

CARE LEAFLET FOR BURFORD BROWNS AND COTSWOLD LEGBARS

The following are normal basic rules for good management of young poultry, and apply to any growers or pullets which are being introduced to a new home.

- **The birds should remain on poultry growers pellets until 18-20 weeks of age.** Reason: growers pellets provide a balanced diet to allow pullets to achieve full body weight before coming into lay. When a hen starts to lay it will cease to produce new muscle and bone, so should not be given a layers ration too soon.
- **They should not be mixed with other hens until 18-20 weeks of age.** Reason: young chickens have an immature immune system which may not be able to cope with disease challenges from other hens. Hens reared in different parts of the country may have an immunity to a range of different diseases.
- **They should not be mixed with ex-battery hens.** Reason: ex-battery hens have undergone a commercial vaccination programme and may be disease carriers. Ex-batts have been kept for 12+ months in intensive systems and may be suffering from chronic disease.
- **They should not be mixed with hens showing signs of illness, or which have been ill in the past.** Reason: many poultry diseases remain dormant in a seemingly healthy hen, and may crop up again at times of stress.
- **Up to 18 weeks of age, they should have constant access to adult size, hen flint grit with no oyster shell.** Reason: excessive calcium can cause kidney damage in young hens but flint grit is essential for a healthy digestive system and should be used at the appropriate size from one week of age.
- **At 18-20 weeks they should be given mixed hen grit (containing flint and oyster shell) and poultry layers pellets**
- **They should be kept free-range, or in a good sized run (recommended size - 10m sq. per bird).** Reason: all hens need plenty of daily exercise, walking and running to maintain health and fitness.
- **They should be kept in a well ventilated, vermin proof house.** Reason: Ventilation and egg quality are closely linked. Many hen houses do not have enough ventilation and this can cause respiratory diseases which hens are prone to. Rats can carry diseases including Pasturella.
- **They should be regularly wormed with Flubenvet.**
- **A good quality multi vitamin should be given twice weekly,** Reason: vitamins in poultry feed start to deteriorate after several weeks. Always check use-by date on feed bag.
- **The birds should never be subjected to stressful situations.**
- **Fresh clean water should be available at all times**
- **Poultry layers pellets should be available at all times for adult hens**