

How to Raise Meat Chickens

A Comprehensive Guide for Beginners

Raising meat chickens is a great way to provide your family with fresh, healthy food, while also saving money on your grocery bill. It's also a fun and rewarding experience, and it can be a great way to get your kids involved in the homesteading lifestyle.



Dinner From Scratch: How To Raise Meat Chickens: A Complete Guide to Raising Better Tasting, Happier Chickens for Meat by Brian Cunningham

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If you're thinking about raising meat chickens, this guide will provide you with everything you need to know, from choosing the right breed to butchering and processing your birds.

Choosing the Right Breed

There are many different breeds of meat chickens available, each with its own unique advantages and disadvantages. Some of the most popular

breeds include:

- **Cornish Cross:** This is the most common breed of meat chicken, and it's known for its fast growth rate and large size.
- **Redbro:** This breed is known for its good meat quality and its ability to withstand heat and cold.
- **Wyandotte:** This breed is known for its good meat quality and its ability to lay eggs.
- **Plymouth Rock:** This breed is known for its good meat quality and its ability to withstand heat and cold.

When choosing a breed, you'll need to consider your climate, the size of your coop, and your budget.

Housing Your Chickens

Meat chickens need a secure, well-ventilated coop to protect them from the elements and predators. The coop should be large enough to provide each chicken with at least 2 square feet of space.

You'll also need to provide your chickens with nesting boxes, perches, and a waterer and feeder. The nesting boxes should be filled with clean straw or wood shavings, and the perches should be placed at least 18 inches off the ground.

Feeding Your Chickens

Meat chickens need a high-protein diet to support their rapid growth. You can feed them a commercial chicken feed or a homemade ration that includes:

- Corn
- Soybean meal
- Alfalfa meal
- Fish meal
- Vitamins and minerals

You'll need to feed your chickens 2-3 times per day, and you'll need to adjust the amount of feed you give them as they grow.

Caring for Your Chickens

In addition to providing your chickens with food, water, and shelter, you'll also need to provide them with regular care. This includes:

- Cleaning their coop and nesting boxes
- Checking for signs of illness or injury
- Trimming their beaks and nails
- Vaccinating them against common diseases

By providing your chickens with proper care, you can help them stay healthy and productive.

Butchering and Processing Your Birds

Once your chickens have reached their desired weight, it's time to butcher and process them. This is a process that can be done at home, but it's important to follow the proper steps to ensure that your birds are processed safely and humanely.

The following steps will help you butcher and process your meat chickens:

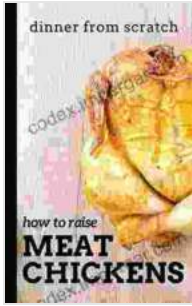
1. Hang the chicken upside down by its feet.
2. Make a small incision in the back of the neck, just below the skull.
3. Insert a sharp knife into the incision and cut through the spinal cord.
4. Allow the chicken to bleed out for several minutes.
5. Scald the chicken in hot water to loosen the feathers.
6. Pluck the feathers off the chicken.
7. Remove the internal organs from the chicken.
8. Rinse the chicken thoroughly inside and out.
9. Cut the chicken into the desired pieces.
10. Package the chicken pieces and freeze or refrigerate them.

By following these steps, you can butcher and process your meat chickens safely and humanely.

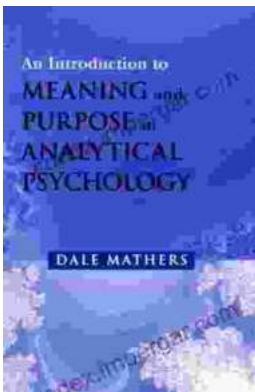
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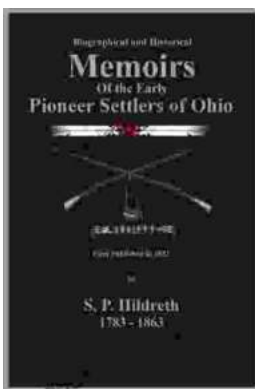


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