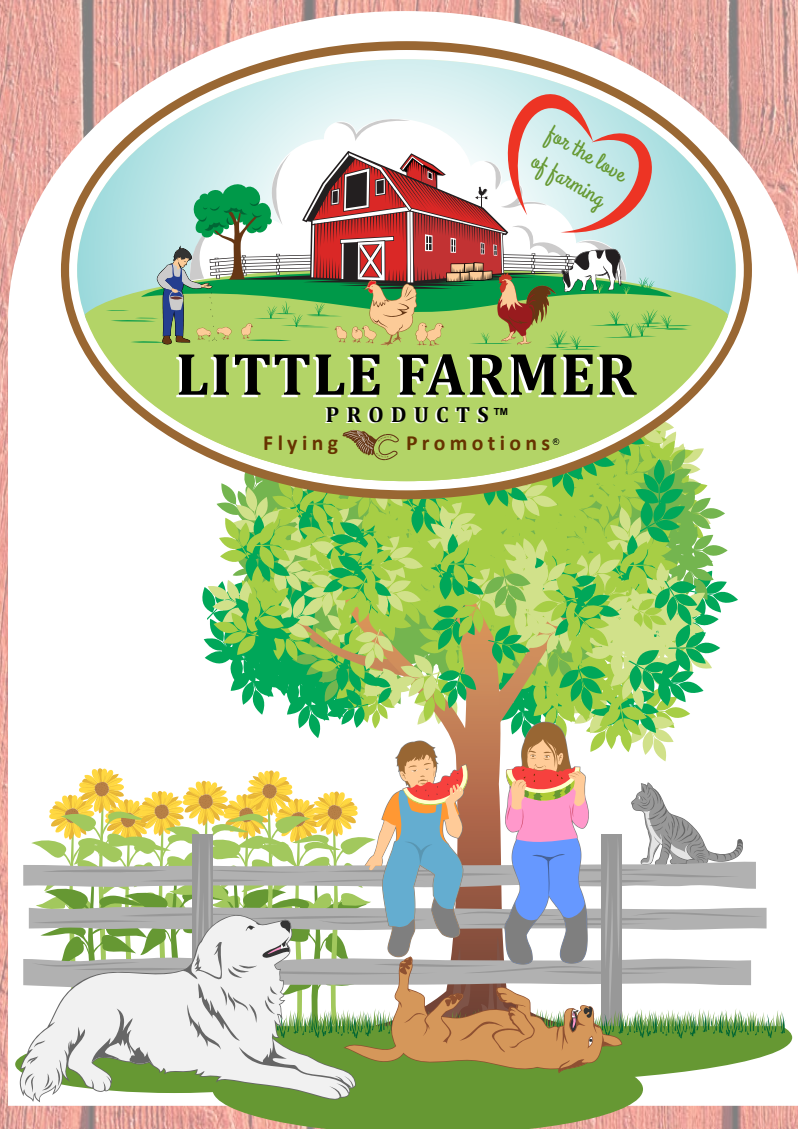


LITTLE FARMERS LEARN TO RAISE CHICKENS



A TRUE STORY AND A GUIDE WITH CHECKLISTS SO YOU
AND YOUR KIDS CAN BE LITTLE CHICKEN FARMERS TOO!

Once upon a time...there were two little farmers. Well, maybe they weren't farmers yet, but they were brother and sister, and they lived on a little farm. CeCe and Calvin loved eating eggs almost every day. CeCe used eggs to make cookies with Mom, and Calvin used eggs to make French toast with Dad.



One day, while Aunt Amanda was visiting for her birthday, CeCe asked her Mom if they could make a cake for her. Amanda had Down syndrome so she was different from the other teens her age. She was more childlike and birthdays were her favorite, especially her own birthday. They got out the flour and sugar, but when they opened the refrigerator for eggs, they realized they were out!

Mom and CeCe quickly got in the car to go buy eggs at the store, but they had a flat tire. The tire repairman was very helpful,



but by the time they got to the store it was closed. CeCe was very sad, and she asked her Mom with a tear in her eye, “Where can we get eggs when the store is closed?” Mom explained that chickens lay eggs and some families raise their own chickens at home. That day CeCe and her mom decided to raise their own chickens.

The next morning, CeCe and her mom made a plan to get baby chicks. They went to a local feed store to buy baby chicks and asked Uncle Chuck to join them at a local feed store so they could see what they needed to get started.

Uncle Chuck knew more about chickens than anyone they had ever met because he had raised them all his life. Uncle Chuck said they should buy six baby chicks, a small waterer so the chicks wouldn't drown, and some special chick starter crumble food.



Uncle Chuck said they would need a heat lamp to stay warm until their fluffy feathers become real feathers. They need a small safe space like a brooder pen, or a metal tub with shavings. There were so many cute chicks at the feed store, CeCe couldn't decide which ones to buy.

Uncle Chuck explained that the breed of baby chick or chicken determines the color of the egg outside, and they would not need a rooster unless they want to raise their own baby chicks. CeCe picked one Silver Laced Wyandotte plus one Swedish Flower and her mom picked one Buff Orpington and one Cuckoo Maran. Uncle Chuck picked two Americana chicks, because he knew CeCe would like the blue eggshell colors.

Calvin was so excited when he saw the box of baby chicks they brought home. He and CeCe waited a few days to pick them up one at a time and hold them very gently. They took turns clearing shavings out of the little waterer and checking that there was always clean water. They put the chick crumbles in a shallow dish, and the chicks liked it very much.

Sometimes the chicks slept close together under the heat lamp and sometimes they walked around saying, “Cheep, cheep, cheep.”





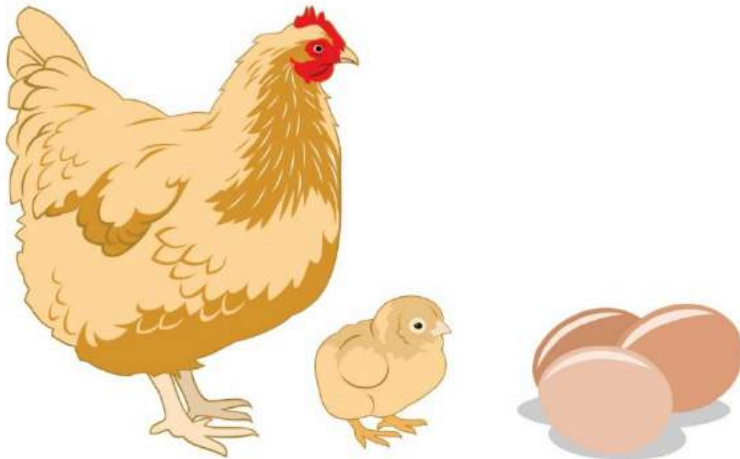
SMART LITTLE FARMERS KNOW:

- **Baby chicks need a safe brooder with a heat lamp to provide 95 to 99 degrees of warmth for up to 6 weeks until they are fully feathered (no fluff). Be careful of a possible fire from shavings or cardboard near the heat lamp. If baby chicks huddle together under the heat lamp then it is not warm enough and if they stay far from the lamp it is too hot and can be raised up a little.**
- **Baby chicks need a small, shallow chick water so they will not drown**
- **Baby chicks need a chick starter crumble or mash feed in a shallow feeder for at least six weeks**
- **The breed of chick or chicken determines the color of the eggs.**
- **You do not need a rooster for hens to lay eggs**

AMERICANA

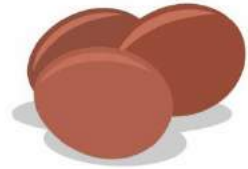


BUFF ORPINGTON

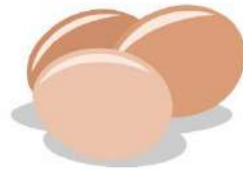




CUCKOO MARAN



SILVER LACED WYANDOTTE



In a couple of weeks, the chicks stayed a little further from the heat lamp. CeCe and her mom read a book about chickens, so they knew their chicks still needed a heat lamp until all their feathers grew in. They also learned that when baby chicks get feathers, they may need their own little chicken house away from bigger chickens who might pick on them. CeCe and Calvin started to name each baby chick. They named the largest yellow chick Lemon, and the pretty brown, black and white feathered one was named Maria. Young hens under one year old are called pullets.





SMART LITTLE FARMERS KNOW:

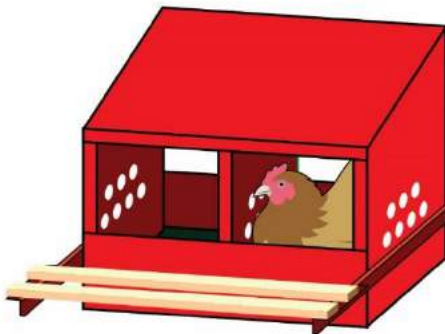
- **Young hens are called pullets until they are over a year old.**
- **Baby chicks are best kept separate from mature hens and roosters until they are fully feathered and ready for a regular pellet diet**
- **All chicks and chickens need clean water daily**
- **Chickens need nesting boxes 24 inches off the ground closed on three sides for a darker place to lay eggs. The bottom may have straw or shavings**
- **Chickens need a roost at least 18 inches off the ground in the safety of a coop to sleep on each night. Clean the coops once a week as needed. Use a cat litter scoop to clean shavings from next boxes and rake out the bottom of the coop.**

One day, Calvin saw a big truck stop by and drop off a big box for Dad. Calvin ran to tell his Dad. It was a chicken coop they could build for their new chicks! Aunt Stephanie had ordered it from her friend Thomas, and it came with instructions to build it. That weekend, CeCe and Calvin started to build the coop for their chicks with Mom and Dad. They built two nesting boxes that were about 24 inches off the ground and they put shavings in the boxes. The nesting boxes were filled with shavings and placed in a darker, safe spot so the hens can lay eggs when they become old enough. They built a roost at least 18 inches off the ground so their chickens can sleep there.



They still had a few more weeks before the chicks would be covered in feathers and ready for the new coop, so Calvin and his Dad went to the feed store to get a feeder and waterer to prepare for when the chickens get bigger. They also bought some Little Farmer Products “Chickie Picnic” treats with dry mealworms and seeds that they could offer as a treat after the chicks had their special chick feed diet.

Every day, CeCe and Calvin checked on their baby chicks’ water and food. If their shavings got messy, the children scooped them out in a bag with a cat litter scoop like Mom said and replaced them with fresh dry shavings. After six weeks, all the chicks had little feathers and sometimes they jumped on top of the waterer.



The next day was the big day, time for the baby chicks to move in to their new home! Mom, Dad, CeCe, and Calvin all carried the baby chicks carefully and placed them in their new coop outside. Calvin filled the waterer and CeCe filled the feeder. The chicks were so excited and made a lot of noise talking about their new home.





SMART LITTLE FARMERS KNOW:

- **Chickens need about a $\frac{1}{4}$ pound of complete feed per day, per hen or rooster along with clean water. Treats containing bugs for protein, wheat, alfalfa and ingredients such as chili peppers (chickens can't taste the heat, but benefit from the vitamins), can be offered after a complete feed diet.**
- **Offering chickens treats and calling to them will make them friendly and they may benefit from additional protein.**
- **Chickens need clean water every day.**
- **Chickens will go back inside their coop to roost before dark.**
- **When you spend time raising chicks and call them for food or treats, they will become more friendly.**

Every week the chicks got bigger and their personalities started to show. CeCe and Calvin named each one. Oreo had beautiful black and white feathers. Lemon had many golden feathers. Bubbles was always friendly and loved to follow CeCe around the yard. Rosie was a very pretty pullet, and her sister Polly followed her everywhere. The most curious hen of all was Maria. Maria would jump up on the fence to see what the family was doing in the garden. CeCe would pick her up because she also loved to be held. Each night the chicks would rest on the roost to sleep.



One morning a chicken was making a loud squacking sound! “Bawk, BAWK, BAWK!” The kids went to look and came back to the kitchen yelling, “Look mom, she did it! Maria was making all that noise and when she jumped off her nest, she left a beautiful little egg!” All the pretty hens were 6 months old and each day, CeCe and Calvin found more eggs. All the eggs started out small and got bigger as the chickens got older.



Hens lay eggs sometime after they are 18 weeks old, and it takes each hen 26 hours to lay a second egg. CeCe asked her Mom if her chickens needed special food now that they were laying eggs, so they looked in their chicken book. The book said to make sure laying hens get at least 16% protein lay pellets or crumble as a daily diet of $\frac{1}{4}$ pound per hen. The book also said that special treats, after the hens had their daily diet, could add extra protein from ingredients such as dried mealworms, crickets, and alfalfa. They went back to the local feed store to get layer feed and a fun variety of treats. In time, their family flock would run to CeCe or Calvin when they called their names!



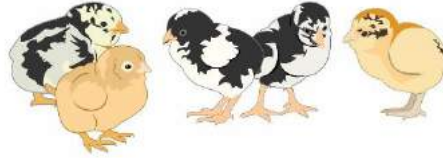


SMART LITTLE FARMERS KNOW:

- **Hens start laying eggs around 6 to 7 months old.**
- **If you purchase “Straight Run” chicks you will not know if they are hens or roosters. Purchase “Sexed” chicks as the best chance to get hens.**
- **Hens need a complete feed diet with at least 16% protein.**
- **Hens lay eggs every 26 hours, usually midmorning and do not require a rooster.**
- **Hens only need a rooster to fertilize eggs. They may hatch if kept warm after 21 days.**

CeCe loved her chickens and smiled whenever Aunt Amanda came to visit because she knew she would always have eggs to make her favorite birthday cake! Calvin loved having his own special chores and he felt like their family got a little bit bigger.





SMART LITTLE FARMERS FIRST TIME BUYER CHECKLIST for baby CHICKS :

___ Check your city zoning to see if you can have chickens. Some cities limit the number you can keep and some cities do not allow you to have roosters.

___ Chick brooder, heavy cardboard, plastic or metal tub. Sides at up to 24 inches and flat bottom for little feet.

___ Heat lamp with clamp. Be careful to keep it safe from cardboard, shavings or straw. Make sure the cord is taped or safely protected so as not to be a trip hazard.

___ Small chick waterer.

___ Small chick feeder or shallow tray.

___ Medicated chick feed or chick crumble.

___ Purchase sexed chicks if you only want hens. Straight run chicks mean you will know when they are older if you have roosters.

___ Shavings are a nice starter to keep a clean floor due to mess or damp from spills.



SMART LITTLE FARMERS FIRST TIME CHECKLIST FOR CHICKS OVER 6 WEEKS OLD:

___ Purchase or build a chicken coop with fine wire on the bottom to keep them safe from predators. A covered top is also good for safety. A walk in sized coop allows you to interact and clean with ease.

___ The coop should have nesting boxes around 24 inches off the ground that are darker and protected. Place shavings or straw in the bottom. Cat litter scoops are helpful to keep the boxes clean.

___ The coop should have a separate roost a least 18 inches off the ground. Chickens jump up on the roost to sleep just as it gets dark.

___ Chicken feed for laying hens with a 16% protein. Chicks over 2 weeks old may stay on crumble until they are fully feathers then start with a complete feed at $\frac{1}{4}$ lb per hen per day. Treats may be offered after complete feed for extra protein and variety. Chickens naturally eat bugs and worms.



SMART LITTLE FARMERS FIRST TIME CHECKLIST FOR CHICKS OVER 6 WEEKS OLD continued

___ Provide a full size feeder and a full size waterer. Clean waterer out often in hot weather to provide access to clean cool water.

___ Chickens naturally eat small stones to help grind whole grains because they do not have teeth. Place grit in a shallow dish and provide fine grit for chicks over 2 weeks old with access to whole grains.

___ Chickens naturally dust their feathers in dirt. If your coop does not have dirt you may offer diatomaceous earth in a shallow kitty litter style pan.

___ When your chickens are of age to lay their first egg, approximately 6 months old, you may place a fake egg in the nest box to encourage them to start. Chickens lay eggs in the morning.

___ Mature hens will lay eggs less often in very hot weather or in darker cold weather.



My husband and I created the Little Farmer Products brand, because we love to farm on our own little property. We've enjoyed raising chickens, goats, pigs, cattle, horses, tortoises, Koi, dogs and cats. We raise what we can to eat and appreciate good quality ingredients like organic eggs. Not only have we loved raising our children in a little farm lifestyle, but we love to share it with friends, family, and neighbor kids. We have spent years in our local 4H club both showing and breeding chickens. We believe anyone can be a little farmer, so we shared our real life tips and experiences in this book. Calvin and CeCe in this book are my niece's children, Amanda is my adorable down syndrome niece, Uncle Chuck is my chicken-loving husband and Dylan, my youngest "shown above" helps everyday. We hope to inspire you and your children to raise something you love. Also a big thank you to so many of our family and friends who have helped with photos, packaging, mixing, filling and packing up to get Little Farmer Products from our farm to your feed store.

With love in every handful!

Author Stephanie Gulliford Jarle

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Best of luck with your family
farm experience

with love in every handful

Owner & Author

Stephanie Gulliford Gawle

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