Chicken Embryo Development

Hatching eggs.

Infertile, unincubated egg. Blastodisc located on top of yolk appears irregular in shape.

Fertile, unincubated egg. Blastoderm larger, more regular in shape and has a “donut-appearance.”

Day 1
“Donut-shape” greatly enlarged and embryo lies within the donut ring.

Day 2
Blood appears as “blood islets” in outer ring of developing embryo.

Day 3
Circulatory system well developed. Formation of appendages.

Day 4
Notice brain to body size relationship.

Day 5
Brain continues to develop at rapid rate.

Day 6
Wing development rapid. Development of egg tooth begins.

Day 7
Egg tooth seen on tip of beak. Eyes very conspicuous.

Day 8
Feather tracts seen on the back. Wings, feet, toes well developed.

Day 9
Beginning formation of feathers.

Day 10
Down feathers appear. Hardening of beak and egg tooth begins.

Day 11
Eyelids have overgrown eyes.

Day 12
Calcification of bone started. Toenails and down feathers on neck, thighs and wings present.

Day 13
Appearance of scales on legs. Comb and wattles present.

Day 14
Embryo acquires a more chick-like appearance.

Day 15-19
Embryo grows rapidly assuming hatching position with the head under the right wing and beak toward the air cell. Remaining yolk sac begins entering body cavity.

Day 20
Chick begins pipping through shell.

Day 21
Chicks hatch and dry.

For more information, call your county Extension office. Look in your telephone directory under your county’s name to find the number.

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