

Village Poultry Management

In the past, we have had a serious problem in the Village with bird mites. There are many pigeons and other feral birds around that can spread the Red Fowl Mite to your chooks. The following recommendations to poultry owners are to reduce the chance of your 'girls' becoming infested with mites and other parasites.

- Metal poultry houses are preferable to wooden ones. They are easier to clean and keep free from parasites.
- A moveable yard is a good idea to prevent parasite build up in one area.
- If wooden perches are used, clean and paint with teatree oil regularly.
- Ensure the chook yard or run is covered with bird wire or bird netting. This is to prevent any other birds coming into contact with the chooks. The netting needs to be small enough to stop sparrows as well.
- Straw in the yard or nesting boxes can provide a breeding ground for mites. Sawdust is a good nesting material as when fresh it gives out an odour that repels pests. Change the sawdust regularly.
- Dust the birds regularly with food grade Diatomaceous Earth (DE) or a poultry mite powder e.g. Pestene. These powders are not to be inhaled, so wear gloves and an appropriate dust mask. Put some in the nest boxes as well. Note: The DE **must** be food grade, not industrial grade, and is commonly known as Ascorbicide.
- Ensure the feeders/grain/water cannot be accessed by other birds.
- Only put out enough grain to be consumed straight away. Feed twice a day rather than have a continuous feeder.
- Store all grain and feed in secure mouse and rat proof containers.
- Clean up food scraps and vegetable waste from the yard regularly so as not to attract mice and rats.
- Ensure the yard has a dust bath area.
- Herbs such as wormwood can assist in repelling parasites. If grown in the yard or nearby the chooks will eat it, and cuttings can be placed in the nest boxes.