

A Review of MOFGA

By Jack Wooldridge



On Friday the 19th of September, Saturday the 20th, and Sunday the 21st, we headed off to the three days of MOFGA, the Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association. When we arrived, we walked through the woods to where the fair was. We passed a clearing created for the Low Impact Forestry Program, where they cut wood in a way that wouldn't hurt the forest too much.

On the first day, I went to a presentation on the care of Guinea Fowl, which are odd-looking little birds with bald heads and weird bony crests sticking out of the tops of their heads. I learned a lot about Guinea Fowl, and they are quite funny animals to watch. After that, I wandered around the chicken show barn and saw the most enormous rooster! He had puffy feathery feet, a great big tail, and he was just huge! If he had crowed, his head would probably have hit the top of his cage! In the cage next to him, there was the biggest hen I have ever seen. There were also some orange silky Polishes and a really weird breed with bald necks (Mom wasn't too fond of them). I would have gone on to the goats and rabbits, but it was already past the time I was supposed to back, and my parents were going crazy! Whoops!

In the afternoon, as we were going around the market to buy some produce, I saw the weirdest ornaments I have ever seen. They were golden chicken legs! How weird is that! As we neared the end of our shopping, I heard music blaring from behind a hill. So I climbed the hill, and found a stage where a band was playing. Unfortunately, I arrived just in time to hear the end of their last song. So I left for a bit. When I came back, there was a really silly band playing. They played songs like "The Power-Tool Polka" and "The Deep Sea Waltz". They were hilarious!

On the second day, I went to a really cool talk about goats and how to care for them. The presenter's goats did a lot of funny things, and she enjoyed telling us about their

adventures. One time, a baby goat got into the house and went to sleep in the cupboard above the sink, while she ran around like crazy looking for it! Another time, a baby went to sleep in a bale of hay and she couldn't find it until the next morning! I learned a lot and loved learning it.

After that, I walked over to the sheep and goat barn. The sheep and the goats were very cute. There was one ram with the most enormous rack of horns I have ever seen! They were all curled around. The young goats were very playful, butting each other and running around like happy goats. The older goats were eating furiously.

Then I went to the sheep dog show, where sheep dogs herded sheep (duh!) and ducks. It was fascinating to see the way they all worked together to bring the sheep where they needed them. The dogs could even open the door of the sheep's pen and shut it behind them! After they had finished entertaining the crowd, they were allowed to play Frisbee and be petted.

On the third day, I headed straight over to the fowl presentation's tent and listened to a talk on the care of chickens in an urban environment. Even though I knew most of the information, it was interesting to get a look at a different way of keeping chickens. They only had hens (because roosters make too much noise), but they did most things the same as us. Then I went to a talk on keeping pigs in a humane way (making them "happy pigs"). There were two presenters, and they were both very knowledgeable. Pigs are obviously very fun to keep, if you have the space to keep them and the time to get to know them! I also went to the Junior Division of the Poultry Raising Contest, where the contestants showed how much they knew about their birds and poultry in general. I counted a whole bunch of bantam chickens, one chicken, and a duck.