



DAILY CHICKEN CARE: 5 THINGS TO DO IN SUMMER

Summers in our area can be scorching, with average high temperatures in the range of 85 to 100 degrees in July. While we love great weather and holidays, the hot weather isn't fun for our two-legged friends in the chicken coop.

As spring shifts to summer, here are five things you need to know about daily chicken care during the warmest part of the year.

1. MAINTAIN PLENTY OF FRESH WATER

Hydration is key. As temperatures climb higher, water should be plentiful and fresh. One chicken can drink as much as one liter of water a day during the summer. If you have a large coop and/or number of birds, make sure multiple water sources are available. Use waterers that have enough capacity so they won't run out. When it's really hot, consider setting frozen water bottles inside your waterers to help keep the water chilled.

Place the water source in the shade and replace it often. Clean it frequently to minimize or eliminate the growth of algae, bacteria and fungus. The fresher the water, the more the chickens will drink and produce eggs.

When temperatures reach the high 90's or in the 100's, adding an electrolyte to the water can help keep a chicken's body regulated during stressful conditions.

2. FEED WHAT THEY NEED

Along with fresh water, it's important to keep feed in the feeder. Hot weather is harder on chickens than cold weather. Since chickens consume less feed in the summer, make sure they have access to feed in the early morning and late evening. Feeding a higher protein will help with nutritional



requirements. We recommend a complete feed with any of our IFA layer formulas.

You should refrain from feeding a lot of scratch or cracked corn in the hottest times of the summer. Corn can raise body temperature, which does not help your chicken's health. Instead, try giving frozen fruits such as watermelon, berries, peaches, etc., as well as leafy greens and frozen vegetables to help them cool down.

3. GIVE YOUR CHICKENS SHADE

Your chickens will need access to both sun and shade. They will want to lay out in the sun at times, but keep them in the shade as much as possible. Try to ensure your coop is located in a cool, shady spot where the chickens can feel a breeze.

Your birds also need an area to dust their feathers and they love to do it in flower beds. If you don't want them digging up holes there, make sure they have another spot to dust themselves.



4. KEEP A CLEAN COOP

Cleanliness is another crucial factor in keeping healthy, productive chickens. Keeping your coop clean, dry and well ventilated can help to stave off disease and sickness in your flock. A clean coop also helps keep odors and flies under control as well.

Remember, a cool, happy chicken in a well-ventilated coop is likely to lay more eggs.

5. CONTROL THE PESTS

Feeders should be hung about the same height as your hen's back to help reduce the amount of feed that falls to the ground. Such wasted feed will attract rodents and insects. When pests interfere with chickens, they stop laying eggs.

Along with a clean coop, there are several strategies for keeping the flies at bay. Fly control products, such as sticky fly traps on the chicken runs and stinky traps away from the coop, help draw flies away. You can also spray a poultry-approved pesticide on the coop walls and in the nesting boxes. Just make sure that any pesticides have a label that is safe for poultry.

In addition to these tips, it's a good idea to collect your eggs at least once a day during the summer heat. The sooner you can get your eggs in a cooler, the fresher they will be.

Visit your local IFA Country Store for additional advice, and to find everything you need to keep your chickens happy and healthy this summer.

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