

## Lesson 6 – Extension 1 – Keeping chickens

**Keeping chickens is an excellent way of learning about animal husbandry, the biology of a farm animal and reducing unavoidable food waste. If students have a role in designing and constructing a ‘chook house’, this could also meet elements of the Design and Technologies curriculum.**

**Meets Design and Technologies ACTDEK021**

Investigate how and why food and fibre are produced in managed environments and prepared to enable people to grow and be healthy

**Design and Technologies ACTDEP024** Critique needs or opportunities for designing, and investigate materials, components, tools, equipment and processes to achieve intended designed solutions

**Design and Technologies ACTDEP025** Generate, develop and communicate design ideas and processes for audiences using appropriate technical terms and graphical representation techniques

**Design and Technologies ACTDEP026** Select appropriate materials, components, tools, equipment and techniques and apply safe procedures to make designed solutions

**Design and Technologies ACTDEP027** Negotiate criteria for success that include sustainability to evaluate design ideas, processes and solutions

**Science ACSSU043** Living things have structural features and adaptations that help them to survive in their environments

**Sustainability OI.5-OI.9** In summary, the sustainability of ecological, social and economic systems is achieved through informed individual and community actions that value equity and fairness across generations

## Teacher Notes

If you have the space, keeping a few chickens in your school can help the school to:

- get rid of unavoidable food scraps and reduce the amount of food waste going to landfill
- supply fresh eggs to those in need in the school community
- create a source of organic fertiliser for the school garden
- educate the students about caring for animals and where food comes from
- learn about the biology and reproduction of chickens

And students might enjoy observing the flock—chickens have lots of personality!

Keeping chickens at school would require infrastructure – a ‘chook house’, grain storage bins, a nearby water supply and an enclosed area for the chooks to forage. Designing and building the chook house and yard could be a project for Design and Technologies. Alternatively, there could be an opportunity for students to visit a household within walking distance of the school where chickens are kept, to see how they are cared for.

If the school was to have chickens, ensure that they could have self-feeders for the weekends and that in school holidays someone could care for the chickens, either at school or at their home.

## Method

There are many online resources about keeping chickens, such as <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-09-16/how-to-keep-backyard-chickens-healthy-and-happy/8940534> and many websites detailing how to build a chicken coop. Ask your students to design a chicken coop with the needs of chickens in mind. For example, a place to roost at night, safety from dogs and cats, shelter from the weather, a place to forage and a place to lay eggs.

Ensure that food scraps derived from each classroom and from the school canteen are given to the chickens.



The Tasmanian Department of Education has implemented the Tasmanian Agricultural Education Framework - Grow, Make, Protect, providing an overview of agricultural education from Kinder to Grade 12. This framework encourages and supports self-identified schools to become leaders in agricultural education. Those schools and others embed curriculum resources on food and fibre production, develop awareness and interest in agriculture and an awareness of local industry contexts.