

# Jade Woodhouses Simply Natural Organic farm Dorrigo

## BARNEVELDER AND AUSTRALORP CHOOKS

I love Chooks! I Love good looking Chooks!

Pure breed, top genetic lines of traditional Australorp and Barnevelder chooks are kept at the Simply Natural Organic farm. These two breeds are ideal for every purpose I need them for. Being a chook fancier I have trialled other breeds.

I have managed my chooks 100% organically using only natural health care for 19 years and I have had no problems whatsoever. The flock just continued to get stronger and maintains resistance to any infection, disease or parasites.

My chook care is based on complete availability of all the nutrients they require. So a balanced diet which focuses on building their immune system and fosters a strong constitution.

My feeding diets deliver nutritious healthy eggs, content, fit and sound chooks

My chooks, are fed a diverse diet consisting of certified organic grains, legumes and seeds. Fresh vegetables, fruits and herbs are picked from the gardens and orchards daily for feeding to the chooks. This is one of the reasons why I have 3 large vegetable gardens in 3 different locations providing an abundant amount of food daily and all year. Our gardens not only feed us but all our chooks too!



Chook House with deep litter system. Free range area managed with chooks and sheep.

\* Sprouted grains and legumes they love are wheat, buckwheat, mung beans, lentils, alfalfa sprouts and sunflower sprouts

\*Herbs for optimum health include ~ comfry, chicory, dandelion, sorrel, borage and yarrow. These are feed as greens weekly.

\*Medicinal herbs fed monthly are wormwoo, mugwort and medicinal purple garlic. Garlic chives, onion chives, society garlic can all be feed to chooks at any time.

The chooks receive regular mineral supplementation and monthly medicinal herb treatments. We grow medicinal herbs and garlic throughout the orchards for this purpose. What ever supplementary feed (grains or legumes), that is obtained through bartering (work exchange), that I choose for the chooks, is always top quality and as fresh as possible, as this investment is seen as my fertilizer, by way of the animals manure, for composting and humus making, not to mention quality feed for quality eggs plus the health performance of your chooks.

Chooks are my providers and workers!



We have 3 chook houses and systems. One chook house has a deep litter attachment plus a generous grassed free range

Jades purebreed Australorp Chooks

area. This area is mowed to maintain the grass level and palatability, while the grass clippings are used in the deep litter area as nitrogen.

The other chook house has a mulch litter pen attachment (for shedding materials and making our orchard mulch), with large free range area, that adjoins one of the larger livestock paddocks. This means that the grass can be maintained by the sheep in the rotation. The 3rd chook house is the hatching and growing pullet's house or can be part of the rotation.



Medicinal herbs are grown throughout the orchards for the livestock

I have during our freezing winters used it as my hot house. Only 2 Chook houses are used at the one time with the 3rd one restoring pastures and breaking any nutrient or parasite build up. The chooks are rotated from one location to the other every 3 months. In spring I use all 3, as I use 1 for hatching and growing my pullets.

I have a rooster in each flock with approximately 8 – 10 hens. I have 3 different family lines. We consume about 4 dozen eggs a week. We are vegetarian and fresh eggs are a vital part of our diet. Eggs are the most wonderful nutritious food and they are extremely good for you. My 16-20 hens are excellent yielders with excess eggs being bartered to neighbours.

Attributes I looked for in choosing my chook breeds

- good foragers
- excellent work ethic
- medium to heavy strong birds with good size feet. Excellent diggers and shredders.
- excellent layers
- no tendency to going broody
- easy to retain
- able to take climate extremes(robust)
- magnificent type roosters with a decent deep crow
- the breed is docile with gentle personalities
- attractive plumage
- Popular sort after breed for breeding and selling offspring/fertile eggs.
- Selling fertile eggs

## **CHOOKS PURPOSES IN THE SYSTEM**

- self providing with our own fresh eggs, compost and mulch. We breed our own chooks.
- aid to sustainable gardening practices
- provides fresh nutritious eggs
- neighbourhood surplus exchange
- eggs and egg shells used to make humus and a Biodynamic preparation.
- night housing harvesting provides carbon material and manure for deep litter system (every other harvesting can provide fine light weight mulch for covering seed bed and/or around young transplanted seedlings)
- nesting boxes provide mulching material for gardens or carbon layers for composting and humus making
- daily chooks are making compost in the deep litter areas attached to their housing
- daily chooks are shredding materials, breaking them down and aging them for suitability for mulch
- daily chooks are fed fresh herbs, veggies and fruits and they convert these into good healthy eggs, kilojoules, manure, urine and left overs are dug in to the deep litter
- initially used for preparing the area (getting the area back to soil) for growing their own herbs

- to eat fruit spoiled and infested by insect attack (consume larvae and adult pest).



Barnevelders working a deep litter pen. Eating and digging in the greens. Barnevelders are well suited to colder climates.

These and many more reasons are why I have chooks.

I start my day at dawn by letting the chooks out and my day outdoors ends with locking the chooks up at dark. At each end of my day it is a joy.

I am blessed with their individual gifts that they lay for me and the tireless work that they do to help me garden.

Thankyou my beautiful chooks.

Your antics, the sounds you make and your shear movement give life to my day.

Jade Woodhouse

[www.simplynaturalorganic.com](http://www.simplynaturalorganic.com) and [www.coloursheepie.com](http://www.coloursheepie.com)