



## Did you Know?

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- Chickens have either 4 or 5 toes, depending upon the breed.
- Chickens are probably the most common bird in the world and are raised on every continent.
- Egg shell color is determined by the breed of hen and is often related to the color of the feathers over the hen's ears. Brown hens typically lay brown eggs and white chickens lay white eggs (although there are a few breeds of white chickens with brown ear-feathers that lay brown eggs). The Ameraucana Heirloom hens even lay eggs with pastel blue shells. Note that the shell color is not related to the nutrition or quality of the egg inside.
- Depending upon the breed, a single chicken can lay from 100 to 300 eggs per year. Most eggs are laid between 7 a.m. and 11 a.m.
- The common commercial egg flocks of hens in the United States lay an average of 260 eggs per hen in a year and over a million birds are in commercial egg production each year.
- The average egg contains 70 calories and supplies 13% of the Daily Reference Value (DRV) for protein, providing mind and body energy for big days!
- In 2013, the average American consumed 82.7 eggs during the year.
- Humans started keeping chickens over 10,000 years ago.
- It takes 23-32 hours to form an egg.
- Chickens play a big part of our folk tales. Have you heard of Little Red Hen, Henny Penny and Chicken Little?
- A hen must eat 3.5 pounds of feed to make a dozen eggs.
- When eggs are laid, they are approximately 107°F as that is the body temperature of the hen.
- The incubation period for a fertilized chicken egg is 21 days.
- The shell of an egg has approximately 7,000 pores.
- Through the pores, carbon dioxide is expelled, replaced by atmospheric gases including oxygen.
- The shell of an egg is composed mainly of calcium carbonate, which is similar in make up to chalk.
- After hatching, the chick loses the egg tooth after a few days.
- It takes on average 4 to 12 hours for a chick to completely emerge from the shell after hatching.
- When a hen sits on eggs, the eggs are heated to 100-101°F.
- While sitting on eggs, the hen turns her eggs by using her beak to scoop under the eggs and roll them towards her.
- Imprinting is a natural instinct in birds. When newly hatched birds bond to the first thing they see, which is usually their mother. The strong bond encourages the baby birds to follow their mother to food, water and safety.
- We decorate eggs because painted, edible eggs were given to a Chinese chieftain in 722 BC to celebrate spring. In the 13<sup>th</sup> century, eggs with intricate religious symbols were common.
- Chickens swallow their food without chewing and then it is ground up in their gizzard.
- All eggs that make it to the grocery store have been candled to be sure they aren't fertilized.
- Chickens are ready for market at 8 weeks old.
- There is a breed of chicken named "New Hampshire Red" which originated in New Hampshire. They are known for extra-large brown eggs and excellent meat production.