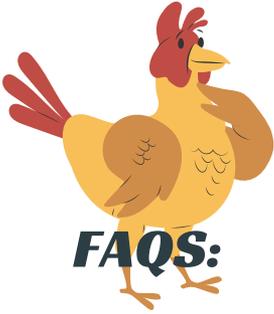


VACCINATING MY FLOCK

WHAT ARE MY CHOICES?



1) Is there a way for someone incubating eggs and hatching their own chicks to vaccinate against Marek's Disease?

It is possible, but can be challenging. The vaccine is typically only available for purchase in large quantities and requires specialized storage, experience, and equipment. Newly hatched chicks must be vaccinated individually under the skin.

2) The chicks I ordered are not vaccinated against Marek's Disease. Outside of biosecurity, what can I do to protect them?

Delay exposure by not putting the new chicks in contact with older birds for at least 2 weeks. This will delay the infection and may lessen the consequences of the disease.

MAREK'S DISEASE

The most prevalent disease of small flocks is Marek's Disease. This virus is found in every environment and can cause devastating losses in your flock. Vaccination helps prevent this disease. It is recommended that the vaccine be given at the hatchery.

OTHER VACCINATIONS

There are very few recommended vaccines for backyard chickens except for Marek's Disease. Generally, it is not advisable to vaccinate for the majority of poultry diseases because exposure is limited and most diseases can be prevented by having good biosecurity practices. Vaccination is not necessary or recommended for interstate bird movement.

Poultry keepers should make sure that they maintain their flock's health. This includes consulting other hobbyists or poultry veterinarians on disease prevention though good nutrition, environmental conditions, vaccinations, and parasite control.

If the flock does get sick, a veterinarian should be consulted and a diagnosis made. A treatment or vaccination may be recommended based on the findings in the flock. In cases of severe disease

or mortality, please contact your veterinarian, county extension agent, or the Georgia Poultry Laboratory Network's hotline at <https://www.gapoultrylab.org/avian-influenza-hotline/> or by calling 770-766-6850.



VACCINATING MY FLOCK

WHAT ARE MY CHOICES?

CONTINUED...



3) What is your recommendation when purchasing chicks?
We recommend purchasing chicks from an NPIP certified hatchery and requesting vaccination against Marek's Disease.

4) Will biosecurity be enough to prevent Marek's if I hatch my own chicks at home?
Unfortunately, biosecurity alone is not sufficient to protect against Marek's Disease; however it is critical in preventing many other poultry diseases.

For more information on common diseases and prevention in backyard flocks, please visit our website at:

WWW.GAPOULTRYLAB.ORG

GPLN Gainesville: 770-766-6810
Forsyth: 478-994-1219
Tifton: 970-420-4155

BIOSECURITY

The most important way to prevent disease in a backyard flock is biosecurity, especially when adding new birds to the flock. Following the tips below can help keep your flock safe.

BIOSECURITY TIPS

- Only add healthy chickens to your flock. Any chicken acquired from an outside source should be isolated from other chickens for a quarantine period of 30 days.
- Do not buy poultry from flea markets and other sales where airborne diseases are easily spread between birds and flock health histories are unknown.
- Separation from wild birds and aggressive rodent control are important factors for your small flock.
- Have dedicated boots (and even clothes!) for entering the coops and tending your flock. Change out of them on your way out of the flock's area.
- Wash your hands before and after contact with your chickens.
- Feed a healthy, complete diet and protect the flock from coccidiosis and other parasites.
- To prevent the spread of disease between flocks, do not let anyone who has poultry visit your flock and do not visit other flocks of poultry, including poultry club tours.

