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Barnyard Economics: The Modern Little Red Hen

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BARNYARD ECONOMICS

A time-honored fable about freedom, property, initiative, enterprise, rewards, prosperity – apathy, complacency, moral decay, falling living standards and social dependency.



THE MODERN LITTLE RED HEN

THE MODERN LITTLE RED HEN

Once upon a time, there was a little red hen who scratched about the barnyard until she uncovered some grains of wheat. She called her neighbors and said, *“If we work together and plant this wheat, we shall have bread to eat. Who will help me plant the wheat?”*

“Not I,” said the cow.

“Not I,” said the duck.

“Not I,” said the pig.

“Not I,” said the goose.

“Then I will,” said the little red hen. And she did. The wheat grew tall and ripened into golden grain.

“Who will help me reap my wheat?” asked the little red hen.

“Not I,” quacked the duck.

“Out of my classification,” grunted the pig.

“I’d lose my seniority,” mooed the cow.

“I’d lose my unemployment compensation,” honked the goose.

“Then I will,” said the little red hen, and she did. At last it came time to bake the bread. *“Who will help me bake the bread?”* asked the little red hen.

“That would be overtime for me,” said the “udderly” disgusted cow.

“I’d lose my welfare benefits,” said the duck.

“I’m a dropout and never learned how to do that,” snorted the pig.

“If I’m to be the only helper, that’s discrimination,” squawked the goose.

“Then I will,” said the little red hen. She baked five loaves and held them up for her neighbors to see. They all wanted some and, in fact, demanded a share. But the little red hen said, *“No, I can eat the five loaves myself.”*

“Excess profits!” cried the cow.

“Capitalist leech!” screamed the duck

“I demand my rights!” yelled the goose.

And the pig just grunted.

They painted “unfair” picket signs and marched round and round the little red hen, shouting equally harsh words.

When the government agent came, he said, *“You must not be greedy, little red hen. Look at the oppressed cow. Look at the disadvantaged duck. Look at the underprivileged pig. Look at the less fortunate goose. You are guilty of making second-class citizens of them.”*

“But...but,” said the little red hen. *“I earned the bread.”* *“Exactly,”* said the all-wise government agent. *“That is the wonderful free enterprise system. Anyone in the barnyard can earn as much as he wants. But under our modern government regulations, the productive workers must divide their product with the idle.”*

And so, they lived (sort of) happily ever after, including the little red hen, who smiled and clucked, *“I am grateful. I am grateful.”*

But her neighbors wondered why she never again baked any more bread.

THE END

What is the moral to the story? You can’t have your bread and loaf, too.