

Welsummer Breed Guide



**Breed type**

Dual-purpose (egg and meat)

**Egg color**

Dark brown

**Pen or free-range?**

Both

**Temperament**

Mostly calm and friendly, seasonal broodiness

Welssummer quick facts

Lifespan: 6-12 years

Weight: Females (hens): 5-6 lbs.; Males (roosters): 7-8 lbs.

Appearance: Brown (hens), Orange/red/black (roosters)

Egg Production: 150-200 eggs/year (4 eggs/week)

Good for Beginners: Yes

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A lot is going for **Welsummer chickens**, from their dark brown eggs and hardiness to their friendly personality and attractive appearance. With 85+ years of experience, Tractor Supply has what you need to know about **poultry breeds** like the Welsummer chicken. Learn more about these birds to see if you will add them to your flock.

History of Welsummer Chickens

Welsummer chickens were first developed in the small village of Welsum, Holland. Their popularity grew because of the attractive dark brown color of their eggs. There's also a Bantam variety that breeders in England and Germany developed in the 1930s.

In 1928, these birds made their way to the U.S. The American Poultry Association (APA) standardized them in 1991. Welsummers have maintained their popularity over the years and are a favorite breed among backyard keepers and small farms.

Temperament and Good-to-Knows

When **introducing new chickens** to a flock, you want a bird that integrates well with existing poultry. For beginners **starting a flock**, calm, friendly chickens are often the easiest to handle. It's these reasons that the Welsummer is such a popular choice, for both urban and rural flocks and beginner and experienced keepers. Here are some key facts about a Welsummer chicken's temperament:

- **Great foragers:** Welsummer chickens love to explore their environments and forage, scratching the ground to find bugs and seeds. This quality makes them ideal free-range chickens, although Welsummers don't mind containment in a run.
- **Good with children:** Docile, friendly and intelligent, Welsummer chickens offer the perfect combination for introducing young kids to chickens. Their exploratory nature also makes them entertaining!
- **Gets along well with existing flock:** Neither flighty nor very aggressive, Welsummers are more likely to get along with other chickens in your flock than some breeds. As always, monitor initial interactions when you introduce new birds.
- **Broody, but not the best mothers:** Welsummer hens become particularly broody in the spring. So, choose this season if you need them to hatch. On the other hand, these chickens can be negligent mothers. Consider placing chicks in a **brooder** until they're adults.
- **Adaptability in different climates:** With European roots, Welsummer chickens are made for cold, winter conditions. They can also thrive in warm weather, provided they can access ample shade and water to **beat the summer heat**.
- **Not prone to flying:** Heavy bodies mean Welsummers struggle to become airborne, so you shouldn't worry about them flying outside the coop or pen. This is why this breed is just as well suited for a backyard flock in an urban area as on a farm.

Visual and Egg Characteristics

A striking appearance and good egg-laying capabilities are two characteristics that make the Welsummer desirable. Learn about the physical characteristics and egg production of Welsummer chickens:

Physical Characteristics of Welsummer Chickens

Chances are, you've seen a Welsummer chicken even if you didn't realize the breed. The roosters are especially flashy, with hackles and saddles in oranges and reds that glisten in the sunlight. Their black tail feathers have an almost iridescent green tint. The hens are less showy but still attractive, with heathery brown feathers and hackles in shining gold and black.

Welsummers have large, bright red combs and yellow legs – even their eyes are an attractive red bay. They feature medium-sized wattles and almond-shaped ear lobes. Their upright stance gives an air of regality, and they have flat, long backs.

Hens weigh between five and six pounds, and roosters weigh between seven and eight pounds. Primarily bred for meat production, Welsummers are a good table bird.

Welsummer Egg Production

Welsummer chickens lay a good amount of large eggs each year, between 150 and 200 (four per week). Hens begin laying eggs around five to six months old. It's not as much how many eggs Welsummers lay that makes them popular but the color of their eggs.

Welsummer eggs are a stunning deep brown color. This pigment develops at the end of the egg-laying process, so you may be able to rub it off when your hens lay. Of course, you probably won't want to, given their beauty. Eggs may vary in color, with lighter-colored eggs appearing when hens are in the thick of laying and darker eggs appearing after a molt or other break in laying. Sometimes, these eggs have speckles, adding to their visual appeal.

Health and Care

Another characteristic about Welsummer chickens that's impressive is their lifespan. Whereas many other breeds live up to eight years, Welsummers can live six to 12 years. Life expectancy varies from chicken to chicken, with factors like **health and wellness** playing a significant role in how long your bird survives. That's why proper care and maintenance is essential for protecting your flock. Consider these tips in caring for your Welsummers:

- **Diet:** Welsummer chickens need a consistent supply of fresh food and water, so refill **feeders and waterers** regularly. Invest in high-quality **poultry feed** to ensure your chickens get the nutrients they need.
- **Housing:** This low-maintenance breed doesn't have special housing requirements. A secure **coop and pen** are what they need to be safe and comfortable.
- **Health considerations:** This breed isn't more prone to any health issues outside what chickens normally experience. Their large combs can develop frostbite when temperatures drop significantly, so consider accessories like **coop heaters** in the winter.
- **Self-maintenance:** As with other breeds, you can encourage Welsummer chickens to clean themselves by providing dust baths. These help chickens maintain their feathers and can protect them against parasites.

Support Your Flock with Tractor Supply

It's hard not to appreciate Welsummer chickens. From their signature brown eggs to their dispositions and low-maintenance needs, Welsummers are ideal for many flocks. If you're interested in Welsummers or other **chicken breeds**, turn to America's largest rural lifestyle retailer, Tractor Supply. In addition to offering live birds and poultry supplies, we share our expertise on **chick care** and more in **The Coop**. For Life Out Here, trust Tractor Supply. To shop for Welsummer chickens, place an order with us online or **visit your local Tractor Supply store**.