

The Fable of the County Rooster

as retold by

Sam Aurelius Milam III
c/o 4984 Peach Mountain Drive
Gainesville, Georgia 30507

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The Fable of the County Rooster

A man bought a chicken farm and soon realized that he had a problem. His hens weren't producing enough eggs to pay for the feed that he was buying. He didn't know how to solve the problem, so he called the county agent. The county agent came out to the farm for a visit that very evening.

They walked from the driveway to the hen lot and the county agent looked around for a few seconds.

"Lots o' hens," he commented.

"Yeah," replied the farmer, "but they aren't laying enough eggs."

"Don't see no rooster," said the county agent.

"I don't need a rooster," objected the farmer. "Hens lay eggs. Roosters don't."

"Yeah," said the county agent, "but roosters lay hens, ifn ya git ma meanin'."

"And that will help?" asked the farmer.

"Shore nuff."

"So, I have to buy a rooster," speculated the farmer.

"No way. You can use ours."

"Yours?"

"Well, not mine. County rooster. He's specially trained. We keep 'im for just this kinda thing. Ah'll be here at sunrise tomorrow morning."

The next morning, the farmer was waiting at sunrise when the county agent arrived. The county agent had a wire cage in the back of his pickup truck. In the wire cage was a rooster.

The county agent carried the wire cage over to the gate to the hen lot, opened the gate, sat the cage down, and opened the door. The rooster crowed once, and went out the door like a shot. He leaped right on top of the nearest hen and, well, uh, he did the job he was specially trained to do. Then he leaped from that hen and ran straight to the next nearest one. Then from her, he ran to the next nearest one.

"Doesn't he have to rest?" asked the farmer.

"Nope, he's specially trained."

"I wouldn't want him to get sick or something," worried the farmer.

"Don't you worry none," assured the county agent, "he's been specially trained."

"How long will this take?" asked the farmer.

"This many hens? All day," replied the county agent. "Ah'll be back about sunset."

The county agent got in his pickup truck and drove away. The farmer stood for a few minutes, watching the rooster. It never stopped. It finished with one hen,

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leaped off, and ran for the next hen. The farmer was a little concerned but what could he do? After all, the rooster had been specially trained.

The farmer went into his house to eat some breakfast. Then, he went out to his tractor. He had to plow the north field. On his way past the hen lot, he noticed that the rooster was still at it.

The farmer plowed all morning and, at noon, he drove his tractor back to the house. He stopped at the hen lot and saw that the rooster was still hard at work. Starting to feel some real concern, he yelled, "Slow down! Take a break! You're gonna kill yourself!" The rooster ignored him.

After lunch, the farmer went back to work. He finished plowing that evening and rode his tractor back to the yard. He stopped at the hen lot, to check on the situation.

There weren't any hens in sight. They were all in the hen house, from which contented clucking and cooing noises could be heard. But, the rooster.... The rooster....

The rooster was out in the middle of the empty hen lot. He was all alone, laying on his back, his head over sideways, and his tongue hanging out. His wings were spread out flat on the ground beside him. His little feet were pathetically curled above him. Overhead, the buzzards were circling, circling, circling, lower and lower.

Aghast, the farmer threw open the gate to the hen lot and ran toward the rooster, screaming, "I told you! I warned you! I told you to take it easy, to take a break! I warned you that you'd kill yourself! Why wouldn't you listen? Now look what you've done!"

The farmer ran up to the rooster and fell to his knees beside it, leaning over it, hoping for some small sign of life.

The rooster opened one eye, pointed one of its wingtips up, toward the circling buzzards, and said, "Shhh!"

The rooster was specially trained.

Moral: There isn't one. It's just a funny story.