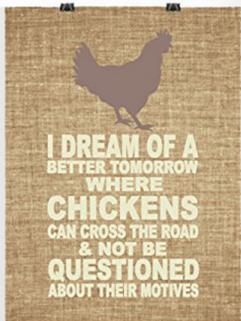


The Dixon's Digest January 2018 Edition



Laying Hens in the winter

Molt in chickens is triggered by the shortening daylight hours. Light influences hormones in chickens which in turn, their behaviour and reproduction. Laying hens need 14 - 16 hours of light daily for egg production.

Without sufficient light, chickens will go into molt. This will reduce the amount of eggs laid or your chickens could even quit laying altogether. As feathers are 85% protein, all protein that the hen takes in goes toward new feather growth, so feeding protein is essential.

Some things to help your chickens during molt are feeding a high protein, good quality, laying hen feed. During this time, scratch grains do not supply enough protein. Also, sufficient lighting in the barn in the fall through to the spring season will help your hens continue laying. Expect feather regrowth in 4 - 6 weeks and egg production can start back in as little as 2 weeks after all of the feathers have regrown.

FROM THE DESK OF DEB

Hi everyone,
the end of Feb. 2018 will mark one year that I have taken over from Dave Dixon. Many of you know this and some of you don't. This has been a long journey from when Dave asked me to take over in Sept, 2016. After my initial "GULP" moment, I asked myself, "what do you really want to do with your life"? I love working at Dixon's, 19 years this May. I love our customers. I know most of the business.

My biggest reason for taking over the business from Dave was... what if, someone were to buy Dixon's and change the focus, direction, and sense of small town community feel. These are all things Dave strived to achieve. So, with Dave's guidance, here I am. Thank you for your wonderful, encouraging support as we carry on Dixon's with great customer service and pepper in a few new ideas.

Debbie

Horses and water: the most important nutrient

Water consumption is always crucial. Without enough water, a horse's body and digestive system cannot function properly. As winter approaches horses may begin to drink less as their water gets cold and freezes. At this time, horses often transition from food with a high moisture content (pasturing) to a dryer diet (hay). These two things are at the root of a common winter problem: impaction colic. It is crucial that horses living outside be given access to quality water at all times as they must consume at least 10 gallons per day.

A bucket of half-frozen water or snow is next to useless, as it does not fulfill the horse's basic needs. Moreover, if a horse consumes very cold water, its body temperature will drop and it will have to expend a lot of energy to warm up. A heated water trough is the best way to prevent impaction colic and esophageal obstruction in horses. Research shows that horses drink more when water is kept at a temperature of about 18-20 degrees C. Using hot water to add moisture to feed, especially if it contains fiber, is another great way to get your horse to drink more. Finally, it is important to carefully monitor your horse's water intake and check its hydration levels by regularly using the skinfold test or by monitoring the texture of the manure. If your horse is still not drinking enough water, adding 1 or 2 ounces of salt (100% NaCl) per meal, in addition to a bloc of white salt, is a great way to increase water intake.



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