



Did you know that if chicks are held too long at high temperatures, it can affect their growth?

The newly hatched chick can not control its body temperature very well.

Air temperature, humidity, and airspeed interact and will all have an effect on the body temperature and the comfort of the young chick.

It is easy to see if chicks are uncomfortable from their behavior – chicks that are too hot are noisy and pant (as shown in **Figure 1**) in order to lose heat.

Chicks that are cold will huddle together to keep warm (see **Figure 2**) and their feet will feel cold.

In a recent trial, the Aviagen Hatchery Specialist team showed that chicks that were panting had a high vent temperature (averaging 106°F), while comfortable chicks had a vent temperature that averaged 104°F.

When the two groups were held in the hatchery for 12 hours, the over-heated chicks lost nearly twice as much weight.

Samples taken at the hatchery showed that chicks that had been overheated had slight gut damage, so they could not absorb nutrients as well.

Grown on in a broiler trial, these chicks were 60g lighter at 35 days than chicks that had been held in comfortable conditions.



Figure 1 Chicks that are too hot.



Figure 2 Chicks that are cold.

