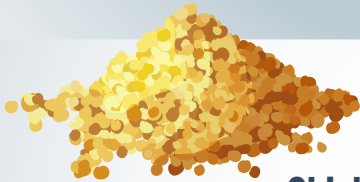


Feed intake behaviour in modern layer hens

4 Key Facts:



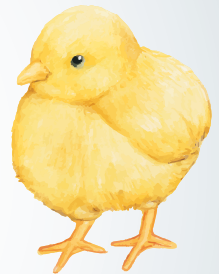
Chickens are granivorous birds.

Pullet and layers prefer the feed in coarse particle size.

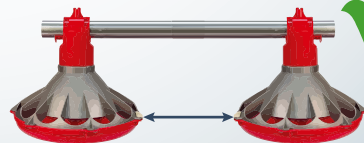
Layer hens debeaking treatment helps to prevent selective feeding intake behavior.



Baby chicks prefer minipellet or crumble feed.



Enough feeder space is crucial to get the right feed intake and maintain good uniformity.



Management Actions to ensure correct Feed Intake

**Enough feed
space at each age**



0-3 weeks (2.5 cm)
4-16 weeks (>5 cm)
In production (>10 cm)

**After week 5 train the
birds to eat the fines**



Leave no feeding time at noon
so birds will eat the fines

Homogenous feed



Max of particles < 1 mm- 25%

**Mid night snack: If birds
aren't eating enough in
raring or production**



1-2 hours light, water and
feed during night time

The water should be fresh



Birds don't like water over 27°C



Energy intake limits feed intake



In rearing

Increase whole diet concentration if you don't get body weight.



After week 10th reduce the energy and protein to stimulate feed intake development.



In production

Body weight controls the energy needs.

Formulate the energy requirement based on the body weight.

REMEMBER: Strong gizzard activity helps gut health, therefore a good energy intake.



REMEMBER: Only pullets that end with high feed intake have a good start in production and keep up in production until the 100 weeks of age.



Feed Intake Check List

Check daily and weekly
feed consumption.

Prevent spillage feed.

Avoid feeders getting too full.

Hens would get too selective with a
wrong choice and negative impact
on correct nutrient levels.



REMEMBER: Energy demand and feed intake changes when:



Temperature is below 20°C



Feather loss



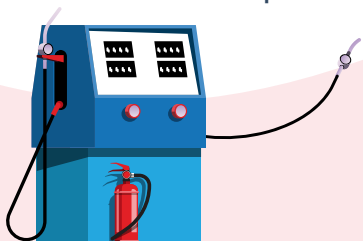
Temperature above 28°C due to panting



Chain feeders or trolley feeding systems are more suitable for layers

Ensure you achieve these Goals

- ✓ **Good feed consumption** during first week and as high as possible feed intake at the end of rearing.
- ✓ **Target feed intake of 100 gr/hen/day achieved** before the birds are 20 weeks old.
- ✓ Standard body weight is **achieved first 5 weeks and at the end of rearing.**
- ✓ **Adjust energy intake to the body weight** of birds and amino acid intake to the egg mass production.



REMEMBER: Correct feed intake is the essential “fuel” modern layer hens need to “body build” their production capacity which then can constantly hold up the desired egg target mass production over 100 weeks and more.

Bibliography



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