

# DAILY NEWS



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NEW YORK'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER

nydailynews.com

## CRITTERS

# Refuge down on the farm

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TWO DAYS after the World Cup championship ended last month, Melissa Nelson came upon a rooster that was dyed blue — like France's team mascot — and left as garbage in a cardboard box in Chinatown.

"He was panting and had string tied around his legs," said the Manhattan resident, who rushed the abandoned cock to her upper West Side vet.

Today, Nigel's early morning cock-a-doodle-dos are a wake-up call to dozens of other farm animals that live at the Woodstock Farm Animal Sanctuary, a bucolic 23-acre farm located in the Catskill Mountains, two hours from the George Washington Bridge.

Former television producer Jenny Brown, 35, and her husband, Doug Abel, 39, a film editor and Manhattan native, run the not-for-profit farm, which provides care, rehabilitation and shelter for abused and abandoned farm animals.

Many of the farm's 67 chickens, roosters, turkeys, 12 giant pigs, 15 goats, eight sheep and four veal farm steers were rescued from the neglect and abuses of factory farms, stockyards and slaughterhouses.

"Modern-day agriculture is all about profit," said Kentucky-born Brown, an ardent animal activist who has gone undercover to document animal abuse. "Animals aren't treated as emotional creatures. Animals are treated like widgets on a factory line."

Every year in New York City, thousands of animals that are bought online or in poultry markets, land in the city's shelters.



Doug Abel and Jenny Brown tend to Louie the pig and Robin the chicken at the Woodstock Farm Animal Sanctuary in the Catskills.

"If the animals aren't placed in homes, they are euthanized," said New York City Animal Care & Control director of operations Richard Gentles. Animal sanctuaries play a vital role in placing the animals, he said, and allowing them to live out their lives in their natural habitat.

Among the growing brood that hail from the city are 40

chickens, seized last year from a Brooklyn parking lot. P-nut, a broiler hen, was found wandering around Brooklyn, and Hollander, a rooster, was found tied to a Manhattan roadside sign.

Oliver, a goat found in Queens with his throat slashed and a "Sold" sign boldly painted on his side, was fostered at the sanctuary until he was placed in a

home.

After Labor Day, the sanctuary will be open to the public on weekends, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., for private tours. People of all ages can come face-to-face with pigs frolicking in the mud and sheep vying for love and attention.

"It's a place where people can see the emotional side of a farm animal," said Brown, who spends much of her day closely trailed by three affable turkeys, Boon, Alfonso and Hershel.

Farm tours, a film series, guest speakers and workshops are also slated to help educate the public about the plight of farm animals.

Still, maintaining a not-for-profit farm isn't a day in the park. The Woodstock Farm Animal Sanctuary is run entirely on public donations, which go directly to fund barn construction, feed and care for the animals and humane education and outreach programs.

A small army of dedicated volunteers has built barns, fences and sheds, and local artists, including "Bizarro" comic strip creator Dan Piraro, have donated artwork and painted murals on barn doors.

Brown and Abel hope to increase awareness of the farm's existence and raise money to fund new roads and a covered pig feed area.

On Sept. 9, you can join the Woodstock Farm Animal Sanctuary family and enjoy Manhattan musician Joy Askew at WFAS' Opening Day Celebration festivities, being held from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. For directions, info — or to make a donation, or learn how to sponsor a farm animal — go to [www.woodstockfas.org](http://www.woodstockfas.org).

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