

Tips on quail production



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Quail eggs are presented as a very complete food due to their high protein, vitamin and mineral content. Therefore, although quail eggs are smaller than chicken eggs, their nutritional value is higher.



With this article, Zucami's technical team intends to present **TIPS** that will help our customers to know the characteristics of quail egg production.

1

Most commonly used quail species

The quail species most commonly used for egg and meat production is the Japanese Quail (*Coturnix coturnix japonica*). However, for hunting grounds, the most sought after species is the Virginia Quail (*Colinus virginianus*):

- **Virginia Quail.** This is a semi-wild species that is normally reared for 14 to 16 weeks before being released into hunting grounds.

It is recommended that these birds have minimal contact with humans so that their status as game birds is not affected.



Picture 1. **Virginia quail or northern bobwhite quail (*Colinus virginianus*)**

- **Japanese Quail.** The common quail, specifically *Coturnix coturnix japonica* or Japanese quail, are the best known and used for captive breeding because they are the **most suitable for breeding for the production of eggs for human consumption, as well as for their meat.**



Picture 2. **Japanese Quail** (*Coturnix coturnix japonica*)



Basic aspects of quail breeding

The quail has an incubation period of 16 to 17 days and the chicks are born weighing approximately 8 to 10 grams.

- Their growth is quite fast, doubling and even tripling their size and weight in the first three weeks of life. On average, females reach a weight of about 150 grams and males 120 grams in their eighth week of life.



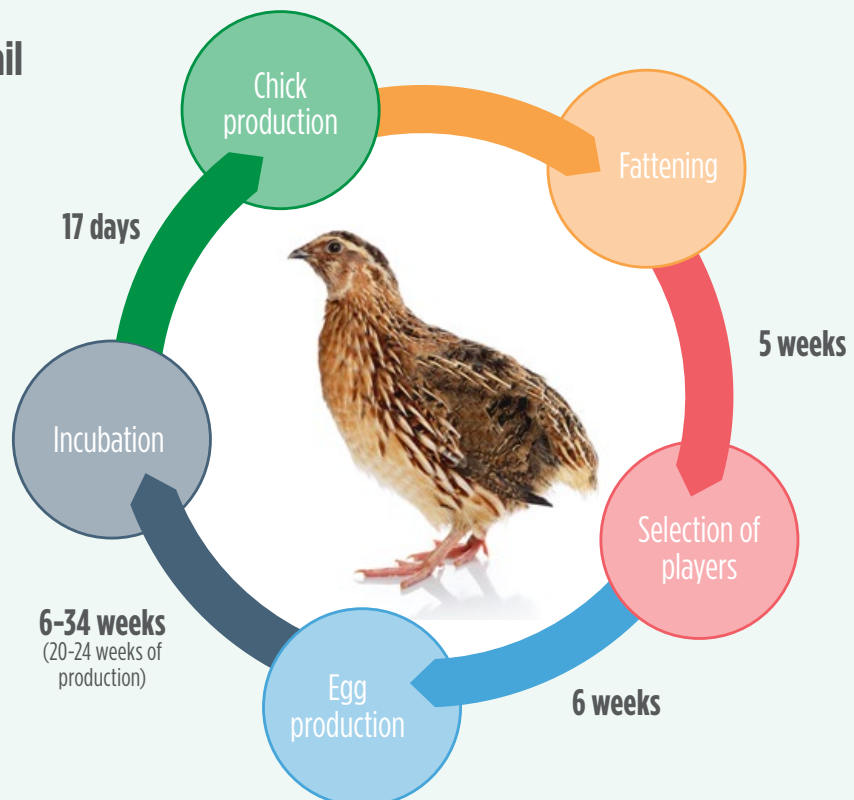
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Japanese quail, the most important species for the industry

Domesticated in Japan around the 11th century, the Japanese quail is the most important species for the poultry industry as it provides four important resources: **Egg production, meat production, utilization of by-products such as droppings or feathers, and restocking of hunting grounds.**

- Japanese quail have an extremely short generation interval. In only six weeks the females begin to produce eggs very actively and the production of these eggs easily persists until 30 weeks of age or more.

Figure 1. Japanese quail production systems



4

The quail, an excellent layer

The domestic quail is characterized for being an **excellent layer**, its average is 23 to 25 eggs per month, in other words, 250 to 300 eggs per year.

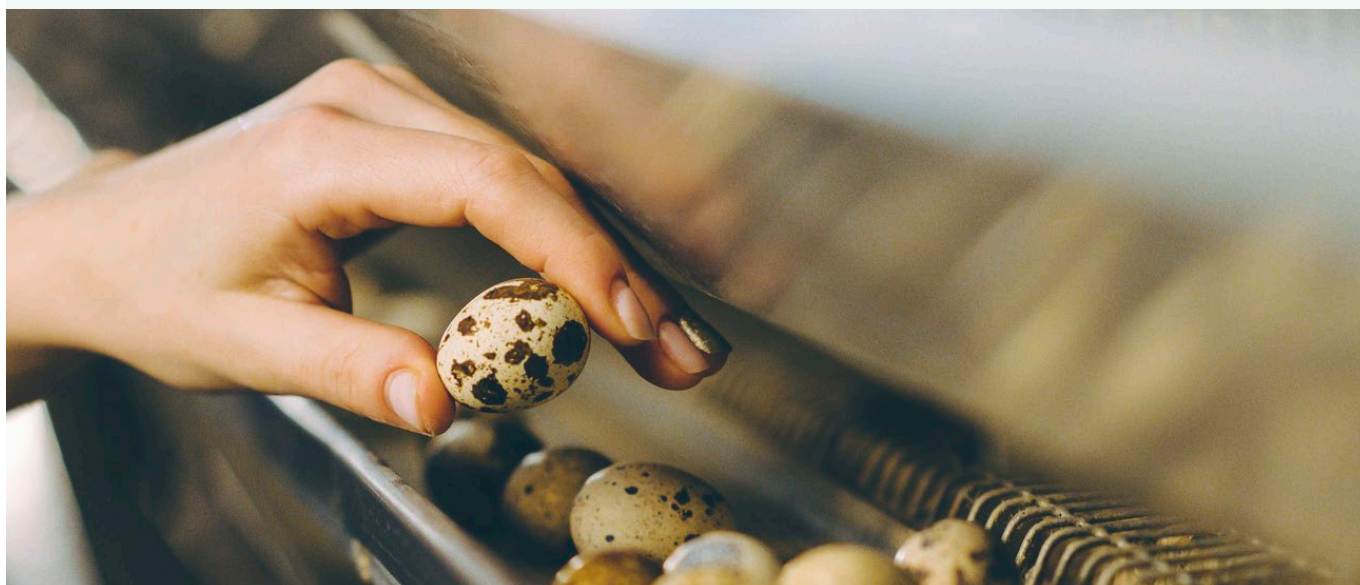
The average egg weight is 10 grams, reaching a maximum of 15 grams. The most important factors that affect egg weight are feed, age of the layers and ambient temperature.

- 5 to 6 quail eggs are equivalent to the weight of a hen's egg.
- In terms of weight percentages, their values are equivalent, meaning that, the white represents 46.1%, the yolk 42.3%, the shell 10.2% and the membranes 1.4%.



The percentage of daily egg collection should be calculated, which should range between 70% and 90% of eggs from the total number of birds in lay, considering that the percentage varies according to the age of the quails.

The laying curve is more continuous and stable in quails than in hens, reaching peak laying in a shorter time, reaching 80% to 90% and stabilizing over a longer period.



Housing should be designed to ensure bird comfort, to make feed and water easily accessible, and to allow for easy and effective disinfection.





Quail eggs, a true delight

Smaller than chicken eggs and with a more lively yolk, quail eggs are a real delicacy that stand out for their high protein content and almost non-existent carbohydrate content.

In fact, their energy content is higher than quail eggs, despite their smaller size.





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