

Inspiration for activities & demonstrations*

Demonstrations

Show chicks hatching; chick handling; guess the weight of chicks; feeding hens; show how various 'kit' pieces work-drinkers, heat lamps, tags. Handle a chick, listen to the sound of chicks, look at the different breeds of hen, body features, spurs on cockerels, wattles/comb, adaptation e.g. feeding/scratching.

Talk about

Traceability, feeds used, different breeds, genetics, free range versus enriched colony; broiler/egg production cycle; managing manure; technology used, for example heating and energy efficiency; welfare-how your system meets all the birds' needs; explain about bio-security if on a unit.

Activity 1: 'Make a 3 Dimensional Hen' (8+)

Materials

Downloadable template (link below), white paper card, crayons, felt tips or pencil crayons.
www.face-online.org.uk/resources/farmers/3danimals/chicken.pdf

Instructions

Download the hen template. If copied on paper, glue it onto card to give it some further support. Whilst still flat, colour the hen. Use a stapler or sticky tape to join the tabs to complete making the hen.

Activity 2: 'Make a Chicken Mask' (5+)

Materials

Yellow and black card, corrugated cardboard or red felt or fabric, pair of scissors, red glittery pipe cleaners, glue.

Instructions

Cut a rectangular shape out of yellow card a bit wider than the child's face, mark where eye holes should be. Use a pair of sharp scissors to cut them out (with adult supervision). Cut two pieces for the beak: one out of black card and one, very slightly smaller, out of red card. Use either corrugated cardboard, red felt or fabric for the top layer. Cut two small tear drop shapes out of the black card and glue to mask. The "comb" is made using a cactus-shaped piece of red cardboard and red glittery pipe cleaners. Twist them to fit the shape of the card, glue down and attach to back of yellow card. Full instructions can be found here:
www.activityvillage.co.uk/chicken-mask

Displays

Tools and equipment used; different feed grains and supplements used; poster of different breeds of hen; cuts of meat.

Questions to ask visitors

Can you think of the foods that are made from eggs?
Do you know how many different breeds of hen there are?
What type of breed do I need?
What are the risks of non-farm assured chicken?
How much weight per kg of feed?
What happens if I let the broiler get too old?

Activity 3: 'Cress Heads' (8+)

Prepare a set of six beforehand for demonstration purposes. Make them into characters like Good egg (angel), bad egg (devil), (Johnny) Rotten egg (punk), or use ideas like 'egg cited', 'egg-hausted', 'egg-cellent' (swot), 'Egg-spert' (scientist) to characterise the egg!

Materials

Empty egg shells, felt pens, stick-on wobbly eyes (optional), cotton wool, cress seeds, an empty egg box, to keep the cressheads steady and for the children to take them home.

Instructions

- Wash out the egg shells and sit them in the egg box to keep them steady (on a cotton wool cushion to raise them up a bit if you need to).
- Draw on some amusing faces, using the wobbly eyes if you've got some or just felts and pens if not.
- Put some cotton wool inside the shells and dampen them with some water.
- Sprinkle cress seeds all over the cotton wool – try and get them to cover the top totally but avoid

The Back British Farming campaign website www.nfuonline.com/backbritishfarming lists the many reasons why British farming should be backed and how you can show your support.

For more information about LEAF and LEAF Marque and how to support our work, please visit www.leafuk.org

* Text kindly supplied by FACE (Farming and Countryside Education)



Key messages

- There are two types of chicken reared on British farms – ‘broilers’ which we eat and ‘layers’ that produce our eggs. There are two main breeds of broiler chickens – Ross and Cobb.
- Chickens eat a 100% vegetarian diet – around 60% cereal (wheat, barley, maize), 30% soya bean meal for protein and 10% minerals, vitamins and salt.
- The poultry meat sector creates 73,000 jobs across the supply chain and contributes £6.6 billion to the UK economy.
- 95% of broiler chickens are housed indoors where temperature and ventilation are controlled by a computer.
- An average laying hen produces 310 eggs per year and more than 9.7 billion eggs are produced in the UK every year.
- The main breeds of laying hens in the UK are Hyline, Lohmann Brown, Bovans, Columbian Black Tail.
- The British Lion Quality mark on egg shells and egg boxes means that the eggs have been produced to the highest standards of food safety. 90% of eggs in the UK carry this mark.

Speak Out top tips

- Be aware of background noise - pick a spot where everyone can hear you
- Create a circle – put an umbrella in the ground and ask people to stand round it; stand so that no one has your back to them
- Keep it personal – about you and your farm; it will be more memorable
- Be positive – if you are asked a negative question, turn it round and talk about the good things you are doing
- Keep out the jargon – a drill and headland mean something different; explain the terms you use e.g. an agronomist is a crop doctor, an acre is just over a football pitch
- Make your story relevant – start by talking about food and how your visitors benefit from your produce, rather than starting off talking about farming
- Use props – to illustrate what you are saying
- Talk with everyone – look at everyone, not just the people at the front
- Ask your visitors questions – interact with them, it will help keep their interest
- Engage the senses – encourage listeners to look, listen, smell and touch things to keep people engaged.

Health & Safety

- If you allow visitors to touch your animals, hand washing facilities, signage and supervision are essential
- You must provide: running water, liquid soap and paper towels
- Anti-bacterial hand gels are NOT a suitable alternative to hand washing
- Helpers need to encourage and supervise thorough hand washing
- Locate eating areas away from animal contact areas
- Eating and smoking in animal contact areas should be forbidden to avoid hand to mouth contact
- Ensure animals have clean, fresh bedding and that no bedding protrudes into walk ways
- Ensure yards, walk ways, gates and railings are clean – watch for areas of faecal seepage
- Provide a tap and brushes for visitors to wash mud off boots and pushchairs, followed by hand washing
- Make sure the event is insured and that a risk assessment has been carried out (if you are a helper, please read it)

Read the industry code of practice: ‘Preventing or controlling ill health from animal contact at visitor attractions.’

For more health and safety information see the Open Farm Sunday website: www.farmsunday.org

