



Leghorns

Strengths:

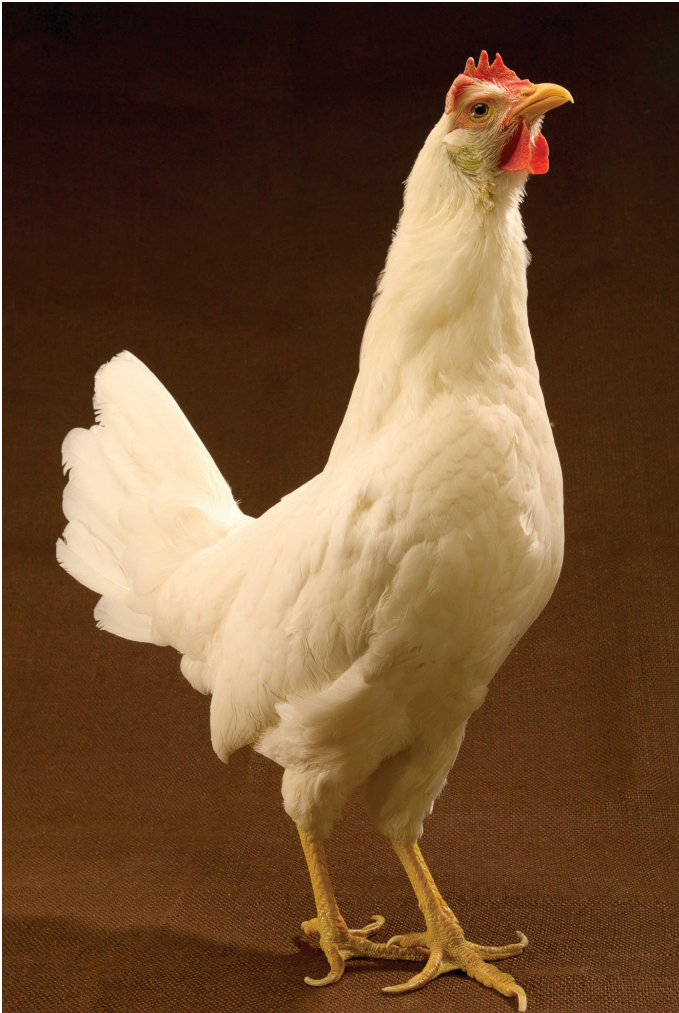
Leghorns are good layers of white eggs, laying an average of 280 per year and sometimes reaching 300 or even 320! They are efficient at turning the feed they eat into lots of eggs. Leghorns are also active and efficient foragers, which is great for backyard chicken raising. The Leghorn is a light breed that matures quickly.

Weaknesses:

Because of its lightness, the leghorn is not considered a viable meat producer. They also tend to avoid human contact and are nervous and flighty.

Egg color: White

Pictured counter clockwise from left: rooster, hen, chick



Barred Rock

Strengths: Barred Rocks are large, long-lived chickens. Some varieties are good layers while others are bred principally for meat. They are very cold hardy. Both roosters and hens are calm and will get along well with people and other animals such as pets.

Weaknesses: Since they are used for both meat and eggs, they are less efficient at using feed and lay fewer eggs in a year than hens bred specifically for laying.

Egg color: Light to medium brown with a touch of pink

Pictured clockwise from right: chick, hen, rooster



Buff Orpington

Strengths: Their temperament is calm and friendly. Their large size makes them good dual-purpose chickens for meat and egg production.

Weaknesses: In a flock containing different breeds of chickens, Buff Orpingtons are often “picked on” because they are relatively docile. Due to their larger size, they lay fewer eggs annually, only 175–200. They use their feed less efficiently than other hens bred specifically for laying.

Egg color: Light brown

Right: chicks; Below: several hens with one rooster in the center



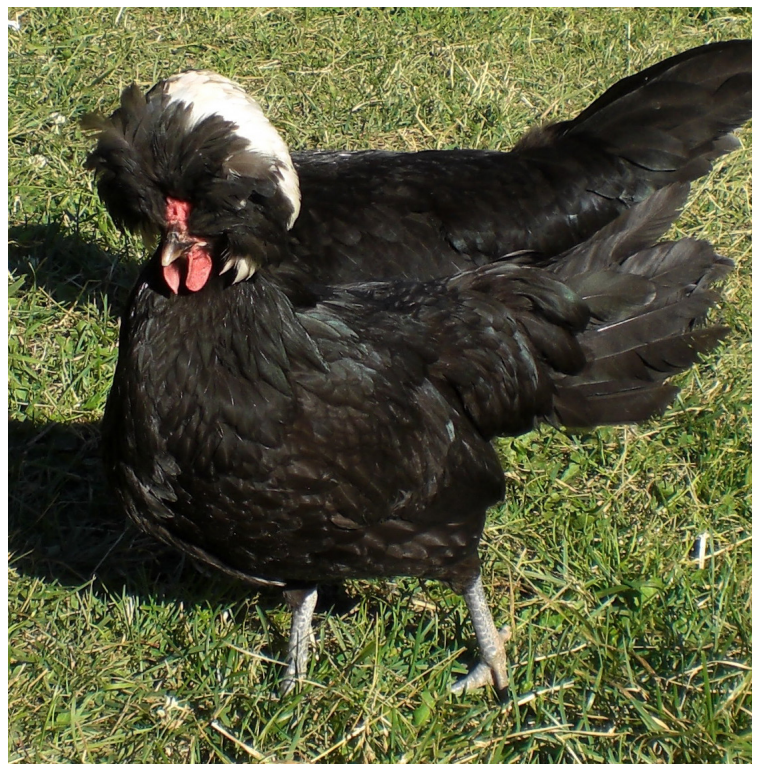
White Crested Black Polish

Strengths: Polish chickens are a very unique breed with a huge crest of feathers on the tops of their heads. They tend to be friendly and even “sweet” with humans.

Weaknesses: Their behavior may seem strange and erratic, but this is because the crest of feathers on their heads obscures their vision. They often stumble into holes and are startled by things they didn't see coming. These birds have been bred mainly for show and appearance, so their production of eggs is erratic and unreliable.

Egg color: White

Pictured clockwise from right: rooster, hen, chicks





Ameraucana

Strengths:

Ameraucanas are exceptional egg layers, laying about 250 eggs a year, and they start laying at about five or six months old. They are cold hardy and do well in winter. They cope well in confinement, but also do well on free range because they are curious birds.

Weaknesses: Because of the popularity of their colored eggs, these birds are often cross bred in backyard stocks, making it hard to get a true Ameraucana.

Egg color: Light blue to green

Pictured clockwise from top: rooster, hen, chick



Rhode Island Red

Strengths: Friendly, good natured chickens that can be raised as pets as well as egg and meat producers. They are also tough birds, resistant to illness, and good at foraging and free ranging.

Weaknesses: Can get overly aggressive when annoyed. In areas where temperatures drop below freezing, their output drops considerably, and the tips of their combs become very susceptible to frostbite.

Egg color: Brown

Pictured clockwise from top left: hen, rooster, chicks





White Silkie

Strengths: This unique breed is named for its fluffy plumage, which is said to feel like silk. The breed has several other unusual qualities, such as dark blue flesh and bones, blue earlobes, and five toes on each foot (most chickens only have four). This breed is one of the most calm and relaxed, making it the ideal pet chicken.

Weaknesses: The hens produce only around 100 eggs a year and will go broody (meaning they will want to stay on the nest to hatch chicks and not lay new eggs) very often and for long periods of time.

Egg color: Cream

Pictured counter clockwise from left: hen, rooster, chick





Blue Cochon

Strengths: The Cochon a very large, fluffy feathered bird with fully feathered legs and feet. It is hardy, friendly, docile, and typically very quiet. Cochins are good mothers and can even be used as foster mothers for other breeds.

Weaknesses: Cochins are slow to mature. They can lay many eggs, but usually not for extended periods of time.

Egg color: Brown

Pictured clockwise from top left: hen, rooster, chicks



Salmon Faverolle

Strengths: Faverolles have a very distinctive look with muffs, a beard, feathered legs, and five toes (most chickens have just four). They are well adapted both to confinement or free range. They are also very large which makes them a fine meat chicken. They are very good layers—a well-cared for Faverolle hen will lay approximately four eggs per week. They are very docile and friendly, and even the roosters are known for being quiet.

Weaknesses: They tend to get bullied in a mixed flock.

Egg color: Light brown to pinkish

Pictured left: rooster, hen; Below: chicks

