

Gather Your Own Farm Fresh Organic Eggs

Ten Lesser Known Fun Facts about Backyard Birds

Everyone appreciates the health benefits and delicious taste of homegrown, organic eggs. Yet, many people are unfamiliar with how easy and rewarding it is to have these family-friendly feathered friends right in their own backyard.

Healthy hens are easy to maintain, inexpensive to feed and pleasantly “quiet.” With just a few pointers, residents of all neighborhoods, in city or rural landscape, can enjoy their own farm-fresh, guaranteed quality eggs.

Fun Facts:

1. Roosters crow. Hens quietly cluck or coo. A noisy Rooster’s job is to fertilize eggs, but hens proudly lay eggs without their male counterpart’s assistance.
2. Rhode Island Red, Sex-link, Leghorn and Araucana hens (as well as other types of hens) typically lay one egg / day.
3. Egg laying is steady during months of longer day light. Installing a light on a timer can provide eggs year round.
4. Araucana hens lay colorful blue/green eggs. Sex-links and “Rhodies” lay brown; Leghorns lay white.
5. Hens consume your left-over table scraps. Corn, aged fruits and vegetables, as well as weeds and grass clippings are among their favorite treats.
6. If you are low on table scraps, you can pick up a bag of “laying pellets” for about \$15. A stocked item at Tractor Supply or other agricultural supply store, one bag lasts a long time as each hen will ~ “eat like a bird.”
7. Chickens are easy to leave when you leave for vacation. A hanging water dispenser can keep your birds supplied with water for 1 - 2 weeks. Throw extra food in the pen and head out of town. They’ll be there when you come back and not sulk, hide your shoes or tear down your draperies for having left them behind.
8. Unwashed eggs, left in their natural environment, stay fresh for weeks. So, gather your eggs at your convenience. If you are concerned, place the egg in a bowl of water. Fresh eggs sink.
9. Chickens are hearty coop occupants during all four seasons. They require no blankets, heaters or special worry.
10. Hens are friendly. While some chickens are “conflict avoidant” and scoot out of your way when you enter the coop, others enjoy a little petting.

Coop design is an important consideration. Your coop should provide: Daylight, “a sunny run” for exercise, easy human access, convenient egg retrieval, and shelter during inclement weather. Material and design should be solid and built to last. Outside design of your coop can coordinate with your home’s siding color and roofing material.

Hens are hardy birds. Generally, they stay healthy when you purchase 2 - 4 birds from a chicken hobbyist or supplier and avoid introducing new birds to the flock until you are sufficiently satisfied that the new residents are healthy.

Chickens cost \$5 - \$8 dollars each and begin laying around 4 months of age. The Georgia Market Bulletin and Tractor Supply are excellent sources to find young birds or baby chicks. Over the years, you might find you save a little money by growing your own backyard birds, but the greatest reward is the pleasure of caring for these gentle animals while providing quality eggs to serve at your table.

Carol Paige

Administrator, Precision Barn Builders, LLC.

Precision Barn Builders, LLC build barns, chicken coops, fences and farm structures throughout Georgia.

Photo:

This tenants of this “Perfect Coop”, a product by Precision Barn Builders, LLC, enjoy their home next to the family’s private tennis courts in an upscale neighborhood in Sandy Springs, GA.

Photo:

Wholesome backyard eggs come in a menagerie of shapes and natural colors.