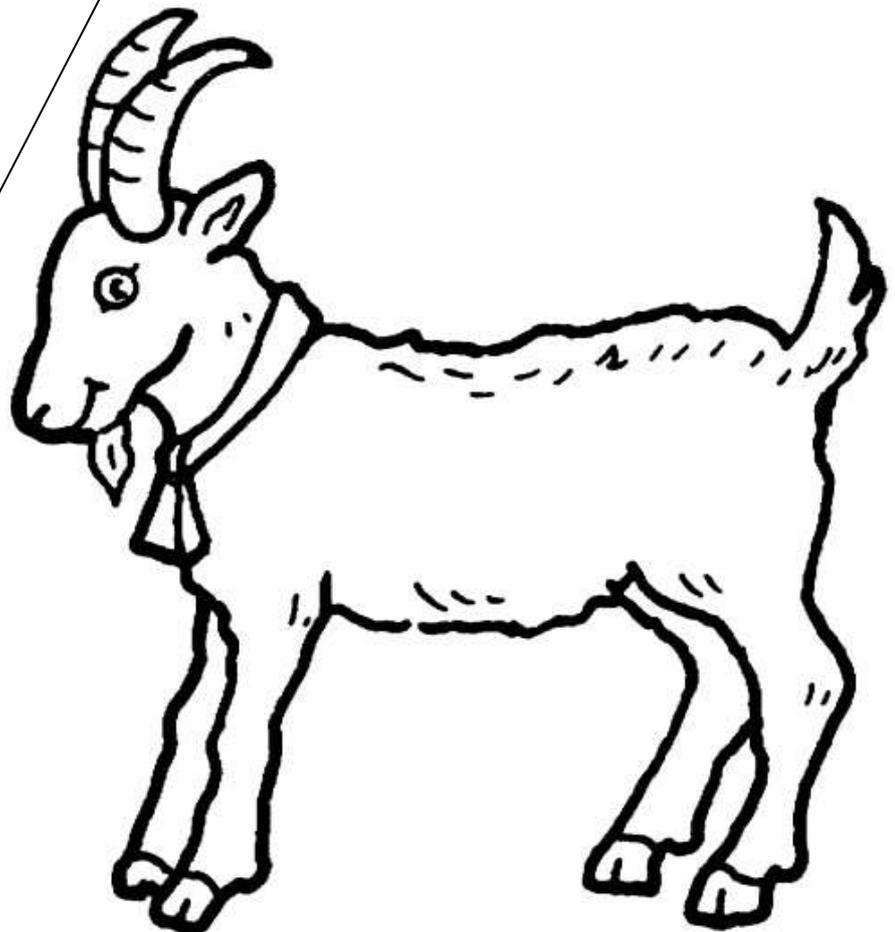


Education Pack

Poultry and Game Birds.

Here at Belmont Farm we have lots of different animals. In this booklet you can find out about the poultry and the game birds that we have here, where they come from and what they are used for.

Happy learning!



A few key words you will need to know.

Throughout this pack there may be a few words that you don't know the meaning of. Let's go through them now.

Game Bird: A game bird is a bird that is raised for sport or for meat. Birds like Pheasants, grouse, guinea fowl and quails.

Poultry: This is the term used for birds that are kept on the farm for either meat or as pets, these include chickens, ducks, geese and turkeys.

Incubator: This is where the eggs are placed so we can hatch them ourselves. The incubator will keep the eggs at the right temperature and will rotate the eggs every few hours just as the hen would.

Breed: In the animal kingdom there are lots of different types of the same animal. These are called "breeds" and each type has a different name. For example dogs:

This dog is a border collie.
That is his breed.



This dog is a Rottweiler.
That is his breed.



Chickens!

Let's start with something everyone has heard of. Chickens are used on farms for meat and for eggs, but what else do we need to know about chickens?

There are so many different breeds of chicken it would be impossible to count. Here at Belmont Farm we have around 10 different breeds of chicken.

The male chickens, called cockerels or roosters, and female chickens, called hens, look very different. Hens are smaller, and lay the eggs; cockerels have a large comb on the top of their head, long flowing tail feathers and a very loud crow!

A mother hen will "talk" to her egg, teaching it certain calls and sounds before it is born, much like humans do to babies in their mummy's tummy.

Chickens have something called a "pecking order". This is sort of like a hierarchy, or ranking, of how important each chicken is. The cockerel is normally at the top, with his favourite chicken below him, and so on. The one at the bottom will often get pecked or bullied by the other chickens.



FUN FACTS!

A chicken can lay up to 300 eggs a year!
Each egg takes 25 hours to be made inside the chicken.

Chicken eggs take 21 days to hatch. When a hen is sitting on her eggs she will turn them every few hours to make sure they grow properly.

It is very difficult to tell if a chick is male or female until it is about 6 weeks old when the characteristics, such as the comb on a cockerel, start to appear. In many schools they will have artificially made chicks, where the females are yellow and the males are brown. This is not the case for all chicks.

Ducks!

We only have a few ducks here at Belmont Farm, but they are very cute and we might as well learn all about them.

Ducks are found all over the world, except for Antarctica.
All breeds of duck are part of the bird family Anatidae.

Ducks love water. They have waterproof feathers which means the water just runs straight off their back.

A male duck is called a drake, and a female duck is called a hen or a duck.
A group of ducks is called a raft, a team or a paddling!!!



We have two main breeds of duck here at Belmont,
The Indian Runner Duck and the Rouen.
There are lots of other breeds though.

FUN FACTS!

Ducks will eat plants as well as small insects and fish. This means they are omnivores.

Ducks are hunted for food, sport and farming. Some breeds of duck are used as decorative items in houses.

A ducks' feet are webbed; this helps them swim in the water. Although it does mean they look rather funny as they walk because it makes them waddle!!!

Duck eggs take about 27 days to hatch. Baby ducks are called ducklings.

Turkey.

We have a few different breeds of turkey here at Belmont Farm. Find out more about this funny looking animal below!

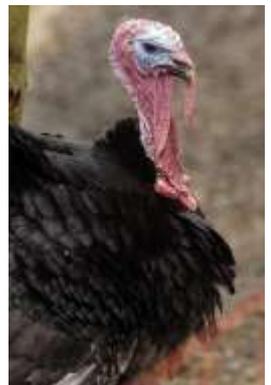
A male turkey is called a stag or a tom and a female turkey is called a hen.

Baby turkeys are called Poultts and take around 32 days to hatch.

Sometimes a long bit of skin hanging from a turkey's nose is called a snood. This is used to attract females. They also have a wattle, which is the brightly coloured part of their neck, which is for the same thing.

Male turkey's will often "Strut" around in front of the females. This is when they puff all their feathers and their tail fans out. It's supposed to make them look beautiful for the ladies... what do you think??

Turkeys are often eaten at Christmas, however it used to be tradition to eat goose at Christmas in England. It was King Edward VII that made it popular and fashionable to eat turkey!



Fun Facts.

A group of turkeys is called a rafter. Although sometimes they are referred to as gobblers or flocks but this is incorrect.

Wild turkeys can fly! The domesticated ones cannot though, because they have been bred to be twice as heavy as their wild friends.

Turkeys originally come from America. In fact Benjamin Franklin, a president of America, wanted the turkey to be the national symbol of America, instead of the bald eagle that is has become.

Pheasant!

Pheasants are bird you may not know much about... find out some facts below.

Pheasants are a game bird; if they are domesticated they are often used in a shooting sport, using them for meat is not as common.

They originally come from China, and South East Asia, however now they are found all over the world.

Pheasants can fly up to 60mph over short distances, but they prefer to run away from their predators.



We have four breeds of pheasant at Belmont Farm.

We have the:
Common pheasant.
Golden pheasant
Reeves pheasant
Silver pheasant.



FUN FACTS!

A male pheasant is a Cock, a female pheasant is a hen and a baby pheasant is a Poult.

It is always the male pheasants that are brightly coloured. The females are normally just one colour.

Female pheasants will lay around 12 eggs in one sitting (they can lay up to 20!). They take 23 days to hatch and the mother will look after them in the wild until they learn to fly, which is normally about 2 weeks, then they are on their own!

Geese!

We have a couple of different breeds of geese here at Belmont, and a few wild ones that come to visit as well!

A goose will lay an egg every couple of days. A goose egg takes 28-32 days to hatch into a gosling.

Wild geese are migrating birds. This means that they fly away from here in the winter to somewhere much warmer and come back in the summer to lay their eggs.

Geese make great guard dogs. They are very good at making lots of noise when strangers appear, but are very tame around their owners.

Geese will come back to their place of birth each year to lay their eggs, only moving if they feel threatened or their home is destroyed.



Fun Facts.

During June and July adult geese will lose their feathers in a process called “molting”, this means they cannot fly. When the feathers grow back the adults are able to fly again.

Geese always fly in a V shape. This is to decrease wind resistance, which makes it easier to fly.

Geese are very protective of their young. They will attack anything, including humans, which go near their goslings.

The name for a group of geese together is called a gaggle!

Guinea Fowl!

The last animal in our poultry and game bird pack is the Guinea Fowl, a very funny looking creature all the way from South Africa.

Guinea fowl are from Africa and can still be found roaming around all over the continent. Now they are also found all over the world.

Guinea fowl are farmed in England for sport, meat, eggs and feathers.

Guinea fowl feed on lice, worms, ants, spiders and ticks, as well as common birdseed and grain provided by farmers.

A guinea fowl will make a nest out of twigs and leaves, somewhere hidden from sight. The eggs will take around 28 days to hatch.



Fun Facts.

In their native land of Africa, guinea fowl have a lot of predators to watch out for, including wild dogs, humans and crocodiles!!!

Guinea fowl will mate for life just like geese.

Unlike most other animals and birds, both male and female guinea fowl look remarkably similar in size, colour and shape.