

# Moon Ridge Quail



## Why Quail?

- Quail are one of the simplest and most rewarding forms of poultry to keep.
- Quail are particularly good as an introduction to poultry keeping, people with limited space or for children wanting to keep some poultry for the first time.
- Almost anyone can keep quail as their space requirements are much less than any other form of poultry (a simple rabbit hutch can easily house six quail)
- Egg production levels and feed conversion are virtually unsurpassed: each quail eats approx 7.5kg of feed a year and are capable of laying 320 eggs in that time, so allowing an average of 300 eggs (25 dozen) per year one rabbit hutch can provide 150 dozen quail eggs in twelve months, plenty for a family ... quail eggs can fetch from £1.50 to £3.00 per dozen in price ~ plenty of additional pocket money. No other poultry can produce the returns that quail can.
- Quail despite their size are very hardy and healthy being resilient to most poultry problems. The laying types that we keep tend to be docile and friendly and can become very tame, so great for children and new poultry keepers.
- We have found over the years the small patterned quail eggs are very appealing, and children who will not eat chicken eggs will easily consume half a dozen quail eggs as if they were sweets
- Quail do not naturally incubate their own eggs but can be hatched in an incubator or under a small broody. The eggs take 17 days to hatch and they themselves are mature at 6 weeks of age.

## Why Moon Ridge Quail?

We are now in our second decade of rearing quail and have some of the most productive lines in the country. Buying quail from us means you can buy with confidence with all the experience we can give you. At Moon ridge we will stand behind our birds and offer full and informative advice whether you aim to keep them for, pet, hobby or as a commercial concern.

We concentrate on the following breeds. ~

Italian~



These are a pretty golden coloured quail slightly speckled; they lay up to 320 eggs per year and are the most prolific layers of all the quail species. They weigh between 4-6oz for the males and 6-8oz for the females. They are the lightest weight of the laying quail. The males are very active and can cover up to five females we do not recommend keeping them in pairs, we tend to sell in trios or quartets for breeding purposes. There is no need to have any males if you just require the eggs for eating and not for hatching.

The male has a dark head; the female is lighter and more speckled.

Japanese ~



The traditional wild coloured brown bird, very steady natured, and a dual purpose bird suitable for eggs and as a table bird. The males weigh between 8-10 oz and the females weigh between 10 – 12oz. The Japanese can lay up to 300 eggs per year. The male has a russet breast, the female a speckled breast. As these quail are slightly heavier they tend to be less flighty. A good all round bird

Golden Giant. ~



This is a large golden coloured quail similar to the Italian but much larger. They are a steady bird which makes a good pet but they are predominantly bred to be a table bird with the males weighing 10-12 oz and the females weighing between 12 –14oz. They also lay a good amount of eggs up to 240 per year. The males and females are the same as the Italian for identification



Italian, Japanese and Golden Giant

# How to keep quail

- Quail can be kept in a simple rabbit hutch this is perfectly adequate for 6 birds. The most important criteria are the housing needs to be rodent proof either with a solid floor or wire floor. The wire needs to be 1/2inch gage.
- Adult quail can withstand the cold quite well, but they cannot stand the cold and wet, in the winter months their housing is in a sheltered area. The males may not be fertile in freezing weather
- They are ground dwelling birds so do not need perches. They love to dust bath so we use shavings as bedding. We have found they do not lay in nest boxes but tend to lay in the corners of their pens
- Quail do not tend to put them selves 'to bed' so if you want to shut them in a night you will probably have to put them in.
- Quail do not like sudden noises and do tend to fly up or crowd into corners. They can be quite susceptible to stress caused by cats, dogs and other things like rats etc. These facts need to be taken into account when siting your quail house.
- Like all poultry they need dry food and fresh water.
- Quail can fly so do need a netted top to any run, we can clip their wings but this is not guaranteed to stop any escape
- We feed our quail chicken layers pellets as a complete diet (protein 17% +) and to ensure we keep them laying they need at least 16 hours of daylight.

## FAQ

### ***Can I keep my quail with chickens?***

Due to their housing requirements and size difference we do not recommend keeping them with chickens

### ***Can quail be free range?***

No, quail do not have a homing instinct and can fly quite well so free-range means lost birds. It is also illegal to release quail into the wild, as they are a non-indigenous species. Housing incorporating a run onto the grass is not a problem but please make sure it is vermin proof both from the ground and from the air. As with chickens it is best to be able to move any run that is on grass around.

### ***Do quail need access to grass?***

As above they are quite happy with just shavings. If you do give them access to grass make sure it is short, as quail do not fend well if they get saturated in long grass when wet.

### ***What sort of bedding do I need?***

We recommend shavings, as they love to dust bath. You can use straw as well if you want. It is easier to find the eggs amongst the shavings.

### ***Will quail lay all year around?***

Yes we supply eggs both for eating and hatching all year around. They require a feed that is at least 17 percent protein i.e. Credition milling layers pellets. You can give them layers mash but they tend to be quite wasteful with the mash. They also require 16 hours of light a day. We achieve this with an energy saving light bulb on a timer with the extra light being given in the mornings.

### ***I bought quail from a market and they are constantly fighting?***

Almost invariably you have too many males. You do not need any males to make your hens lay, indeed too many can stop the hens laying.

### ***Will my quail go broody and hatch their own eggs?***

Although we have heard of this happening it is definitely not the norm. Quail have been reared as laying birds and any of these natural instincts have been bred out of them. Quail are relatively easy to hatch in an incubator for more advice on this feel free to contact us

### ***My friend says you can keep quail in an aviary, can you?***

Yes you can, as they tend to eat all the waste feed from the birds above. If you aim to keep them in an aviary make sure they have plenty of shelter from the birds above.

### ***Are quail easy to tame and handle?***

Quail are very easy to tame, just five minutes handling and they tend to calm down and become very placid. They love mealworms and will happily eat from your hands.

### ***Do the cock birds make any noise?***

The cock birds make a shrill noise, this is not very loud but if you have them in any number and have close neighbours you will have to bear this in mind when siting your quail house. The hens are very quiet with no call.

### ***Will my quail be vaccinated and do I need to worm them?***

Your quail will not be vaccinated, they do not suffer from the amount of diseases chicken tend to, quail do not seem to suffer from worms however they can be wormed.

### ***How long to quail live?***

Up to three years, commercially their laying ability will reduce after 9-12months