

# **PLEASE READ**

## **Chick incubator & Brooder Guide**

### **And important details to know**

#### **Incubator set up**

Choose a place away from a window and where the temperature stays steady in your home. Place your eggs inside the incubator and let the magic begin! Follow the manufacturer guide provided in your tote. If you have questions please let me know.

#### **Brooder set up**

Set your brooder up on day 17 and have the brooder plate warmed and ready to go. The brooder tote should be inside your home where the temperature stays warm and away from open windows. (Not outside, not in a shed or a garage). Pets such as cats and dogs should be kept away from the chicks unsupervised. We recommend a spare bedroom where lights can be turned off and a door closed as chicks can chirp at night.

Line the tote with two pads. Set up the feeders with fresh food and water. Chicks can hatch early so best to be prepared. Pads should be replaced every 2-3 days. I have provided enough pads for two weeks. **DO NOT PUT THE LID ON THE TOTE** while live chicks are inside. Chicks up to two weeks old will not be able to fly out.

#### **It is day 18 (Lockdown Day) and your chicks are ready to hatch – What do you do?**

Review your incubator guide, remove the turning device, candle your eggs, and remove any late quitters or undeveloped eggs. Keep the incubator closed. Maintain humidity levels between 50-70% (ensure you are adding water). Open the air vent fully. Wait and watch! **DO NOT OPEN THE INCUBATOR** – this can cause issues with hatching called shrink wrapping.

As chicks hatch before others, it is recommended to keep them in the incubator until all are fully dried and fluffy. Chick bowling (a chick rolling around the eggs) is okay and encourages the other chicks to hatch. Their peeping helps motivate the other chicks too. Chicks absorb their yolk sac just before hatching so they have enough nutrients for 72 hours so no need to rush them out of their warm incubator.

#### **The hatch is finished but there are duds.**

Candle the eggs at day 22 and remove any eggs without movement, pips, chirping or signs of viable life. If a chick has pipped thru the shell but is struggling to hatch, you may assist by slowing chipping away at the egg shell until she is free and put back in the

incubator to dry. If the egg membrane bleeds, Stop, and put the egg back in the incubator and wait. Try again in a couple of hours. Assisted chicks have a lower chance of survival.

### **Incubator cleaning**

Please remove all water, shells, and waste after the hatch. Carefully wet wipe the basin of the incubator and wipe dry. Submersion of the incubator or excess water will damage the incubator and risk your deposit. Store in a safe place. *I will deep clean the incubator after drop off so no need to soapy wash.*

### **After the hatch**

Place all the fluffy and dried chicks into the brooder box. Dip their beaks into the water so it teaches them where their water. Help them under the brooder plate. The brooder plate should be low enough for them to touch but too low where it impedes movement. Chicks will sleep a lot during their first 72 hours outside the egg. It is normal and recommended to let them sleep.

### **Chick health**

Happy chicks are quiet chicks! If your chicks are chirping loudly check their brooder plate height and adjust. Loud chicks are signalling to you something is wrong. They could be stuck in the feeder or need assistance going back under their heat plate and finding their hatch mates.

### **Pasty Bum**

Freshly hatched chicks can be susceptible to pasty bum. Pasty bum is where poop sticks to their fluffy bottoms and seals up their vent. A sealed vent stops the chick from going poop and can cause death in a short amount of time. Check your chicks' bottoms day and night. Carefully remove stuck on poop by gently picking off or by using warm water and a cloth. Do not soak your chicks! Please contact me if you need further help.

### **Chick Death**

With the magic of hatching chicks comes with the possible outcome of chicks who do not survive. Chick death can be caused by failure to thrive (natural and not preventable), poor brooder conditions, dropping, or mishandling/overhandling. The first 72 hours we recommend letting the chicks sleep, eat and drink without much handling. Check for pasty bums twice a day. If a chick passes in the egg or hatched, please take care in disposal either by composting or burial. Please do not toss with your kitchen waste.

### **Return Day - Transporting chicks back to the farm**

**Please review your return window and return your tote and all the contents and unused brooder pads/feed (chicks included) during those dates. Failure to return the tote during this window will result in your deposit being kept as per the Hatching a Chick agreement. We have a timeline we need to keep for others patiently waiting the return of the tote. Totes need to be clean so dispose of soiled brooder pads and wash out the tote. Incubator wiped down but does not need to be fully cleaned – I will sanitize all products upon return. Ensure everything is in the tote. Chicks can be transported back in a box, kennel or anything at your home that would work. If you need a box for returning chicks, I will provide at pick up. Please do not return the chicks in the tote as the tote is required to safely transport the incubator, brooder heat plate and the other contents back to the farm. Missing or broken contents of the tote will result in your deposit being held and the cost of the broken or missing contents deducted from your deposit.**

**If you decide to purchase chicks – please advise how many chicks hatched and how many you would like to purchase. I believe in the honour system and trust your family to be honest with hatch numbers and how many chicks you are purchasing. Chicks are \$10 each and will be deducted off your deposit when you return the tote. I will do my best to sex your chicks (if they are auto-sex or sex-linked). You can send pictures or bring to the farm for me to determine in person! You may purchase all or a select few but return the chicks you are not purchasing.**

**Farm Address for returns 5311 Cowichan Lake Rd, Duncan, British Columbia**

**Emergency number 250 -732 -5716**

**Owner/ Operator Becky Klasen**

**Hatch A Chick Experience**

**Chicken Town Hatchery & Hens**