

Everything I know about keeping Chook Domes intact!

The Chook Domes described in Linda Woodrow's "The Home Permaculture Garden" book are great, however they do not seem to do very well in windy weather. I've figured out a few modifications that make them survive even strong gale warnings which keeps the chooks much happier!

Building the Dome

I use standard 1mm diameter wire with 25mm hexagons. Thicker wire is too hard to manipulate and has too many sharp edges to catch skin, feathers and tarps on. Wire that has holes bigger than 25mm is too flimsy. So this is the best combination of strength and weight that I have found.

Linda uses a lot of bracing to strengthen her domes. I have found that the string bracing inevitably comes loose and becomes redundant. I would not bother with any bracing except the diagonal bracing anymore.

Supporting the Dome

If wind gets on top of the tarp it can easily squash the dome to the ground. In the early days, I would come home to find the chickens trapped in a small section with the rooster on top of the mangled dome.

To prevent this from happening I now cut four bamboo posts which I wire onto the top rail. They support the weight of the feeders and the dome when the wind is pushing on it. The wire joint is flexible enough to allow you to swing the legs up out of the way when you want to move the domes.

Tarp over the Dome

The tarp must not be attached to the dome! Linda mentions this in her book and I repeat it as any strong wind will carry even the heaviest dome away. I know as I saw my extra super heavy tank of a dome end up in a blackberry filled valley. Tie the tarp to the ground with its own pegs.

Please get in touch if you have any other ideas or experiences!

julian.

www.imagoforest.com.au

