

Organic Chicken Feed Is Cheap When You Make It Yourself

<http://tlc.howstuffworks.com/home/organic-chicken-feed-cheap.htm>

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A benefit of raising your own chickens is having inexpensive organic eggs and meat. The problem is that in many areas it is nearly impossible to get organic chicken feeds and even if you can it is expensive.

Of course you can order it online, or have your feed store special order it but it is inconvenient as well. Your final cost is still less than buying commercially raised poultry products (And more humane!) but homesteaders generally have to constantly look for ways to save money.

Homemade Organic Chicken Feed

Free range and pasture raised chickens eat a lot of forage. From mice to bugs and grass to your prize tomatoes, chickens will peck at anything. Add in your table scraps and your chickens are probably getting a pretty balanced diet. You won't need to worry too much about the proper balance of ingredients because the feed will be a supplement to their diet rather than a primary component of it.

Obviously if you are going to make your own homemade organic chicken feed you will want to use all organic ingredients. Beware of soy and fish meal, however. Soy has a high concentration of phyto-estrogen and this is of concern to some people. Fish meal can have a high level of mercury and that is something you want to watch as well. There are so many good ingredients that can be added to homemade chicken feed there is no reason to buy questionable things.

You should be able to find all of the following ingredients in an organic variety. Kelp and oyster shell do not come in organic varieties but they are acceptable in a 100 percent organic blend.

Homemade Poultry Feed Mix

- 2 parts whole corn
- 3 parts soft white wheat
- 3 parts hard red winter wheat
- 1/2 part Diatomaceous Earth (not the kind you put in your pool)
- 1 part hulled barley
- 1 part oat groats
- 2 part sunflower seeds
- 1/2 part peanuts
- 1 part wheat bran
- 1 part split peas
- 1 part lentils
- 1 part quinoa
- 1 part sesame seeds
- 1/2 part kelp

Mix the feed by hand so that it is thoroughly mixed. It doesn't hurt to run your hands through it before feeding in case something settles. This is based on a good bit of Internet research from a variety of places. You may find Bird Farm helpful. It has a lot of specialty mixes. Another good place for information is the forum at Backyard Chickens.

Keep the oyster shell calcium in a container so the chickens can eat it as they need to.

Keep It Fresh

When you make Homemade, organic chicken feed you have the opportunity to completely control everything that goes into it. The tendency is to feel like you should make huge amounts to save time. Don't do it. Another benefit of homemade feed is that it is often more fresh than the commercial feeds, retaining much of the nutrients.

Store your fresh feed in an airtight, covered container.