

# Best Management Practices & Biosecurity

MNSW Farm Conference  
March 22<sup>nd</sup> 2025



# Objectives

- Explain when the Poultry Industry Council does.
- Share the Best Management Practices & Biosecurity tips for small flock.
- Address what happens if your flock grows (chicken math)

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# Engage, as questions and participate!

Considering a flock?      Have Birds already?

Laying hens?      Broilers?      Turkeys?

Emu/Ostrich?      Ducks?      Speciality Birds?





# The Role of PIC to Share the Information

- Education:
  - PIC is a registered charity that delivers poultry education through extension services, event coordination, and project and program management.
- Extension:
  - Tailoring events, and content to put relevant knowledge to work for industry.
- Events:
  - Offer non-bias opportunities for industry, and producers to gather.
  - Opportunities to share experiences and struggles while networking to create strong support systems.

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# Why does it matter to PIC?

## Whole Industry Moves Forward

- Supporting early adopters, and extending their story of success for industry wide gains.

## Continuous learning

- “Top 25% have Propensity for Continually learn”. Dollars\$ and Sense, 2015 Report



# Extending outside of Industry

## Small Flock Ontario Project

- Designed training for general public interested in poultry.

## Role of PIC

- Create content in plain language with strong visuals. Industry professionals fact checking content, and then disseminate in multiple methods. In person, online, and through outreach of caseworkers.

## Outcomes

- Protecting Industry by extending biosecurity technics and how to access professional flock health for their operations. Supporting learning in small flock producers and offering continuous communications regarding disease outbreaks to heighten their awareness.

**Stepping outside of our box of industry education while delivering the project on behalf of both provincial and federal government helped to protect our industry.**



# THE RESOURCES AND LEARNING HUB

# SMALL FLOCK ONTARIO





**ANYTIME...DAY OR NIGHT,  
RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE**

**SmallFlockOntario.ca**

It's easy to navigate  
and filled with the information  
and resources you need.







## BIRD HEALTH

# Bird Health for Avian Influenza

We've gathered facts from experts.

The screenshot shows a website page with a navigation bar at the top containing 'Home', 'Bird Health', 'Education', and 'Resources'. The main header area features the 'SMALL FLOCK ONTARIO' logo and a photograph of a hand in a blue glove holding a purple PCR test tube labeled 'Avian Influenza A (H5) PCR Test'. Below the header, the text reads 'AVIAN INFLUENZA and Other Reportable Diseases'. A green section titled 'What's the deal with Avian Influenza?' contains the following text:

Avian Influenza is an infectious disease that primarily affects birds of all types and comes in two forms: high and low pathogenicity. Low pathogenic can cause mild illness, however the Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) is the form that has dominated headlines across the globe.

Travelling largely with migratory birds, HPAI poses a serious threat to poultry flocks of all sizes, from commercial industry to back yard and hobby flocks. HPAI causes serious illness and spreads rapidly within flocks resulting in high death rates.



## BIRD HEALTH

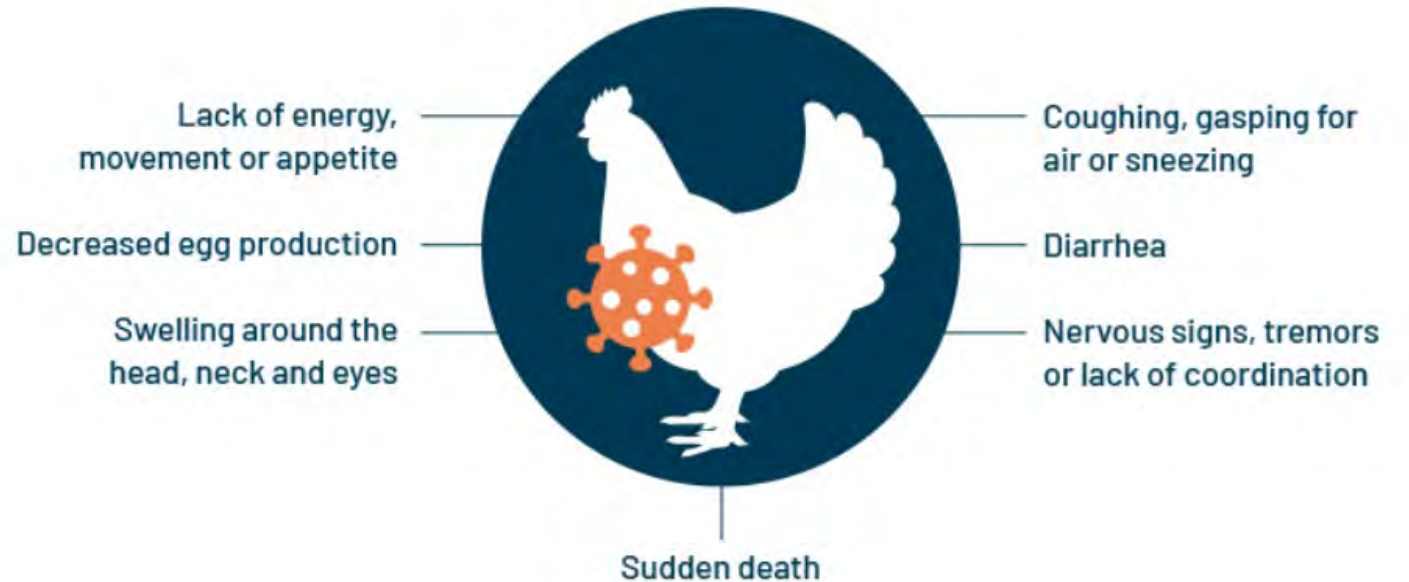
# Visual Resources

It's easy to find the topic you're searching, so you can learn more!

Specific to Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza, you may observe...

### Signs of Bird Flu

Infected birds may show one or many of these signs:





## BIRD HEALTH

# FAQ for YOU

Commonly asked questions, with concise answers.

### Frequently asked questions

What is the difference between low-pathogenicity avian influenza (AI) and high pathogenicity avian influenza (HPAI) viruses? ∨

What wild birds carry bird flu (avian influenza viruses)? ∨

Can animals besides birds be infected? ∨

Does AI or HPAI pose a risk to people? ∨

How to treat avian influenza? ∨

How the CFIA responds to an outbreak of avian influenza in Canada? ∨

Who do I report to if my backyard poultry are sick or dying? ∨

What should I do if I find a dead wild bird(s) in my backyard or in a park? ∨



## RESOURCES

# Download or Print

If you're looking for a checklist to assess your risk, look no further than our booklets.

The screenshot shows the 'Resources' page on the Small Flock Ontario website. The navigation menu includes 'Home', 'Bird Health', 'Education', and 'Resources'. The main heading is 'Resources for Small Flock Owners'. Below this, there is a section for 'OMAFRA: Animal health update: Avian influenza (February 17, 2023)' with a link to a general update on the HPAI situation. Another section mentions 'PIC's Small Flock Webinars on PIC's YouTube Channel' with a link to the channel. At the bottom, there are five resource cards: 'Biosecurity Urban Small Flock Booklet', 'Biosecurity Small Rural Flock Booklet', 'What you need to Know about HPAI Booklet', 'Good Coop & Housing Management', and 'Postcard Protect your flock from Disease'.



## RESOURCES

# Videos

Prefer to play a video or looking for past webinars? They're here too!



OMAFRA: Animal health update: Avian influenza (February 17, 2023)

[Click here](#) for a general update on the HPAI situation as it relates to all poultry types.

PIC's Small Flock Webinars on PIC's YouTube Channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/@poultryindustrycouncil>





## BIRD HEALTH

# Animal Welfare

Failure to plan will result  
in failure to thrive.

FLAWSS

Keeps it simple



As an essential part of keeping your flock healthy  
begin with F.L.A.W.S.S. for good animal husbandry and welfare.



FEED



LIGHTING



AIR



WATER



SPACE



SANITATION



## BIRD HEALTH

### Feed

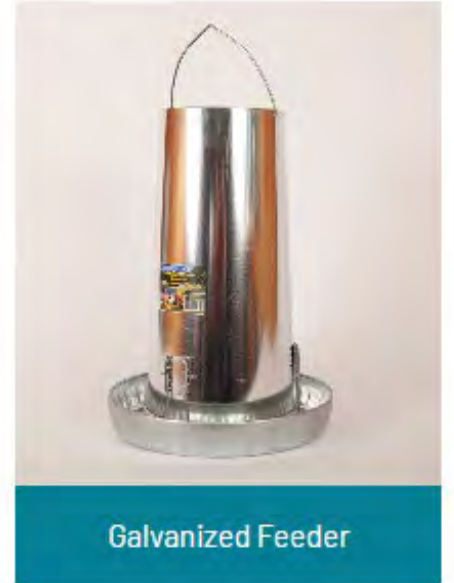
- Nutritionally balanced
- Diet changes with age
  - Storing and dispensing are crucial
  - Clean up spills



Feeder



Rodent Proof Feeder



Galvanized Feeder



## BIRD HEALTH

### Feeding Table Scraps

- Can vary their diet, most is ok
- Avoid potato peels- hard to digest
- Strong foods impart a taste
- Nothing spoiled
- Lawn cuttings also good (keep them short to avoid sour crop)







## BIRD HEALTH

# Lighting

- If using fluorescent, use warm-wavelength
- 1 60 W incandescent OR 1 9 W compact fluorescent/ 200 square feet floor space
- LED lights are more tolerant of dust

### Rules of thumb...

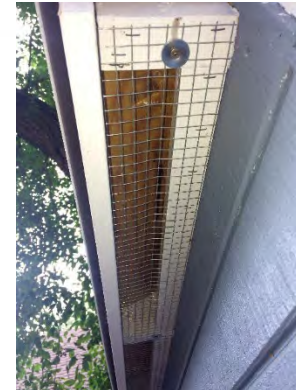
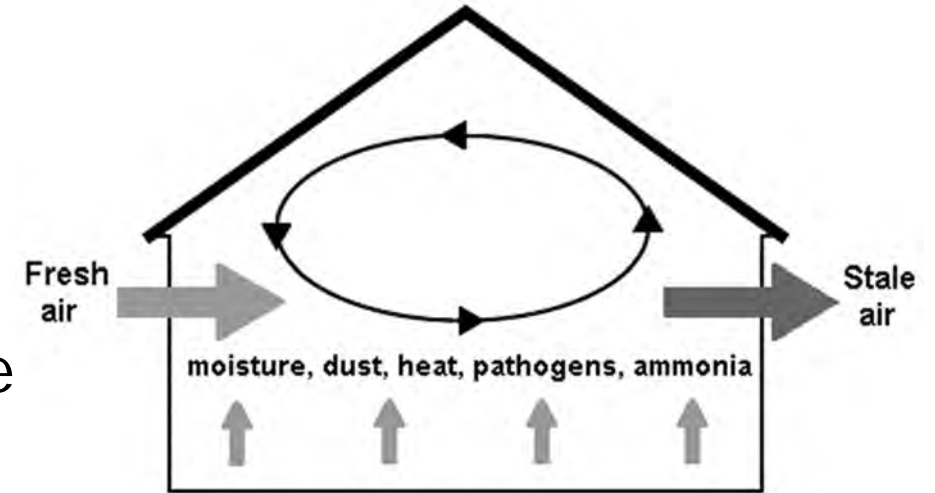
- Meat chickens: 12-16 hours of light/day
- Pullets: raise on a constant 8-10 hour light day or decreasing day length system
- Layers: increasing light after 20 weeks by 15-30 min/week until up to 14-17 hours light/day. HOLD.
- If using heat lamps, use red light



## BIRD HEALTH

### Air

- Air quality is important regardless of flock size
- Ammonia, CO<sub>2</sub>, CO, Hydrogen Sulphide
- Dust can be from dander, feces, grain dust, fungi/mold, bacteria, feathers.
- All can have health impacts
- Proper ventilation especially in the winter to keep out humidity \*(may require heating)



**Ventilation holes should always be placed at the top of the coop, where the wall meets the ceiling, and be secure from predators!**



## BIRD HEALTH

# Water

- Chickens drink throughout the day (not to exceed 30C)
- Chickens body is 50% water and an egg is 65% water
- To function properly chickens need fresh water at all times
  - Limit access to surface water sources
- Each chicken drinks about 1-2 cups a day

Amounts depend on:

- Age as they get older they drink more
- Layers drink twice as much as non-layers
- Hot weather 2-4 x more water per bird!
- Time of day: most at dusk and dawn





# BIRD HEALTH

## Space

|                               | Age (weeks) | Floor Space (square feet) | Feeder Space (inches) |
|-------------------------------|-------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Chicks and Poults             | 0 to 6      | 0.8 to 1.0                | 1.0 to 1.6            |
| Chicks and Poults             | 6 to 12     | 1.0 to 2.0                | 1.6 to 2.4            |
| Roasters, Pullets and Turkeys | 12 to 20    | 2.0 to 4.0                | 2.0 to 2.8            |
| White Egg Layers              | >20 weeks   | 2.5 to 3.0                | 2.8 to 3.9            |
| Brown Egg Layers              | >20 weeks   | 3.0 to 3.5                | 2.8 to 3.9            |
| Turkeys                       | >20 weeks   | 4.0 to 5.0                | 4.1 to 4.8            |
| Ducks                         | >20 weeks   | 4.0 (plus yard)           | 2.8 to 3.9            |
| Geese                         | >20 weeks   | 5.0 (plus yard)           | 2.8 to 3.9            |

Courtesy of: Wallenstein Feed & Supply



## BIRD HEALTH

# Sanitation – Dry Clean

- Clean off the Organic Matter
- Clean out shavings & bedding, scrape off perches
- Remove nest materials
- Dust, and remove cobwebs including walls and beams

**Ideal time to inspect for pests (insects) or rodents!**



## BIRD HEALTH

# Sanitation – Wet Clean

- Clean off the Organic Matter first with soap and water, then disinfect
- Use a bit of elbow grease (and a stiff brush or scraper)
- Choose a good surfactant (soap) for cleaning

Let it dry – all the way! Consider a box fan to move air.



## BIRD HEALTH

# Sanitation - Disinfect

- Choose disinfectant based in pathogen you are trying to control. (Bacteria, fungus/mould, virus etc.)
- Temperature affects contact time, and ability of disinfectant to work.
- Think about nest boxes, all equipment, waterers, feeders, your boots and shipping crates.

**1 tbsp bleach/1 gallon of water disinfect can work – then rinse and DRY!**



## BIRD HEALTH

# Sanitation

**Cleaning:** The goal of cleaning is to physically remove all visible debris, dirt, soil, feces, and other organic matter from surfaces and/or objects. This two step process includes dry and wet cleaning with a surfactant (soap). The cleaning stage is very important as most disinfectants are inactivated by organic matter, so remove as much as possible during the cleaning stage.

**Disinfecting:** The goal of disinfecting is to actually kill germs. Using the right disinfectant is very important to kill germs. **Always apply according to label instructions, follow contact/exposure times, and use protective gloves, long sleeves and eye protection when using.** Remember to never mix different disinfectants together, and always mix/dilute a new solution of disinfectant every time. Allow to fully dry before reintroducing birds.





## BIRD HEALTH

# Prevent Disease

Plan ahead, and  
use the three R's

Keep what's outside the coop  
OUT and what is inside is safe  
from disease causing agents.

The screenshot shows the 'Biosecurity Page' on the Small Flock Ontario website. The page features a dark blue header with the 'Small Flock Ontario' logo and navigation links for 'Home', 'Bird Health', 'Education', and 'Resources'. Below the header is a large banner with the text 'Biosecurity Page' and 'Keep your Birds Safe' alongside illustrations of various birds. The main content area is titled 'Biosecurity' and includes a paragraph explaining the program's purpose: 'Biosecurity is a program used to safeguard poultry from the introduction and spread of infectious agents. It is about keeping what is inside the barn in, and what is outside the barn out. Biosecurity is a multi-faceted health plan that includes isolation, traffic control (vectors and fomites), hygiene, mortality, and manure management in addition to cleaning, disinfection, and water sanitation.' A note follows: 'For specific Avian Influenza biosecurity measures, disease recognition, and reporting refer to our Avian Influenza page.' Below this is a section for 'Disease Prevention' with the text: 'Learning how to care for your birds is critical to their health and well-being. Disease prevention is one of the most important ways that you can help your birds. Monitor the health status of your flock and be prepared to react and use the 3 "R"s approach to protect your birds.' At the bottom, three icons represent the '3 R's': 'Reinforce' (green checkmark), 'Recognize' (blue checkmark), and 'Report' (orange checkmark).



## BIRD HEALTH

# Reinforce



### Reinforce your Coop

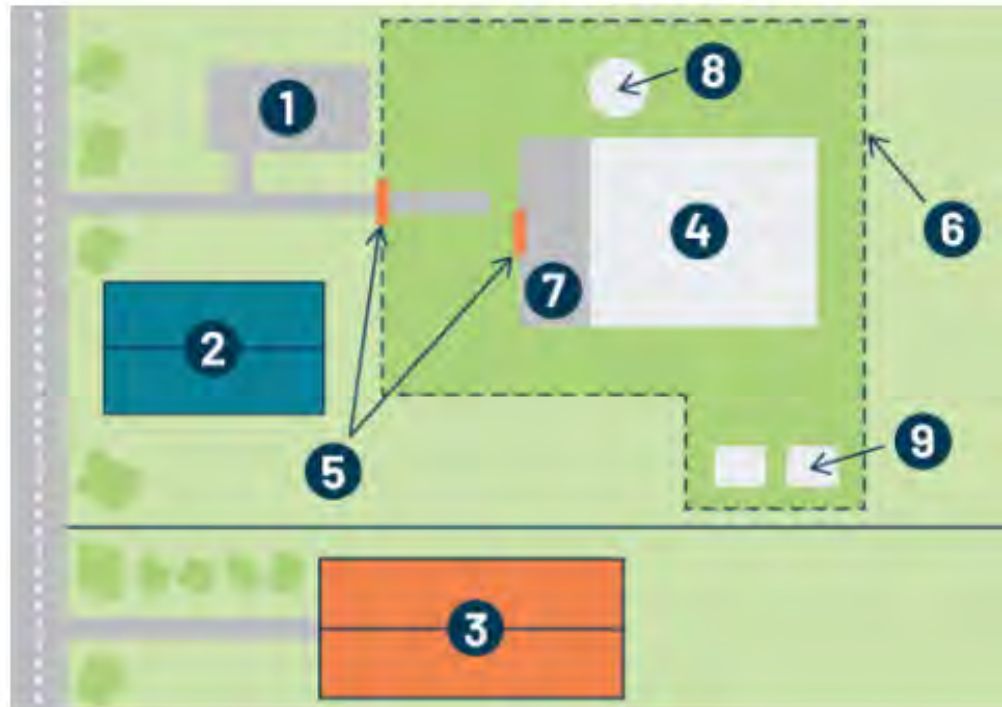
1. Limit range for birds and use appropriate fencing.
2. Clean up feed spills and standing water to detract wild birds who carry disease.
3. Keep feed sealed in the coop/barn and pest free.
4. Use designated boots and sanitize when removing boots from yard/barn.
5. Thoroughly clean and disinfect coop/barn and equipment regularly especially.
6. Do not allow access to surface water or ponds.
7. Purchase birds from one, disease free source.



## BIRD HEALTH

# Reinforce

For larger outdoor operations employ the RAZ and CAZ systems:



1. Parking
2. House
3. Neighbour
4. Restricted Access Zone is more restricted area and access is more tightly controlled. RAZ (Bird Housing and/or Range)
5. Controlled Access Point is how you get into the CAZ or RAZ (can be either a gate or a door, etc). CAP
6. Controlled Access Zone is the entire area where poultry are kept or handled. CAZ
7. Transition Area
8. Feed Storage
9. Equipment Storage



## BIRD HEALTH Reinforce

### Restrict Contact

Only allow contact with your birds to people caring for them.





## BIRD HEALTH

**Reinforce**



### Rodents are a Visitor

Rats & mice spread disease to your birds, spoil feed, cause property damage and kill chicks, poults and other young birds.



## BIRD HEALTH

# Reinforce

### Proper Hygiene

Wash your hands before and  
after coming in contact with  
poultry





## BIRD HEALTH

# Reinforce

Change Clothes



Before entering and prior to leaving the animal control  
area



## BIRD HEALTH

# Reinforce

### Don't Bring disease home

Comingling events such as fairs, shows and other gatherings of birds can have a severe impact on the risk of disease spread across the province. People who raise small flocks should be aware of the risks of diseases.







## BIRD HEALTH

# Reinforce

## Isolate and Quarantine

### Watch for signs of Illness

Returning from a comingling event should result in isolation and quarantine. Watch for signs of illness. Once determined healthy re-introduce to the flock.





## BIRD HEALTH

# Recognize

## Record Early Signs

### **No one Knows your Flock like you!**

Early signs of illness can be behavioural. Feed and water consumption, or social habits.

Writing down things you notice can help establish a timeline of infection.





## BIRD HEALTH

# Recognize

## General Signs of Illness

All symptoms listed are not specific to any particular illness, and may be caused by a variety of diseases. For diagnosis, call a qualified veterinarian.

If further reporting is required from there, they will ensure it happens

## RECOGNIZE

### SPOT THE SIGNS OF DISEASE



Remember viruses can persist in the environment for a long time.

#### Symptoms may include:

- Lack of energy, movement or appetite
- Decreased egg production
- Swelling around the head, neck and eyes
- Coughing, gasping for air or sneezing
- Diarrhea
- Nervous signs, tremors or lack of coordination
- Sudden death



# BIRD HEALTH Report

Bird owners are legally responsible to notify authorities if they suspect their flock is infected with a reportable or notifiable disease. Reportable diseases in poultry include any strain of H5 or H7 Avian Influenza A virus (HPAI) Infectious Laryngotracheitis (ILT) and others. Contact a veterinarian if you suspect your flock has a disease.

Visit: [smallflockontario.ca/resources](http://smallflockontario.ca/resources)



For the Public - **Find a Veterinarian**

[Find a Veterinarian](#)

Use this tool to find information about veterinarians who are licensed with the College. [Learn More](#)

Veterinarians  Veterinary Practices  Professional Corporations

When searching for a veterinarian "By Address", only those veterinarians whose licence status is active or suspended are displayed in the search results. If you search by "Name of Veterinarian", the results will include veterinarians whose licence is active, suspended, deceased, expired, resigned, cancelled or revoked. [Learn more about the Public Register.](#)

Name of Veterinarian

Status

By Address

[Show Less Options](#)

Patient Species

Board Certified Specialist

Language



## BIRD HEALTH

# Remember the 3 R's

### Disease Prevention

Learning how to care for your birds is critical to their health and well-being. Disease prevention is one of the most important ways that you can help your birds. Monitor the health status of your flock and be prepared to react and use the 3 "R"s approach to protect your birds.



**Reinforce**



**Recognize**



**Report**

# Ready to get birds?

Remember we have resources to help you.



**Please check your local by-laws prior to picking up birds.**

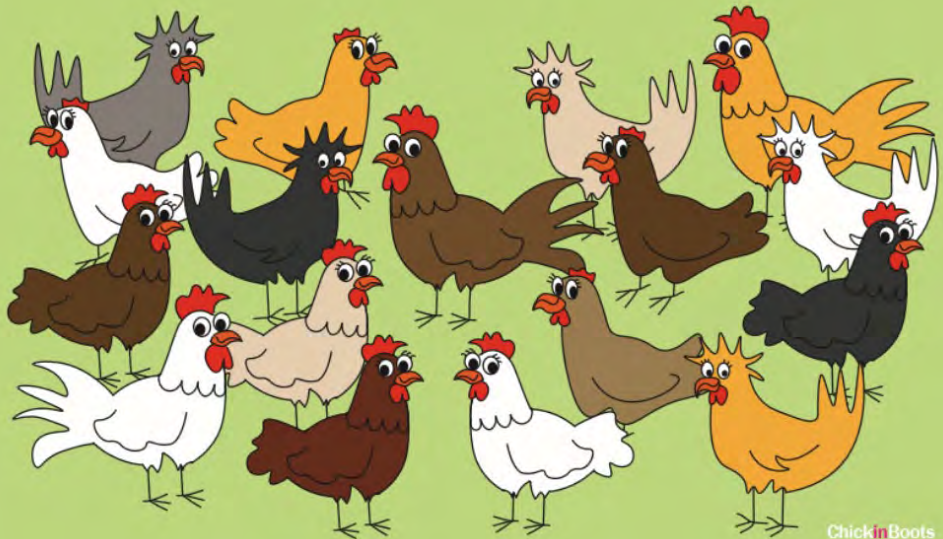
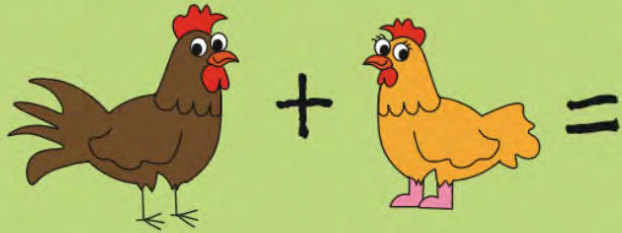


# What Can You Own Without Quota?

- Laying hens – max. 99/premises/ person
- Broilers – max. 299/person/premises/year
- Turkeys – max. 50/year/premises
- Other species are un- regulated



## Chicken Math



When chicken math gets the better of you.

No longer a 'small' flock?







# NICHE MARKETS: ARTISANAL CHICKEN



## Niche Markets: Artisanal Chicken

- Launched in 2015 for 2016 production
- Aimed at providing locally grown chicken to the farmers community
- Application and Licensed based program
- 600 – 3000 birds in the calendar year
- Raised and slaughtered
- Farmer responsible for marketing with minimal CFO support





## Niche Markets: Artisanal Chicken

- Mandatory training
  - 4 webinars
- Inspected yearly to ensure compliance with biosecurity, on-farm food safety and animal care standards
- Must follow all federal, provincial and local regulations
  - Transport of live bird and processed meat, on-farm stores, farmers markets, etc.
- Renewal process each fall
  - Allows for farmer to reset production levels based on new or potential markets for the next season

## Niche Markets: Artisanal Chicken

- Marketing
  - Artisanal Farms are allowed to market off-farm
    - Farmers' Markets
    - Restaurants
    - Independent Grocers
    - Butchers
    - Health Food stores
- Value added products
  - Sausage
  - Burgers
  - Meat pies
  - Prepared meals





# NICHE MARKETS: FAMILY FOOD



## Niche Markets: Family Food

- Aimed at people that wish to raise chickens for self-consumption or farm gate sales
- Limit 300 chickens
- 99 layers (Egg Farmers of Ontario)





## Niche Markets – Family Food Growers

- Chicks may be bought through
  - Hatchery
  - Broker-Dealers (feed stores)
  - Self-hatched
    - Must self-register chicks at [familyfoodgrower.ca](http://familyfoodgrower.ca) under the register tab to receive a Form 300 for processing
- If selling from farmgate – birds must be processed at a licensed abattoir
- If slaughtering for self-consumption, you can self-slaughter

# Staying small?

## Still want more information?

- Join us next week!
- Learn from Ontario's Provincial Poultry Specialist






# RAISING BACKYARD CHICKENS



Raising Backyard Chickens Webinar: Saturday March 29th, 2025 | 10:00am - 1:30pm

Register Now!

## Event Details:

 **Saturday, March 29th, 2025**

 10:00 AM – 1:30 PM EST

 Live on Zoom |  **\$35 per registrant** (includes access to the recording to watch at your convenience)

[www.poultryindustrycouncil.ca/education/raising-backyard-chickens.ca](http://www.poultryindustrycouncil.ca/education/raising-backyard-chickens.ca)



Education • Extension • Events

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Thank  
you to  
OFA for  
inviting  
me!





# Questions?

