



For the Farmer in All of Us!™

# STARTER GUIDE TO RAISING DUCKS

*In addition to the basic chick care information, new duck owners will find these tips helpful.*

## DUCKLING VS. CHICKS:

Ducklings and chicks have similar care requirements. Although ducklings and chicks can be raised together, ducklings have different feed requirements and tend to be messier, which can make a shared brooder difficult.

## BROODER SPACE:

Ducklings do not handle being overheated well, so be careful to monitor their heat. They do best in a temperature of 90 degrees for the first week, with the temperature reducing by 5 degrees each week until they are fully feathered. Panting and drooping wings are signs that they are overheated.

Ducklings can make quite a mess while drinking and eating, so it is important that their brooder space be routinely cleaned with fresh bedding added. Although many people like to use cardboard boxes as brooders, they really do not work with ducks. They are just too messy! We have found that a Rubbermaid box works best, as they contain mess but are easily hosed out.

## FEEDING:

You should never feed ducks without water. Water helps the duck get food down and clean beak vents. Ducklings require different starter than chicks, because they have higher niacin requirements. Feeding ducklings chick starter can lead to niacin deficiency, causing leg weakness and development issues.

See our Feeding Guideline for detailed information. Just like chicks, ducklings appreciate greens and fruits, but they must be chopped into small pieces. Do not feed grass clippings.