



POULTRY PROTECTION



SEASONAL PASTURED POULTRY

Free-range pasturing using electric poultry netting is one of the most popular ways to keep adult chickens, ducks, turkeys and other fowl. Poultry netting is an affordable, “complete fence”, meaning the posts are built in and it’s ready to set up right out of the package. It is available in many styles with various options for height, length, post type, and color. As with other electric netting types, multiple rolls can be joined together to create a large and protected free-range area. Instead of climbing over the net, which can lead to weakened corners, we recommend using a PoultryNet® Gate for quick, efficient access in and out of your enclosure. Electric netting can be set up quickly and taken down easily by one person; and when properly energized and baited, provides a secure barrier against predators. It is important that a powerful enough energizer as well as sufficient ground field are properly installed for the fence to function effectively. Give us a call and let our friendly and knowledgeable staff assist you if you need help determining which energizer and ground field options are best for your situation.

BASIC MATERIALS

- PoultryNet® 42” or 48” high, Regular or ‘PLUS’
- PoultryNet® Gate
- FiberTuff™ support posts for corners
- Energizer - plug-in (110v), battery (12v) or solar
- Ground rod(s), 4’ galvanized steel or chain link
- Multi-light fence tester
- Electric fence warning signs

PERMANENT

To keep adult birds safe from four-legged predators year-round, we recommend using a 2” x 4” or 3” x 3” woven wire with an electric offset at the top. Additional electric offsets can be installed around the exterior for added protection. For situations that require tighter spacing, Wellscroft also carries a 48” and 90” high, 1” black vinyl-coated hex mesh. We welcome you to work with our team to help you design a system for your needs.



Above: 48” PoultryNet® Plus enclosure with 4’ wide PoultryNet® Gate.



Above: 2x4 Woven wire and 3” Fixed-knot woven wire are two options for permanent poultry protection.

Continues on reverse »



AERIAL PREDATORS

While excluding ground predators from your birds is fairly straightforward, aerial predators such as hawks and owls can be more challenging. If you keep your poultry in a permanent enclosure, overhead netting is an option, but some drawbacks include additional cost and maintenance. For pastured poultry that are frequently moved, overhead netting is unrealistic so many rely on guard animals to protect from intrusions from the sky. Guard dogs are quite reliable, but are not always practical. Others have success with a lone, larger animal of a different species such as a donkey, sheep, or alpaca. If permitted in your area, one rooster is often a highly vigilant lookout for incoming divebombs and will alarm his hens to seek shelter immediately. Other methods include staking up scarecrows, playing music, or installing monofilament in a tent-like fashion, which creates a tricky and uncomfortable space into which birds of prey prefer not to navigate.



Above: 48" PoultryNet® Plus 12/48/3.

RECOMMENDATIONS & BEST PRACTICES

■ **A proper ground system** is one of the most important factors in any electric fence. A 4' galvanized steel ground rod inserted into the ground leaving only a couple inches visible, will provide a sufficient ground field for most small areas using up to three rolls of net.



For poultry that are moved frequently, an easy grounding method is to lay a piece of chain link fence in the grass outside the net but within reach of the ground lead of the energizer. The surface area of the metal in contact with the grass makes for a ground field that is effective and easy to move. Determining the amount of chain link required can be tricky; give us a call so we can advise what will work for your situation. In very dry conditions, it may be necessary to use additional ground rods or chain link fence to increase the ground field for the energizer.

■ **Baiting** electric fences greatly improves the efficacy of the fence by teaching predators about the negative experience that it causes. By attracting animals to the fence to receive a strong head shock it reinforces their fear of the fence. We recommend regular baiting by securely attaching to the fence one or more of the following: strips of aluminum foil smeared with peanut butter, strips of raw bacon, or a partially opened can of tuna fish.

■ **Maintaining** vegetation underneath netting is important for keeping the voltage high and preventing shorts in the fence.

■ Remember, electric fences do not have to complete a circle. For example, you could begin a roll of net at one end of your barn and create a semi circle which ends at the other end of your barn. The energizer and ground field however, will need to be located together at an end or junction of the net.

Note: Follow instructions on how to set up, take down and store net. Electric fence and netting are not as effective in winter as dry snow and frozen ground are insulating and the net will not hold up very well in the snow.

Note: Wellscoft offers CONSULTATION & DESIGN of your fence. Send us a map of your layout and we can provide you with an estimate. See our catalog or website for tips on how to prepare your sketch.

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