

# Protect Chicks From Damaging Affliction

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Birds in captivity rely totally on the caretaker. Caretakers who neglect birds cost the poultry industry millions of dollars annually or many thousand dollars per farm per year.

The Bible teaches we can afflict ourselves with a fast to improve ourselves or our situations. Chicks frequently are afflicted by a caretaker intentionally or unintentionally. (Seldom are there accidents, most events are caused.) The following are cases of affliction resulting in damage or fatal reaction of a baby poult, chick, or other animal. Adult animals can also be damaged by caretakers.

Fasting two hours off water caused chicks to get hungry and eat more when fed. This may help or hurt chicks. Six hours off water caused chicks to become nervous and eat litter. Productivity fell and some chicks died. Twenty-eight hours off water caused the weaker chicks to dehydrate at 80°F in the brooder, become listless, and fail to eat or drink later. Some chicks fell behind in growth rate, some died. Fifty hours off water with air temperature at 70°F caused many chicks to dehydrate, become weak and die before the water fast was over.

Two hours off feed caused chicks to get hungry and eat more when fed. This can be a valuable tool to clean up old feed. Eight hours off feed caused chicks to eat litter, get sick and some died. Twelve to sixteen hours off feed

on a wire floor caused capon bound cockerels to lose intestine size so surgery was a success at nine days old. Water, then feed was provided in the recovery pen.

Thirty hours off feed caused commercial layers to reduce egg number so low a \$30,000 loss was incurred.

A light-time clock change caused breeders to be reduced in day length which resulted in a loss of egg number, increased neck molt and an unknown loss in fertility of eggs laid by the breeders.

Feeding no granite grit to replacement pullets for a commercial laying house caused them to get small gizzards ostensibly resulting in poor egg production later. Mortality was higher and feed consumption was too low for normal egg production. To diagnose small gizzard disease, open every bird that dies naturally and size the gizzard.

Feeding no oyster shell or calcite grit apparently caused layers to have poor egg shells before a molt, before being slaughtered and when everything else was normal on three different flocks respectively. So feed extra calcium grit in the feed to keep egg shells normal.

Typically, all broilers or turkeys eat some litter. When many flocks of birds were raised on the same litter, growth rate became variable, mortality became higher, gut infection was diagnosed more and mysterious illness was more prevalent.

Do not afflict baby birds with contaminated litter, old litter, wet litter, or fecal contamination as a major part of litter. Use clean,

fresh bedding with each bird. Bedding materials should be selected to improve fertilizer value of litter when applied to land.

Young turkeys were mistakenly fed three percent red rock salt in a ration instead of 0.3 percent. They drank more water, fell behind in growth rate and died at a much higher rate than normal.

Pheasant breeders apparently eating rat tracking powder fell behind in egg number, eggs showed lower fertility and lower hatchability of eggs laid.

Baby broilers kept at 60 to 70°F the first three weeks of age instead of 75 to 85°F had nearly twice as much ascites. These birds showed fluid in the abdomen when slaughtered and did not grow well.

Deep water in waterers allowed chicks that fell in to get too wet for too long, so they died of hypothermia. So put pebbles or something in waterer to allow a chick to fall in and walk out.

Broiler mothers with overeating disorder were fed a ration too high in nutrient density, they ate too much feed, became obese and failed to lay adequate egg numbers and had lower fertility in eggs laid. Overeating may cause medicine in feed to be eaten at a toxic level.

All species of bird debeaked too severely fail to eat, fail to grow or reproduce and typically die more readily. Debeaking is surgery and must be done well and successfully.

Detoeing surgery on turkeys appears to encourage more infected feet and legs with ascending infection in the foot and leg.

Any surgery on bird must be done properly or not at all. My observation shows too little significant research done on surgery on individual birds.

Feed crumbs or pellets too large for chicks to eat appeared to cause uneven chick growth and more mortality.

Mycotoxins in moldy grain apparently killed baby chicks, poults and bunnies on three different farms and on three different occasions.

Young turkeys eat wood splinters from litter. The splinter punctures the duodenal loop in the small intestine and the turkey dies.

The thermostat or time clock over-ride sticks and the fans blow the brooder house cold. The chicks chill, get sick, slow in growth rate and many die.

A waterer runs over about 1,000 gallons on a litter floor before it is stopped. Chicks drink contami-

nated water, wet litter produces odor and toxic gas, chicks slow in growth rate, and many die. Because of the moisture, disease increases.

A weasel, mink, skunk, raccoon, or other predator enters a brooder house and kills many chicks. A 10-hour electrical power failure kills chicks.

Mice, rats, insects in a poultry house may carry disease or parasites to poultry.

Summary - Some reasons given for caretakers afflicting permanent damage on birds are, "I did not know," "I didn't see it," "forgot," "was trying to help," "came on duty late," "had car trouble," "I hate this job," "ammonia fumes made me sick," "dust covered the thermometer," "I was told two different directives by two different people," "I did not have time," "no one told me!"

Prevent costly affliction.



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## Soybean Board Funds Research

NEWARK, Del.—The 1995 Delaware Soybean Board research grants to the College of Agriculture Sciences at the University of Delaware totaled more than \$53,000.

The funds support research to improve soybean production in Delaware. The check was presented to Dr. John Nye, dean of the college, by Doug Corey, president of the Delaware Soybean Board, and treasurer Olin Gooden.

The soybean projects funded for this year are:

- An analysis of hedging as a soybean marketing alternative
- Continuing grower-Extension research communication
- Effect of poultry manure on the efficiency of soybean herbicides
- Initiation of egg essays to determine soybean cyst nematode (SCN) population densities
- Lower-cost weed control and weed management programs for Delaware soybean production
- Management schemes for soybean severe stunt virus (SSSV) in Delaware soybeans
- Soybean proteins: prediction of functionality in value-added food application
- Soybean variety evaluation for site and cropping system adaption and cyst nematode resistance.

Delaware soybean farmers fund these projects through a per-bushel soybean checkoff. This grower-supported research will be conducted by Agricultural Experiment Station scientists, cooperative extension specialists, and researchers in the departments of food and resource economics, plant and soil sciences, and food sciences.