



100 E. Tyler St., Suite 300
Athens, TX 75751
Phone: 903-675-6130
Fax: 903-677-7222

<http://henderson-co.tamu.edu>



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Clover Connection

By: Kate Marshall
Extension 4-H Agent

I placed an order with my egg lady this week. I told her I'd take 5 dozen. Realizing that might not be enough, I upped my order. Do I really like eggs? Am I making a gigantic omelet for a bunch of my friends? What would a person do with that many eggs?! Rest assured, I haven't lost my mind. It's just time to start the "Hatching in the Classroom" project with some local schools!

It's a pretty amazing process, tracking an egg from incubation to hatching a little chick. The whole progression takes a mere 21 days. The first thing that students usually ask is "are these eggs from the grocery store?" The answer to that is no. You can't hatch an egg that comes from the grocery store. The eggs we use are fertile and come from a farm with hens and roosters.

Some interesting facts about baby chicks include: It can take up to 24 hours for a chick to "pip" out of its shell. Chicks have an "egg tooth" on the end of their beak that they use to peck their way out of the shell. Once the chick is out, it doesn't need to be fed or watered immediately – just before it hatches, it absorbs the remaining yolk in the egg and uses it for nourishment.

Each spring I usually set up an incubator in my office to have some baby chicks at our county livestock show. We offer tours to grade school students to provide some education about agriculture and where food comes from. So, if you are ever in the courthouse and think you hear some chirping, there might just be some baby chicks living in the Extension Office!

Kate Marshall is the Henderson County Extension Agent – 4-H & Youth Development for Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. Contact her at: kate_marshall@ag.tamu.edu & visit our webpage at <http://henderson.agrilife.org>