUTINE

- » Check twice a day
- » Water daily – always have fresh water available.
- » Clean water feeder frequently.
- » Replenish feed as required – keep track of amount you have until butchering.
- » Clean food feeder frequently.
- » Check the temperature – install a thermometer.
- » Maintain proper lighting.
- » Dry bedding (straw) - you can add layers or remove the litter once saturated (compost for garden).
- » Remove any dead birds immediately.



FEED AND WATER

- » WATER – as soon as the chicks arrive – you may have to gently dip their beaks in water to make sure they drink. Replace room temperature water daily.
- » FEED – Use the starter first, then switch to finisher. At 4 to 6 weeks add a container of sand (or outside when you let your chicks outside). As the chicks age, raise the height of the feeders. Alternate feeds (start with one handful a day increasing) – clover, grass or weeds, table scraps, fish wild rice can not be fed two weeks before butchering. Remove feed 12 hours prior to butchering.





TEMPERATURE

» Should be 90 to 100 degrees F the first week, decrease five degrees each week until the temperature reaches 70 degrees F or until they have feathers. Should be draft free.

» Chick behavior will tell you:

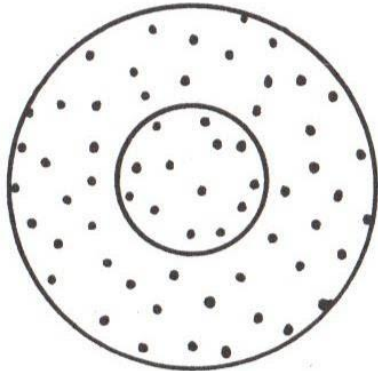
Too hot – panting or huddling in corners

Too cold – cuddled together in a ball under the light

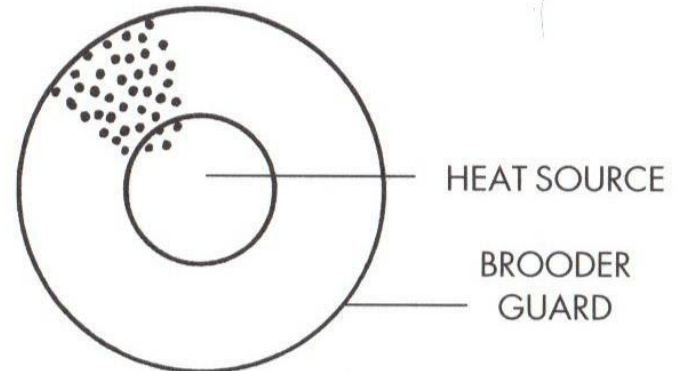


Body Language and Brooder Heat

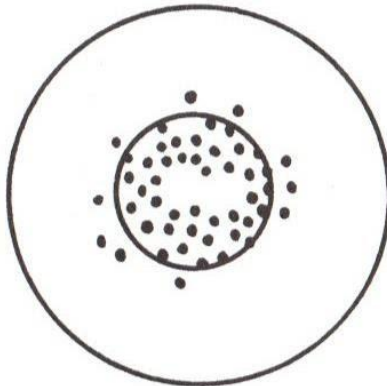
JUST RIGHT



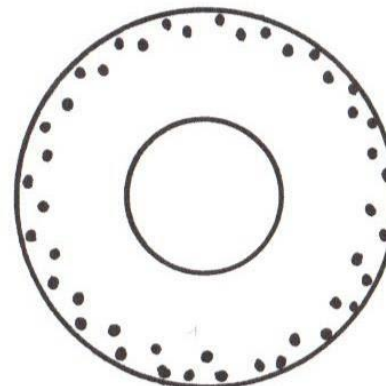
TOO DRAFTY



TOO COLD



TOO HOT



VENTILATION

- » Adjust window and vents morning and night, use screens for bugs and predators.
- » Wire should go into the ground to keep out predators.



LIGHTING



- » 1 – 3 days of age: 24 hours of bright light
- » 4 – 6 days of age: 18 to 23 hours of light and 1 – 6 hours of darkness
- » 7 – 21 days of age: 8 hours of light and 16 hours of darkness
- » 3 weeks of age: 12 hours of light and 12 hours of darkness
- » 4 weeks of age to market: 14 hours of light or natural light



GRAZING



- » Make sure chickens have feathers before grazing.
- » Construct a door with a ramp for them to exit and enter the coop.
- » Fence in the pen top and sides to allow them to roam. Tuck in sides a few inches to prevent predators access.
- » Start off with 15 min per day, increase to 15 to 30 min per day until you can open the door in the morning and put them back at dark.
- » Add a container of gravel in the pen – it helps keep the chickens digestive system working well.
- » Supervise other animals around chicks.
- » After they peck all the grass reward them with alternate feed.



PROCESSING

- » Process where the chickens are, relieves stress and is environmentally sensible.
- » Take off feed 12 hours to allow crop and intestinal tract to empty before butchering.
- » Use the two-nail method for execution, other methods include killing cone, shackles or rope around the feet.
- » Bleed the carcass, wait at least one minute before scalding.
- » Scalding temperature should be between 142 degrees F and 145 degrees F. Too hot – skin will tear. Too cold – feathers will not loosen.
- » Pluck feathers by hand or machine. Make sure all pin feathers are out.



PROCESSING

- » Burn slightly remaining feathers with a hand held torch, candle flame or melted wax.
- » EVISCERATION – remove all the contents of the body cavity plus feet. Separate the heart, liver and gizzard for packaging.
- » Clean and soak chicken in ice water to drop body temperature so chicken can be packaged faster.
- » Store in heavy duty freezer bags – remove air and put in freezer making sure they don't touch each other until they are frozen.
- » Compost the waste – feathers, blood, inner parts by digging a hole and burying them.



ENCOURAGEMENT

- » Start small – manageable and workable.
- » Little investment and little time required.
- » A step closer to being self sufficient.
- » Enjoy your healthy food.
- » Chickens eat all your grass, weeds, weed seeds, bugs and plant leftovers. They keep the ground tilled by scratching. They keep your garden fertilized.

