

“World’s Biggest” Rooster Enjoyed A Good Life On Pasture

Don and Sue Ritter have been raising big chickens for years, but their rooster Big Boy outdid them all, tipping the scales at 24.18 lbs. He beat the previous world record of 23 lbs., 3 oz. set in 1992.

The Ritters raise pastured poultry on their Sugarloaf, Penn. farm. They purposely double some of their flock’s time on pasture to 16 weeks or more to raise 10 to 18-lb. (dressed) “holiday birds” for some of their customers.

“When Big Boy reached 18 to 19 lbs., we decided to keep him longer to see what would happen,” Sue Ritter explains. “We weren’t trying to break any records. He was just bigger than the others even though he was raised the same way.”

Big Boy is a cross between a Plymouth Rock and “Giant” Cornish, known for its large size. He lived on pasture – moved daily – with supplemental feed just like the other birds. Despite his large size he was healthy and got around just fine.

He was hatched April 3, 2012, at Moyer’s Chicks of Quakertown, Penn. In September he took an hour and a half ride back to Quakertown to be officially weighed on a certified scale made by the Precision Solutions, Inc. scale company of Quakertown.

“Everything was documented with all the required photographs and video,” Ritter says. It wasn’t accepted by Guinness, however, as they no longer monitor livestock weight records.

Big Boy achieved his potential adult size before he died when the nights became colder and the grass quit growing. The meat breed is not meant to be long-lived, Ritter notes.

Big Boy’s extreme weight may be unusual, but the Ritters have created a successful market raising larger size birds for the holidays. They personally prefer chicken instead of turkey.

One Thanksgiving when a daughter insisted they follow tradition with a turkey, the family had an informal taste-off comparing it to a 16-lb. (dressed) Cornish-Rock cross chicken the Ritters raised.

“The flavorful Thanksgiving chicken won,” Ritter says. “It’s more moist, has more yield and much more white meat in comparison.”

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Sue and Don Ritter, Absolute Pastured Poultry, 572 W. County Rd., Sugarloaf, Penn. 18249 (ph 570 788-1044; www.pasturepens.com/world-record).



Copyrighted photo courtesy Sue Ritter

Tipping the scales at 24.18 lbs., Big Boy was a cross between a Plymouth Rock and “Giant” Cornish, known for its large size. He lived on pasture with supplemental feed.

Modified Grain Bin Has A Grand View

“I admit that I was worried about opening the entire side of the bin for the window installation. Once the hole is cut, it’s not likely there is an easy way to close it back up,” says Geza Lanczy about his grain bin conversion project, which included using 40 pieces of glass to create an 8 by 17-ft. window.

The bin with the huge picture window sets it apart from other conversions he has seen.

The Lafayette, Ind., manufacturing design engineer also used the bin to test ideas he hopes to include in a future vacation home.

“I installed PEX tubing for radiant heat in the poured concrete floor and faced the window south/southwest to maximize solar gain and still keep it hidden from view of passersby,” Lanczy explains. He also kept the cost to \$4,000 by using recycled materials.

He purchased the bin from his neighbor, Marion Klutzke, who has been featured in past FARM SHOW articles. Klutzke had the disassembled bin in storage from a previous trade. The “government bin” was an 18-ft. tall, 18-ft. diameter bin given to farmers in the 1970’s during the grain embargo.

Lanczy transported the pieces next to the hay field he farms, poured a 6-in. slab with in-floor heat and reassembled the bin using tripod bin jacks he made out of 1 1/4-in. EMT conduit. He built jigs to cut and laminate interior wall plates and built the wall frame in 8-ft. sections – like a barrel truss. He laminated three pressure-treated 2-by-6 boards together to build the window frame within 6 in. of the top and bottom.

Not knowing exactly what would happen, he secured a ladder to the exterior of the bin, grabbed his metal cutting circular saw and cut out the window opening. It worked out fine; the interior framing kept everything stable.

The glass is 1/4-in. thick plate glass salvaged from an office building on Purdue University’s campus. Lanczy got it free and has many more panes for future projects. He built a frame to hold the panes flat on the ground with conduit recycled from his homemade bin jacks for the vertical pieces and laser cut 1/8-in. plate steel links for the horizontal pieces. That allowed the frame to curve when attached to the wood frame opening. He welded the metal frame solid after it was in place, then installed the panes one at a time – covering the edges with 50-

year silicone, holding the glass with a suction cup handle, climbing the ladder and installing the glass in the frame. It took him about 10 hrs. to install all the panes, but the process worked, and the window is waterproof.

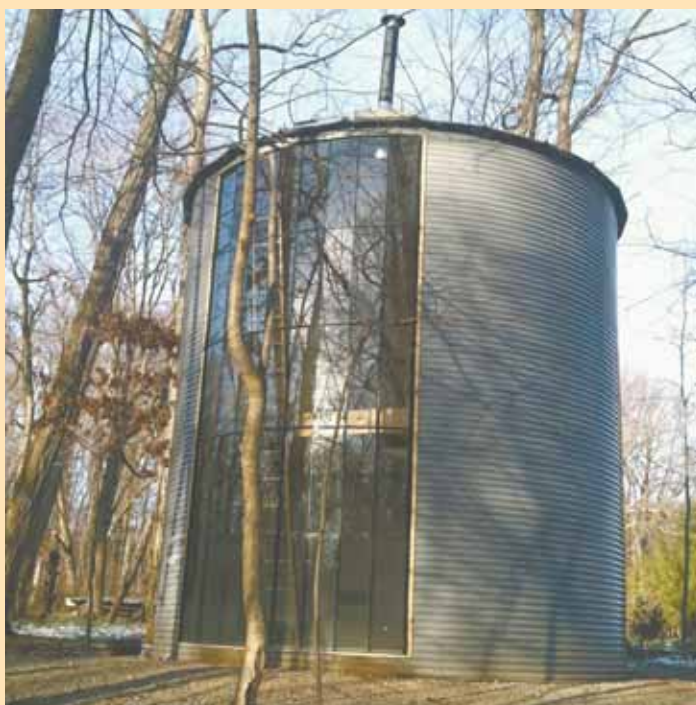
In order to see the whole length of the window, he made the second story a loft – 6 ft. back from the window. The loft is accessible by space-saving alternating tread stairs (half treads that alternate). For winter, he plans to add an insulating panel to capture the solar heat during the day and Styrofoam shutters to hold the heat in at night. During the summer, the leaves on trees shade the window, preventing the bin from getting too hot.

Lanczy uses a generator for power and heats with a wood stove when he’s at the bin. He finished the walls with R-19 insulation covered with 1/8-in. industrial plastic/fiberglass sheeting used to line refrigerated trailers.

He hasn’t decided exactly how he wants to use the modified bin.

“It’s too small for a house. Maybe it’ll be a studio or guest house,” he says.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Geza Lanczy, 107 Digby Rd., Lafayette, Ind. 47905 (ph 765 532-5081; fortressdesign@comcast.net).



Grain bin conversion project involved using 40 pieces of glass to create a huge 8 by 17-ft. picture window.

**How To
Subscribe
To
FARM SHOW
(New & Renewal)**



Take out a new subscription (or renew your existing subscription) and get a FREE copy of our new 168-page “Garden Tractor” book.

Yes! I want to be first to learn about latest new products. Please sign me up for FARM SHOW and send me a FREE copy of your just-published new 168-page book “Look What They’re Doing With Garden Tractors”.

Check here to renew.

United States

- \$21.95 for 1 yr.
- \$41.95 for 2 yrs.
- \$57.95 for 3 yrs.

Canada

- \$27.95 (Can.) for 1 yr.
- \$53.95 (Can.) for 2 yrs.
- \$71.95 (Can.) for 3 yrs.

My check (\$ _____) is enclosed.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State /Prov. _____ Zip _____

Make check payable to FARM SHOW.

Clip and mail this coupon to:

FARM SHOW, P.O. Box 1029, Lakeville, Minn. 55044
Phone toll-free 800 834-9665 or go to www.farmshow.com
VISA, Mastercard, Discover, Paypal & Amazon accepted.