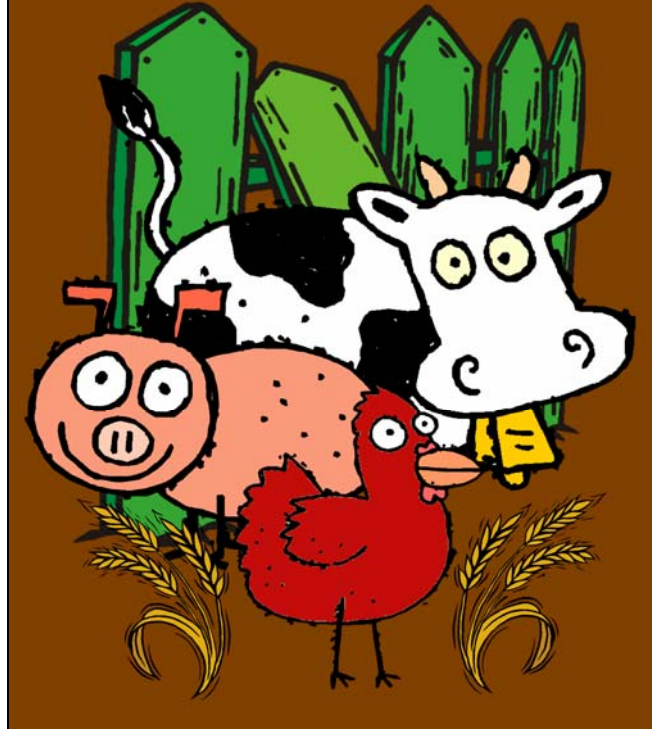


**Little Red Hen
Explains It All
for You**



Edith Weiss

Adapted from the folktale "The Little Red Hen"
and the nursery rhyme "Old MacDonald Had a Farm"

BIG DOG PUBLISHING

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*To Karl and Maria Weiss,
the first farmers I ever knew.*

The Little Red Hen Explains It All For You

CHILDREN'S COMEDY WITH SONG. Adopted from the folktale "The Little Red Hen" and the song "Old MacDonald Had a Farm," this comical play is perfect for kindergarten and elementary school children. In this singing, rapping version, Little Red Hen finds some wheat seeds on Old MacDonald's farm and decides to grow wheat so she can bake fresh bread in the fall. However, when she asks Old MacDonald's barnyard animals for help growing the wheat, she discovers the pigs are too busy wallowing in the mud, and the geese are too focused on meditating. The lambs just want to frolic in the meadow, and the cows want to eat grass all day. Even her best friend, Henny Penny, refuses to help because she's afraid she will get dirty and catch a poultry virus. At the end of summer, Little Red Hen has to harvest the wheat and take it to the mill on her own since the other animals are too busy practicing for the fall talent show. But when the divine smell of freshly baked bread wafts into the barnyard, the animals are suddenly eager to help Little Red Hen—help her eat the bread, that is!

Performance Time: Approximately 30 minutes.

About the Story

“Old MacDonald Had a Farm” is a traditional children’s song and nursery rhyme. It is unknown who originally wrote the song, but many versions of it exist in other languages around the world. Old MacDonald is known as Uncle Tobias in Italian, Grandpa Ali in Egyptian, Jens Hansen in Danish, Uncle Manel in Portugese, Uncle Moshe in Hebrew, Ali Baba in Turkish, and Mr. Wang in Chinese. The Japanese version of the song is entitled “Happy Farm” and features three farmers named Ichiro, Jiro, and Saburo.

Characters

(5 M, 13 F, 7 flexible, opt. extras)

OLD MACDONALD: A hard-working farmer; male.

LOUISE MACDONALD: Old MacDonald's sister; female.

ROSY THE LITTLE RED HEN: Curious, patient, hard working hen; wears a chicken costume; female.

HENNY PENNY: Little Red Hen's best friend, who always imagines the worst will happen; wears a chicken costume; female.

WING DING PUMPKINPATCH: Energetic and enthusiastic rooster who narrates Little Red Hen's actions; wears a rooster costume; male.

SAMMY: Lamb who loves to frolic in the meadow; flexible.

CAMMY: Lamb who loves to frolic in the meadow; female.

PAMMY: Lamb who loves to frolic in the meadow; female.

MANDY: Lamb who loves to frolic in the meadow; female.

BAM BAM: Lamb who loves to frolic in the meadow; flexible.

LUCY: Goose who is mother to several goslings and likes to meditate; female.

ZEUS: Youngest and neediest gosling; male.

DOOSY: Active, vocal gosling; flexible.

JUICY: Gosling; flexible.

RUTHIE: Gosling; female.

BABIO: A suave, charming bull who thinks he's a ladies' man; male.

CLARABELLE: Calf who sometimes forgets to use her words; female.

ANNABELLE: Cow who loves to eat grass in the meadow; female.

LACARMEN: Cow who loves to eat grass in the meadow; female.

CHLOE: Cow who loves to eat grass in the meadow; female.

BETSY: Cow who loves to eat grass in the meadow; female.

HAMLET: Pig who speaks like Shakespeare; male.

HIGGELTY: Pig who loves to play and wallow; flexible.

PIGGELTY: Pig who loves to play and wallow; flexible.

WIGGELTY: Pig who loves to play and wallow; flexible.

EXTRAS (Opt.): As other Farmyard Animals.

Setting

Old MacDonald's farm.

Set

Old MacDonald's farm. There can be a backdrop of a barnyard, opt. There is a tree stump USC large enough to sit on.

Props

Hoe
Wheelbarrow full of animal feed
Hay
Patch of dirt
Patch of dirt with young wheat
Patch of dirt with full-grown wheat
Wheat
Clipboard
Bag of flour
Loaf of bread

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**“Food doesn’t just grow
by itself?”**

—Wing Ding

The Little Red Hen Explains It All for You

(AT RISE: A barnyard. All are asleep except Henny Penny and Rosy the Little Red Hen. The Chickens are scratching the dirt SL. Wing Ding Pumpkinpatch is asleep on a stump USC. Old MacDonald and his sister Louise enter SR. They pose as in the "American Gothic" painting by Grant Wood.)

LOUISE: (To audience.) Howdy. This here's my older brother Will MacDonald. We call him Old MacDonald.

MACDONALD: (To audience.) Howdy. This here's my sister Louise MacDonald. We call her Louise.

LOUISE: (To audience.) We're farmers. We work hard. We gotta feed the animals now.

HENNY PENNY: Buk, buk, buk, buk, ba guk!

(MacDonald crosses to Wing Ding, who is asleep.)

MACDONALD: Now, Henny Penny, you know we always feed our rooster, Wing Ding Pumpkinpatch, first.

HENNY PENNY: (Scratching.) Buk, buk, buk, buk, buk, buk.

MACDONALD: (To audience.) Wing Ding's supposed to wake us up in the morning, but he likes to sleep in, so most mornings we wake him up.

LOUISE: Let's sing while we work, Will. (Count down.) Five, six, seven, eight...

(Note: As Louise and MacDonald sing, they go to each group of Animals and toss them food. The Animals awaken and join the song.)

LOUISE/MACDONALD/HENNY PENNY/LRH: (Sing.)

"Old MacDonald had a farm,
E-I-E-I-O.

And on this farm he had a rooster,
E-I-E-I-O.
With a—“

(No response from Wing Ding, as he is still sleeping.)

LOUISE/MACDONALD/LRH/HENNY PENNY: *(To Wing Ding, shout.)* Wake up! *(Sing.)* “Here, and a—“

WING DING: I’m up.

LOUISE/MACDONALD/LRH/HENNY PENNY/WING

DING: *(Sing.)* “There
Here a ‘wake,’ there an ‘up,’
Everywhere a “wake up,”
Old MacDonald had a farm
E-I-E-I-O.

Old MacDonald had a farm,
E-I-E-I-O
And on this farm he had some lambs,
E-I-E-I-O
With a—“

LAMBS: Baaaa!

MACDONALD/LOUISE/LRH/HENNY PENNY/WING

DING: *(Sing.)* “Here, and a—“

LAMBS: Baaaa!

MACDONALD/LOUISE/LRH/ HENNY PENNY/WING

DING: *(Sing.)* “There. Here a—“

LAMBS: Baaaa!

WING DING/MACDONALD/LOUISE/LRH, HENNY

PENNY: *(Sing.)* “There a—“

LAMBS: Baaaa!

WING DING/MACDONALD/LOUISE/LRH/HENNY

PENNY: *(Sing.)* “Everywhere a—

LAMBS: Baaa, baaa!

MACDONALD/LOUISE/LRH/HENNY PENNY/WING

DING/LAMBS: *(Sing.)* “Old MacDonald had a farm

E-I-E-I-O.

Old MacDonald had a farm,
E-I-E-I-O
And on this farm he had some geese,
E-I-E-I-O
With a—

GEESE: Honk honk!

WING DING/MACDONALD/LOUISE/LRH/HENNY

PENNY/LAMBS: (*Sing.*) "Here, and a—"

GEESE: Honk honk!

WING DING/MACDONALD/LOUISE/LRH/HENNY

PENNY/LAMBS: (*Sing.*) "There. Here a—"

GEESE: Honk!

WING DING/MACDONALD/LOUISE/LRH/HENNY

PENNY/LAMBS: (*Sing.*) "There a—"

GEESE: Honk!

WING DING/MACDONALD/LOUISE/LRH/HENNY

PENNY/LAMBS/GEESE: (*Sing.*) "Everywhere a honk, honk!"

Old MacDonald had a farm,

E-I-E-I-O.

Old MacDonald had a farm,
E-I-E-I-O
And on this farm he had some cows,
E-I-E-I-O
With a—

COWS: Moo, moo!

WING DING/MACDONALD/LOUISE/LRH/HENNY

PENNY/LAMBS/GEESE: (*Sing.*) "Here, and a—"

COWS: Moo, moo!

WING DING/MACDONALD/LOUISE/LRH/HENNY

PENNY/LAMBS/GEESE: (*Sing.*) "There, here a—"

COWS: Moo!

WING DING/MACDONALD/LOUISE/LRH/HENNY

PENNY/LAMBS/GEESE: (*Sing.*) "There a—"

COWS: Moo!

WING DING/MACDONALD/LOUISE/LRH/HENNY

PENNY/LAMBS/GEESE/COWS: *(Sing.)*

“Everywhere a moo, moo!

Old MacDonald had a farm,

E-I-E-I-O.

Old MacDonald had a farm

E-I-E-I-O,

And on this farm he had a bull,

E-I-E-I-O,

With a — “

BABIO: Hi there.

WING DING/MACDONALD/LOUISE/LRH/HENNY

PENNY/LAMBS/GEESE/COWS: *(Sing.)* “Here, and a — “

BABIO: Hello there.

WING DING/MACDONALD/LOUISE/LRH/HENNY

PENNY/LAMBS/GEESE: *(Sing.)* “There, here a — “

BABIO: Hey!

WING DING/MACDONALD/LOUISE/LRH/HENNY

PENNY/LAMBS/GEESE/COWS: *(Sing.)* “There a — “

BABIO: Hi!

WING DING/MACDONALD/LOUISE/LRH/HENNY

PENNY/LAMBS/GEESE/COWS/BABIO: *(Sing.)*

Everywhere a “Hey, hi!”

Old MacDonald had a farm

E-I-E-I-O.

Old MacDonald had a farm

E-I-E-I-O,

And on this farm he had some pigs,

E-I-E-I-O,

With an — “

PIGS: Oink, oink!

WING DING/MACDONALD/LOUISE/LRH/HENNY
PENNY/LAMBS/GEESE/COWS/BABIO: (*Sing.*) "Here,
and an—"

PIGS: Oink, oink!

WING DING/MACDONALD/LOUISE/LRH/HENNY
PENNY/LAMBS/GEESE/COWS/BABIO: (*Sing.*) There,
here an—"

PIGS: Oink!

WING DING/MACDONALD/LOUISE/LRH/HENNY
PENNY/LAMBS/GEESE/COWS/BABIO: (*Sing.*) "There
an—"

PIGS: Oink!

WING DING/MACDONALD/LOUISE/LRH/HENNY
PENNY/LAMBS/GEESE/COWS/BABIO/PIGS: (*Sing.*)

"Everywhere an oink, oink!

Old MacDonald had a farm

E-I-E-I-O.

And on this farm he had some chickens,

E-I-E-I-O

With a—"

LRH/HENNY PENNY: Buk, buk!

WING DING/MACDONALD/LOUISE/LRH/HENNY
PENNY/LAMBS/GEESE/COWS/BABIO/PIGS: (*Sing.*)

"Here, and a—"

LRH/HENNY PENNY: Buk, buk!

WING DING/MACDONALD/LOUISE/LRH/HENNY
PENNY/LAMBS/GEESE/COWS/BABIO/PIGS: (*Sing.*)

"There, here a—"

LRH/HENNY PENNY: Buk!

WING DING/MACDONALD/LOUISE/LRH/HENNY
PENNY/LAMBS/GEESE/COWS/BABIO/PIGS: (*Sing.*)

"There a—"

LRH/HENNY PENNY: Buk!

WING DING/MACDONALD/LOUISE/LRH/HENNY
PENNY/LAMBS/GEESE/COWS/BABIO/PIGS: (*Sing.*)

“Everywhere a buk, buk!
Old MacDonald had a farm
E-I-E-I-O.”

WING DING: Well, good morning, everybody in the barnyard!

MACDONALD: You gotta like his enthusiasm.

BABIO: No, you don't. I don't like it one bit. I am not a morning person.

WING DING: *(Strongly.)* I said, good morning!

ANIMALS: *(Dutifully, as it happens every morning.)* Good morning, Wing Ding.

HENNY PENNY: What are you staring at, Rosy Red Hen?

LITTLE RED HEN: Look, I believe I have found some wheat seeds!

HENNY PENNY: Yeah, so?

CLARABELLE: Moo! Moo!

HENNY PENNY: Use your words, Clarabelle. I don't speak cow.

CLARABELLE: *(To LRH.)* Give them to me. I want. Me hungry.

LITTLE RED HEN: No, I think I'm going to plant them. If we plant them, we can grow wheat and then make fresh bread in the fall!

HENNY PENNY: Now, just wait a minute. I'm your BFF, and I'm gonna be honest here. You don't know anything about planting. You are doomed to fail.

LITTLE RED HEN: I've watched the MacDonalds do it. It's not hard. Hoe the ground, dig a hole, drop it in.

LOUISE: That's right, Little Red Hen. Come on, Will, we gotta plow the back forty.

MACDONALD: Yup.

(Louise and Will exit SR. Little Red Hen gets a hoe.)

LITTLE RED HEN: *(Looking around.)* Who wants to help me? Cows?

COWS: (*Shaking heads no.*) Mooooo.

LACARMEN: (*To LRH.*) Well, we would just love to, but we can't.

ANNABELLE: (*To LRH.*) We were just going out to the meadow.

CHLOE: (*To LRH.*) The early springtime grasses are delicious!

BETSY: (*To LRH.*) And buttercups! There could be buttercups! (*To Cows.*) Come on, girls! I'm starved!

(*Cows head to meadow.*)

LITTLE RED HEN: How about you, Babio? Can you help?

BABIO: I would love to, but I can't. I gotta follow the ladies...so that I can protect them, you know. 'Cause I'm a big, strong bull. That's my job...protecting the ladies.

LITTLE RED HEN: Protect them from what? Vengeful dandelions?

BABIO: Nobody likes sarcasm, Miss Red Hen.

LITTLE RED HEN: Sorry.

BABIO: Apology accepted.

(*Babio joins Cows in meadow.*)

LITTLE RED HEN: We'll just do it ourselves, right, Henny Penny?

HENNY PENNY: *We?*

LITTLE RED HEN: Yes. You and me.

HENNY PENNY: I'd love to, but no. I can't. Sorry. I don't want to get dirty. I'd probably catch some poultry virus. I'll just watch.

[END OF FREEVIEW]