

Why Keep the Rooster

4 Reasons to Keep the Rooster



Did you get some chicks this spring? Those little fluffy balls of fun were so cute! And there, of course was one who was your favorite, right? Now that the chicks are reaching 10 to 12 weeks of age, you have begun to notice something a little different about your favorite chick. It may be slightly bigger, stand a little taller, have bigger feet and it may be growing a slightly more noticeable comb or wattles. You may have a rooster! But will you keep the rooster?



Before you get upset and jump to possibilities and options, lets explore some reasons why you might want to keep the rooster. If you can legally keep the rooster in your neighborhood or town, there are some good reasons to have one around. You may have heard that a rooster is mean, ornery, and dangerous. These reasons can be true but they are not always the case. ([Read more about Cranky Roosters in this post.](#)) I find the roosters are a great addition to our flock. We currently have three roosters, and they work hard every day, keeping the hens safe. Let me explain a few reasons that I am glad we keep the rooster.



Peacekeeper – The rooster in a flock is in charge. He will assume this role and do what he has to do to maintain his position. Other roosters may be able to be part of the flock, too, as long as they don't challenge him. In addition, the rooster will keep the hens from squabbling among themselves. In the absence of a rooster, a hen will often take the role of flock leader.



Protection – Roosters are on alert most of the day, watching for predators, alerting the hens, and making sure they take cover. While the hens are dust bathing or eating, the rooster will stand guard and stay alert to possible danger.



Providing – The rooster will search out tasty food bits and call the hens over to enjoy the snack. He makes sure that his hens get started eating first in the morning and then he begins to eat too. In addition, roosters provide the necessary actions for having fertile eggs, in case you want to hatch out eggs in an incubator or let a broody hen set on a clutch of eggs.



and last but not least

Crowing– Now I am sure you are wondering how I can put a positive light on this noisy ear splitting wake up call. First, roosters don't necessarily start crowing before dawn. Ours will often stay quiet until they hear me in the feed shed, dishing up breakfast. Roosters crow to warn other roosters to stay away. They also crow to celebrate, such as when breakfast arrives, after mating, or to show pecking order. In addition, they will crow to let the hens know the location of the flock, when it's time to head back to the coop at night and various other reasons. But the best reason for

flock security would be the crowing to warn of an approaching visitor.



While you may decide to re-home your cockerel and just keep the pullets, I have already decided to keep the latest rooster. Even though I ordered all pullets, we do have a rooster in the bunch. He is a white rock cockerel which means I have three white rock hens and one rooster. If I keep him with the hens, I will know for sure that those eggs are fertilized White Rock eggs. Maybe I can offer these as hatching eggs. Its a possibility. The other hens we have started this year are Buff Brahmas. Mating them with the White

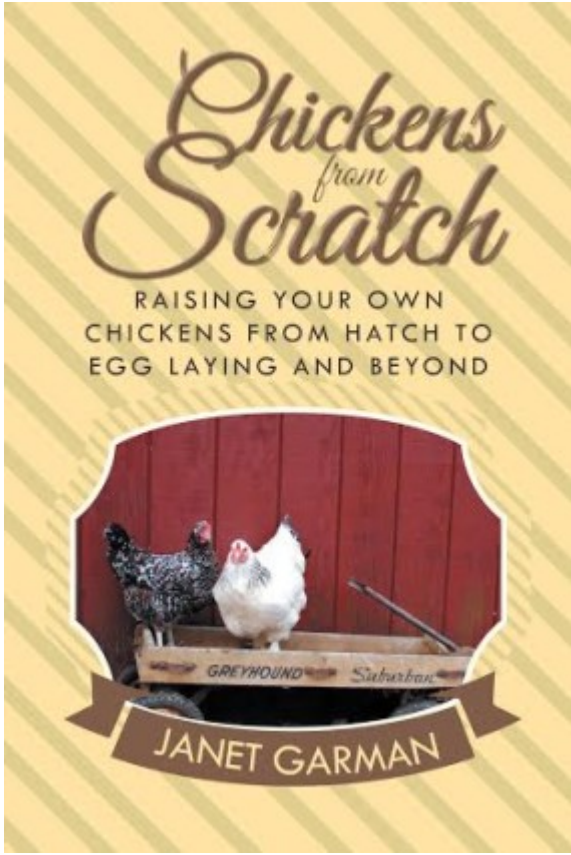
Rock rooster would give a nice size table bird if we decided to raise any meat birds.



I see benefits and uses when you keep the rooster. Let me know how your surprise roosters turn out.

Looking for more information on raising poultry? Check out [Backyard Poultry Magazine.com](http://BackyardPoultryMagazine.com)

I write about many homestead and livestock related topics on the blog [Timber Creek Farm](http://TimberCreekFarm.com). Do you want to know more about raising chickens? My new book, [Chickens From Scratch](http://ChickensFromScratch.com), is available now through the Timber Creek Farm website or from Amazon.com



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