

Re: Chicken Lice?

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- *From:* "Jill" <news@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>
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Keith Kent wrote:

Hi Jill,
if the powder kills mites do we have to worry about the eggs as they will hatch and die with the treatment completing the cycle?

That depends on what mites they are – they all have different hatching cycles.
And some can be long lived

I don't know about ALL do and what is [parents]?

Merely a throwaway comment on the state of parenting in view of various news items recently
There are good and bad in all fields

The people you refer to above are not the ones we need to worry about

Where does this all come from?

You said
<quote> I think there will be lots of people out there with bugs affecting there birds and don't know it/never will. <unquote>

I disagreed with you – most poultry keepers are very conscientious
Of all scales – large and small.

,it is farmers who neglect there birds for profit on a massive scale
ie battery hens which should be outlawed.

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Most intensive poultry keepers look after their birds extremely well. If they don't they lose money very quickly

It is a very precarious business reliant on smooth and fast turnover. Any glitches are VERY expensive and have an immediate effect on viability of a business.

Birds get sick very easily, therefore anyone who wants to sustain a business and even make a profit in the intensive world works extremely hard to keep the birds as well as they can

That is why the industry spends millions each year on ventilation systems; on vaccinations; on breeding docility; on breeding out many of the bugs that affect free range birds on a daily basis and which had brought our egg production industry to its knees in the 1950's

But after all it is only a

chicken in two/three years they are of no use to the farmer.

And a lamb is slaughtered before its a year old. That is food production

The population want eggs as cheap as they can get them

If everyone went into their supermarket and left the battery eggs on the shelf there would be only free range eggs available within 6 months – however they would mostly be imported from countries where the welfare conditions are beyond your worst imagination but thats alright isn't it?

.On the other

hand organic/free range means they think they have the right to rip you off.

You obviously do not understand the costs and economics of the agricultural industry

Until organic food is comparable in price nothing will

change,

The only way that happens is when its all imported from countries who are rapidly increasing their organic production except there are very few controls or regulations

The only way anything is going to change is when the population of this country faces up to the fact that they have to start PAYING for their food again. Like they do in France and other countries where they support their agricultural industry.

In the 1950's we spent around 35% of our income on food

Now we spend less than 10% but we demand more and more and more for less and

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less money

This cruelty is most unlikely to happen for someone keeping back yard chickens ,most will be living a life of luxury compared to the other short life they could have.

Many backyard chickens can have far more 'stress' than intensive ones – most clearly illustrated by the fact that no outdoor bird will lay as much as one inside.

- they have to cope with constantly changing weather and insufficient shelter
- they have to cope with high volume, low nutrition food
- they have to cope with overflying birds [which instinctively might be predators]
- they have to cope with humans in their face all the time
- they have to cope with constant disease challenges from other wild birds
- they have to cope with the ever changing politics of a flock which can be downright evil and cannibalistic at times. [there are good reasons for the terms hen-pecked and pecking order]
- they have to cope with being poorly bred for their conditions
- they have to cope with being rarely treated properly for their ailments [while most people will happily spend hundreds of pounds on their cat which they got given; they will not spend ten pounds on taking a bird that they have actually paid good money for to a professional.]
- they have to cope with often dying of painful conditions ["HenPeny who we rescued went all quiet last week then she died in her sleep, And she had been laying too" : = Properly translates as a bird that should have been humane culled at the end of her last lay had an egg crack inside her, causing a fatal peritonitis to develop which killed her.]

The intensive bird has been bred to be very subdued and meek to reduce aggression

A well run unit will have constant light patterns; constantly regulated environmental controls, constant high value feed; low noise; disease prevention measures;

A stressed bird stops laying.

A chicken is hatched with the number of eggs she can produce already inside her. Modern breeding aims to get as many of these made and out in the first 2 years.

One of the consequences of breeding for high production has been a weakness of the shell in each subsequent lay. This results in eggs cracking inside and death by peritonitis. This as well as their general weakness and much reduced productivity in the years after their 2nd year of lay is the reason for them being slaughtered at this time.

There are 40 million chickens in production in the UK and we import a significant percentage of eggs. This is not a situation that can be resolved with simplistic theories.

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Don't get me wrong — I love keeping birds and working to improve the breeding of the birds we have and to do our best to keep them as happy and healthy as possible.

But I have done a great deal of homework and I am VERY realistic about all facets of the poultry keeping world [and the food industry]

I know that in our climate and location and social structure we cannot provide perfect conditions for chickens indoors or out.

Really the best places for that are the dry scrubby areas of the world, not too hot, not too wet, not too windy. Plenty of shelter from the rain when it comes; and the heat of the day. Lots of spare land to give birds plenty of freedom. Lots of cheap labour to tend to them night and day; — parts of India and Africa would be far better suited than any of us in the Northern Hemisphere <grin>

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regards
Jill Bowis

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