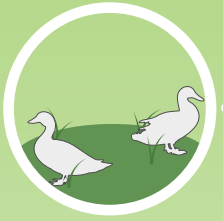


THE DOs & DON'Ts OF PEKIN DUCK WELFARE



DO: Provide open water sources, like troughs and pools. Scientists have found a link between open water and duck health. Ducks given open water had better foot pad health compared with ducks only given access to nipple drinkers. If a duck can at least dip its head in water, it may improve eye, nostril, and feather cleanliness.



DO: Give birds space to cool down. Lower stocking density is associated with better bird health, and it may keep power bills lower too. Giving birds more space may reduce stress and has the added benefit of allowing them to stay cooler in the summer months, especially in faster-growing duck strains.

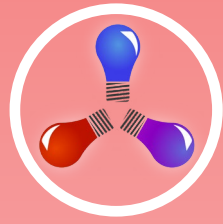


DO: Monitor indoor/outdoor mortality. Outdoor water access can satisfy water needs without the indoor moisture. That's good news—unless you have predators in the area. While ducks housed outdoors normally have a slightly higher mortality rate (2-3% indoors vs. 5-7% outdoors), this rate jumps to 20% if there's heavy predation.

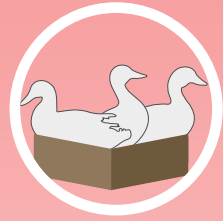


A Note for Producers

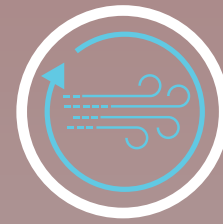
There are still some big unanswered questions in Pekin duck welfare. You can help advance this research by connecting with nearby Extension specialists to see if your duck operation can offer any new data for poultry science research!



DON'T: Jump on the latest lighting trends. While ducks seem to prefer brightly lit compartments, the value of adding supplemental blue light, red light or UV light has not been well demonstrated. We know that more light also leads to more egg laying, but the jury is still out on the bigger lighting questions.



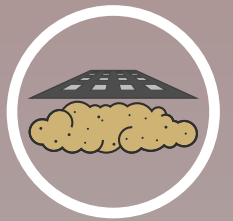
DON'T: Set up competition for nest boxes. Want to avoid floor laying? Invest in nest boxes. Ducks given more nest box access (they prefer the most enclosed kinds) show less floor laying and reduced aggression.



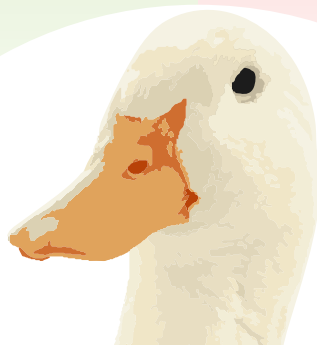
Further Research: Air Quality
No research has been done on the effects of ventilation on ducks raised in a U.S. and European commercial setting.

Further Research: Slatted Flooring vs. Litter

Slatted flooring may lead to poorer feather quality and leg health in ducks, but litter is associated with overheating and respiratory problems. Poultry scientists need to do more research on the benefits of only partially slatted or partially littered housing systems.



[Click Here to Read the Full Article.](#)



Poultry Science Association
4114C Fieldstone Road
Champaign, IL 61822