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## **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PREVENTING FLOOR EGGS IN BREEDERHOUSES**

Eggs laid on the floor are detrimental to the production of the flock because of:

- less useable eggs
- a higher risk of contamination of the hatching eggs
- extra work for the farm staff

It is important to understand which factors may increase the incidence of floor eggs, so that the level can be reduced.

- The birds should easily recognise the nest. Take care for the situation of the lighting-system. It must shine on the nests, slats and litter.
- The nest should be easy for them to reach (no barrier for the nests)
- The bottom of the feeding trough at least 20 cm from the floor (slats/litter) and the height of the feeding trough grill must be so low as possible (55-60mm), but sometimes they don't use supports for feed troughs on the slats and then it's also necessary to use lower type of the grills
- When possible after finishing feeding, immediately winch up the feeding system till a height of 1.80 meter. The best way for that is to use an electric winching system connected to a time switch. In this case there is a big reduction of shady places!
- Prevent sunlight from directly entering the nest
- Keep the nest free from draft (special design of the nests for cross-ventilation available)
- Please pay attention to the inlets of the ventilation. Speed of the air approx. 1 – 1.3 meter/second
- Place the nest in the centre of the house
- The slats for the nests must be raised to a maximum of 10% (this is reducing the risk of being laid outside the nests)
- The drinking system must be installed with a distance of approx 60 cm from the nests on the slats
- Open the expel system not too early (is making the nests dirty). Open the expel system when the first egg is laid. Opening of the nests, just before the start of the production, allows one to profit from the higher exploration activity that hens show at this stage of their physiology
- Avoid dark corners in the poultry house. Install a bright (no coloured) lighting system that will give during all the time and in all places a light spectrum divided on bird level approx 80-100 lux. Dark shady areas under the feeding system, or near pillars, are a common place for floor eggs
- In case of floor eggs near the wall, place an electric shock wire
- Divide the nests uniformly over the house
- A high nests density seems to negatively influence the number of eggs laid outside the nests. An indication is 110 broiler breeders per 1.22 meter double colony-nests
- The birds must be equally divided over the whole house and a bad ventilation and feeding system has a big influence on the number of floor eggs
- Hens must be able to eat and drink before or after they lay their eggs. The feeding time must allow hens to satisfy their morning appetite before they start laying. Do not supply the birds with feed while they are on the nests. If they are fed during this period, they will be drawn away from the nests. Most of the eggs (60%) are laid during the first 6-7 hours of light. If feed is restricted, the hens should be fed within one hour after the light is switched on or eight hours after turning on the lighting
- For the orientation of the layers is good to install every 10-12 meter a bulb of 25 watt. These bulbs are connected to a time switch and a dimmer. Switching on is one hour before the official light is starting and will be end one hour after switching off. During the hour before the layers can find the nest and after they can find their place for the night.





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- When water restriction is too severe, or the water level in the drinkers is too low, birds queue up around the drinking points. This can delay hen movement towards the nests
- Collect always from the beginning the floor eggs so frequently as possible. Every hour until the early afternoon, otherwise, they become an incentive for other hens to lay in the same place. It is too late to start collecting floor eggs when it is already a problem. The amount of floor eggs greatly depends on how quick and observant the farm attendant is and the subsequent action taken.
- During the collecting of the floor eggs, the farm attendant should try to identify the hens laying on the floor and put them into the nests
- It's important that all the operations in the breeder house will be as calmly as possible, in order not to disturb other hens already in the nests.
- Locate always the feeding and drinking system as close to the nests and the hens should be able to cross the feeding system
- Bring (or show) the nests at the right time so that the birds can get used to them before the onset of lay, it means hens should be transferred at approx 18 weeks, but at least one week before they start laying
- The litter on the floor should not be too deep at the beginning of the laying period (too much litter on the floor stimulates the hens to lay their eggs there. By rearing in the layer-house reduce the litter till approx 2 cm and after the start of laying during 4 weeks every week 2 cm till a maximum of 10 cm. A big profit is also that it keeps the litter in an optimum condition (better dry)
- By transferring hens to the layer house, spread them over the slatted floor (because there is the water)
- Do not make any partitions in the house
- House temperature should preferably be around 18 gr. C. A warm, draft free house reduced the number of floor eggs
- Close the area in front of the house. At the moment there is an open space in front of the house please close them with slats!

**By rearing in the (layer breeder house) we recommend:**

**Attention:** By rearing in a layer house the risk of getting floor eggs is bigger and it needs a higher attention from the farm attendant

- When the birds are reared from day-old in the layer house, it will be good to cover the nest with a good quality plastic foil. Remove the plastic foil with a age of 18-19 weeks old. It's good to arrange a change during this time. This change must stimulate the activity for visiting the nest during this critical time. The bird must be able to isolate herself in a place that protects her against the risk of aggression to her or her egg. **The nest must be a new element and it must make them anxious**
- A lighting system in the middle (on the top of the nests) of the house will also stimulate the visit of the nests. Starting of this lighting system when the age of layers is approx. 19 weeks. But a lighting system on the slats and litter is also necessary.

When there are any remarks or questions about using the using Jansen nests please feel free and don't hesitate to contact us.

