

MY LIFE WITH CHICKENS

Last spring, my family decided to get chicks. When we got chicks, my mom, my brother and I brought them home in a shoebox. We kept them inside the house in a big plastic tote. We bought a special heating lamp to keep the chicks warm. They still had down. My mom put a window screen over the top so our cat Pumpkin couldn't get them. They are New Hampshire Reds. When they are chicks, they were light blonde.

Soon, they grew big enough to move out to a chicken coop. My dad spent about a week to build a homemade one. It turned out that one of the chicks was a rooster! We named him Big Daddy. After a while, we had to get rid of him. He had spikes on the back of his feet and he would chase us around the yard.

When the Reds were a couple of weeks old, we got seven more chicks. They are bantams. We raised the bantams the same as the other chicks. Sadly, one of them died. Her name was Ivory. At eight weeks old, the bantams moved out to the coop too.

As the bantams were growing up, we came up with some names: one of them is Peggy Sue. She is a black Frizzle. Sassy is also a Frizzle. She is golden. Fanny (a.k.a. Fanny Five Toe or Fatoe) is a Polish bantam. She has five toes on each foot.

Three of the bantams turned out to be roosters – Chip, Nigel and Cali. We didn't know until they started crowing. Chip is an English Game bantam. Nigel is a Polish bantam. Before we found out he was a rooster, his name was Daffodil. He is white with puffy feathers on his head. We got rid of Chip and Nigel because they were getting aggressive. We kept Cali because he was nice.

In the fall, the hens started laying eggs. The bantams lay small, round eggs. The big girls lay regular sized eggs. I collect the eggs, and shut the coop at night. Now we sell the eggs. We use the money to buy chicken food and hay for their coop.

My favorite chicken is Peggy Sue because she is pretty and funny. She is funny when she wants to guard her eggs. She sticks her tail up and makes a sound like "reeee". The chickens are fun to play with. Also, they are helpful because they lay eggs.

Spring is here again and we are getting six more chicks. I'm excited to hold them in the palm of my hands and watch them grow into hens. Over the past year, the chickens have become part of our family and I look forward to welcoming the new members!

By Hailey Rupp Village School 3rd Grade