

Assessing Correct Take-off Time



Maximum 3 chicks (or 1-2%) out per tray 30 hours before take-off time

If more than 1-2% chicks hatched, incubation time is too long and future hatch set-times should be delayed

Checklist

What to check	Action	Result if take-off time correct
Hatchers 30 hours before expected take-off	Count number of chicks hatched	Maximum of 3 chicks out per tray
Chicks at take-off	Check dampness at back of neck	5% should be slightly damp at back of neck
Emergence of wing coverts at take-off	Check feather blades	Blades should not be visible
Hatch debris at take-off	Check meconium staining of egg shells	Egg shells and hatch debris should be relatively clean

Once the chicks are fully out and dry, any extra time in the hatcher is likely to be damaging

Visual Assessment Of Chicks At Take-off Time



At take-off 5% of chicks should still be damp at the back of the neck

Egg Shell Debris - What It Tells You

Relatively clean egg shells means take-off time is correct

Meconium-stained egg shells means chicks out too long



Adjusting Incubation Times Safely

- When incubation times are wrong, adjust set-time
- Adjust in increments of 3 hours (a delay in set-time of up to 15 hours may be needed)
- Keep checking to determine correct incubation time
- Do not adjust incubation temperatures

Chick Wing Coverts - What They Tell You

If the feather blade is starting to be visible, then the chicks have been in the hatcher too long

