



White Pekin Duck and its rearing practices



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Introduction:

Pekin duck is an old dual purpose and most popular commercial duck breed. It was originated from Mallard in China but in the middle of 1800s, Pekin duck was brought to the western world and afterward it also known as American duck or Long Island duck. This duck is most popular for their egg laying ability and fine meat quality and resistant to all the climatic condition.

Characteristic:

Pekin duck belong to heavy breed class. They have long bodies and quite long necks. They are very large breasted and have yellow skin. Their feathers are of white or creamy white in colour. Their legs are a reddish or orange-yellow, and the bill is yellow. They have short wings. They have a more vertical posture than dabbling ducks, and have an overturned rump. The eyes of the pekin duck boast grayish-blue coloured iris, when observed closely. But when observed far away, their eyes seem to be black in colour.

This duck is very intelligent bird. They will quack loudly for warning others about any predators near them. This duck grow very fast as compared to other meat duck breed, friendly in nature and good pet to the owner. On an average, adult pekin ducks weight

between 3.6 kg- 5 kg in captivity. It is a long life bird with a life span of 9-12 years.

Life cycle:

Incubation period: Incubation period of mostly duck is 28 days higher than chicken. Disease free duckling should be purchased from reliable source or Govt. agency to start the newly duck farm.

Brooding period: Brooding period in duck is 1 days old to 4 week old. This stage is the most critical stage for duckling and higher mortality may be observed within this period, if proper care not taken. 1 sq meter area for 100 ducklings or 100 sq. centimeter per ducklings is sufficient for brooding. A temperature of 29^o to 32^o C (85 to 90^oF) has to be maintained during the first week. It has to be reduced by about 3^oC per week till it reaches 24^oC (75^oF) at the ends of fourth week. If the temperature is higher than the recommended level, air circulation should be increased. In case of winter, a 60W bulb at 1-1.5 meter height from the ground level is enough to maintain the required temperature.

Housing: Depending on the rearing system, intensive, semi-intensive or range system, a house can be made with locally available materials like bamboo etc. Under intensive system, a floor space of 2-2.5 sq. ft. area per bird is allowed as night shelter. Under