

Welcome to backyard poultry ownership: Your guide to biosecurity

Congratulations on your decision to raise poultry! As you step into this exciting world of raising your own fresh egg supply, or the next ribbon winner at your county fair, it's crucial to understand the significance of biosecurity for the long-term health of your birds.

Here's what you need to know:

- Know where you're getting your birds. Purchase from reputable sellers to ensure healthy chicks.
- Healthy chicks and hens begin with your actions. Implementing biosecurity practices from day one ensures a safe and disease-free environment for your flock.
- Taking preventive measures now saves you from potential health issues later. Biosecurity is the barrier against diseases that can harm your birds.
- Biosecurity safeguards your birds, your family, other pets, and neighboring birds from the spread of disease.
- Biosecurity can be super simple and even the most basic steps can have a significant impact on your flock.

Start biosecurity in your backyard:

- Already have a flock at home? Isolate new birds for two to three weeks to prevent potential disease transmission to your existing flock.
- Regularly clean and disinfect feeding and watering equipment, coop, and places poultry have access to reduce disease risks.
- Keep your poultry fenced in and limit visitors to your poultry area. If guests have poultry of their own, it might be best to keep them out of your coop.
- Wash your hands. Wash them before and after handling birds, eggs, or their feed.
- Change into specific shoes or boots when entering your poultry area. Don't bring your street shoes into your coop.
- Keep a close eye on your birds for any signs of illness. If you notice anything unusual, talk to a vet.

Further Resources:

- University of Minnesota Extension - Poultry: extension.umn.edu/poultry
- Your veterinarian