

Live Animals for Easter?



**Live Animals
Do Not Make Good Easter
Gifts**

Its that special time of year. Spring has sprung, flowers are blooming, grass is beginning to turn green and we long to spend more time outside. When we visit the local farm and garden center, everything is bustling! The seeds are in stock, bulbs, seed potatoes, and cool weather veggie plants

are available. But what is that peeping noise coming from the center of the store? Baby Chicks are for sale! Look at how adorable they are, small and soft and downy. They chirp and peep and nap and run around. Wouldn't the kids love them? Wouldn't it be awesome to bring a few home? Surely the kids will love taking care of live animals. No, we don't know anything, but we can just leave them in the backyard right?



Think Before Bringing Home Live

Animals for Easter Gifts

The reality of this and other scenarios is being played out in garden centers and feed stores all across the country at this time of year. Hopefully, the store has someone on staff that can talk the impulse buyer off the ledge and return them to their senses. Giving live animals as Easter gifts has a long tradition but it is not one that I support. Are you shocked? Me, the proponent of raising chickens?

Yes, I believe that raising chicks, ducks and rabbits requires careful thought about how the animals will fit into your life. These cute little balls of fluff are a lifetime commitment, at least the expected lifetime of the animal. In our more agrarian past, many people had some sort of homesteading going on in their back yard. Or had a close by relative that lived on a farm. The future of any live Easter basket gift was certain to include a future move to a home coop, or a nearby farm.

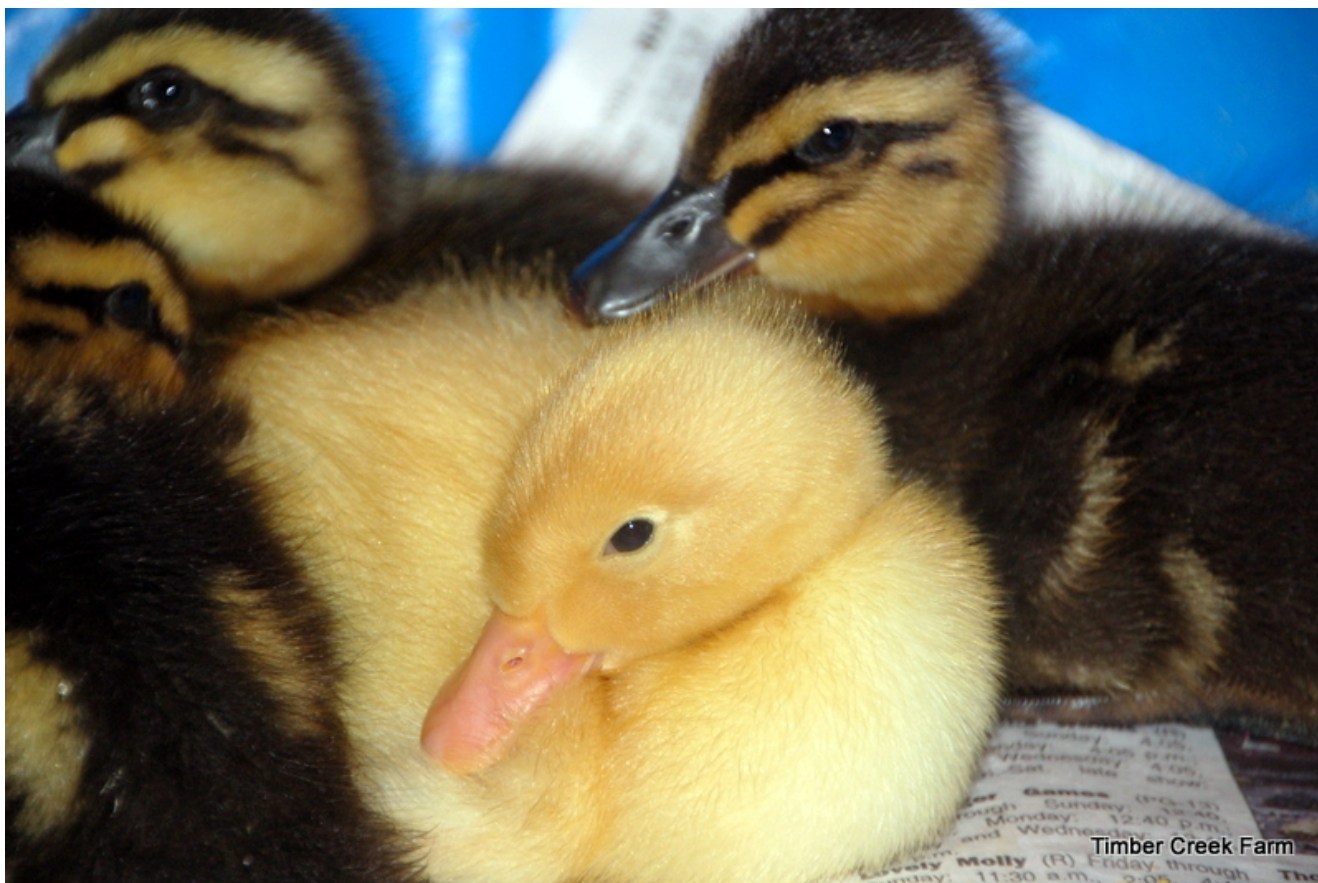
Now, this is not usually the case. Many live Easter basket gifts are turned out to fend for themselves once they grow bigger and messier. Or they are turned in to the local animal shelter which is probably not equipped for poultry and may have trouble placing grown rabbits too. Chicks and ducklings are considered livestock. Rabbits may be considered pets, but not everyone appreciates the behavior of a house rabbit.



Before buying live chicks, ducklings or baby rabbits for Easter gifts, consider the following questions.

1. Do you live where you can keep the animal?
2. Did you plan on raising animals in your backyard?
3. Are your children responsible? Are they old enough to take on the care of a pet and the care involved?
4. Have you considered the entire life span of the chick, duckling or bunny?
5. Where will the animal be housed? Is this realistic?
6. Can you afford the food, care and housing requirements for the animal?

If you are going to bring home live animals for Easter, start with research and not impulse. Buy the best quality you can and make sure the timing is right before giving in to the impulse and spur of the moment purchase.



Do you need more information on the topic of getting homestead animals? You might enjoy [Before Getting Homestead Animals](#)

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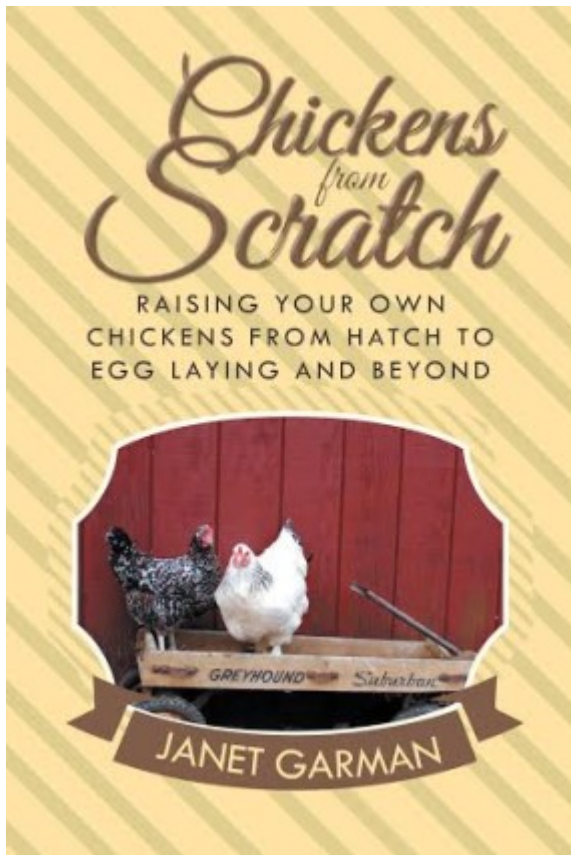
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Janet writes about many homestead and livestock related topics on her blog [Timber Creek Farm](#). Her new book, [Chickens From Scratch](#), is available now through the Timber Creek Farm website or from Amazon.com



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