4-H 153

R · A · I · S · I · N · G

Fancy Poultry

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ County _____

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION

4-H 153
Raising Fancy Poultry

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AMERICAN STANDARD OF PERFECTION, THE AMERICAN POULTRY ASSOCIATION, INC., 1985 EDITION.

GRZIMEK'S ANIMAL LIFE ENCYCLOPEDIA, VOLUME 8, PAGE 55.

BANTAMS, JOHN L. SKINNER, UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-EXTENSION, 1970.

Light Brahma, Cockerel

Member Project Guide

Raising Fancy Poultry

Project Background

This beginning level project is designed for 4-H members ages 9 and older. Younger members will need to work with a parent or interested adult. Older members may wish to specialize in one or more of the project Interest Areas by planning and conducting their own activities in addition to the ones provided. Check your county's project guidelines (if any) for additional requirements, especially if you wish to participate in county project judging or prepare an exhibit for the county fair. Members who complete this project and wish to go further are encouraged to take a self-determined project in fancy poultry.

Project Guidelines

1. Complete the "Planning Your Project" section.
2. Explore one or more of the Interest Areas for this project.
3. Within each Interest Area, perform all of the "Things To Do".
4. Take part in at least two Organized Project Activities.
5. Become involved in at least two Leadership/Citizenship Experiences.
6. Write a one page report telling what you did and learned through this project.

Planning Your Project

Silver Spangled Hamburg, Hen

Step 1: Interest Areas

Plan to explore one or more of the Interest Areas listed below. As you begin to explore an Interest Area, place the current date (month and year) next to it.

Date Started	Interest Areas
_____	1. Getting Started, page 4
_____	2. History, page 6
_____	3. Breeds, page 6
_____	4. Selecting Your Birds, page 7
_____	5. Housing and Equipment, page 16
_____	6. Care and Maintenance, page 17
_____	7. Getting Ready For The Show, page 19
_____	8. Record Keeping, page 22

Step 2: Things to Do

Plan to complete all of the activities in each selected interest area below. Have your parent or advisor initial and date what you complete. Activities can be added or changed at any time.

1. Getting Started
   - Answer the questions on page 4.

2. History
   - Answer the questions on page 6.
3. Breeds
   - Answer the questions on page 6-7.

4. Selecting Your Birds
   - Decide how you will determine if your birds come from a good source.
   - Decide what breed and variety of poultry you wish to raise.
   - Visit at least two local breeders to examine the different breeds of birds available.
   - Examine a poultry reference to learn the different breeds of chickens.
   - Answer the questions on page 7.

5. Housing and Equipment
   - Plan and obtain proper housing for your birds.
   - Plan and obtain proper equipment for your birds.
   - Answer the questions on page 16.

6. Care and Maintenance
   - Consult a local feed dealer to learn about the different feeds available and select the one best for you and your birds.
   - Plan and use a good feeding and watering schedule.
   - Plan a good method for feed storage.
   - Select the type of litter you will use for your birds.

- Plan and follow a schedule for coop sanitation.
- Explain the signs, cause, treatment and prevention of at least one poultry health problem.
- Answer the questions on page 17.

7. Getting Ready For The Show
   - Learn and follow correct grooming procedures.
   - Learn the parts of a chicken.
   - Learn and follow the proper procedures for showing your birds in showmanship.
   - Answer the questions on page 19.

8. Record Keeping
   - Keep complete and accurate records of all income and expenses associated with your birds.
   - Complete the activity on page 22.

Step 3: Organized Activities

Take part in at least two of the Organized Activities listed. Plan your involvement and record it on the chart, Report of Organized Activities.

Before starting your project, enter your choices in the section labeled "Plan To Do." Then, once you have taken part in an activity, record what you did and when. Organized Activities may be added or changed at any time.

Sample Organized Activities

County Project Judging	Illustrated Talk	Radio/TV Presentation
Demonstration	Open Poultry Show	Speech
Exhibit	Project Clinic	Veterinary Clinic
Field Trip	Project Meetings	Youth Poultry Show

Report of Organized Activities

Plan To Do	What I Did	Date Completed
(Example) Poultry Show	I showed my birds at the local poultry show and won Best of Breed!	May 14

Step 4: Leadership/Citizenship Activities

Check the activities you wish to do, or plan your own in the space provided. Plan to do at least two. Keep track of your progress by marking the date (month and year) by what you complete. Leadership/Citizenship Activities may be added or changed at any time.

Plan To Do	Completed	Leadership/Citizenship Activities
_____	_____	Encourage someone to take a poultry project.
_____	_____	Encourage someone to join our 4-H club with a poultry project.
_____	_____	Arrange for an instructor to teach a clinic for 4-H poultry project members in your county.
_____	_____	Arrange for your club to attend a poultry show.
_____	_____	Have someone visit your club and speak on a poultry related topic.
_____	_____	Help someone decide which poultry project to take.
_____	_____	Join and participate in a local poultry club.
_____	_____	Write a news story about your 4-H poultry project.
		Plan your own activities here.

Project Review

Once you have completed what you have planned, write a one-page report telling what you did and learned through this project. Then arrange for a local project review. This can be done with your parent, project advisor or interested adult. It may also be part of a more comprehensive member evaluation at a time agreed upon by club members. This review will help you evaluate what you learned, as well as your growth as a 4-H member. Those who participate in this level of evaluation can receive special membership and project awards like ribbons, pins, and certificates. In addition, you may want to take part in county project judging. This level of evaluation determines how well you did on your project by assigning you a project grade. You will also be compared to others in order to determine the best in your project area.

Getting Started

Introduction

Most boys and girls like animals. In this project you will learn about the history of poultry. Also, you will learn about the equipment necessary to care for a flock of chickens, and selection of the breed and variety that is right for you. You will learn to feed and care for your birds, how to prepare your birds for the show, and breeding tips to help you raise better birds. This project book is designed to be used throughout your 4-H experience. You should try to learn more each year the project is repeated under each area.

If you have never raised chickens, you will probably want to start with just a few. Your first year can help you decide if you want to continue with this project. Also, at the end of the first year you may want to change the breed or variety you have selected or add other breeds and varieties. If you decide to continue, the autumn is a good time to purchase good breeding stock, or you can purchase eggs or chicks in the spring.

Your First 4-H Project

If this is your first year in 4-H, remember that 4-H is open to all boys and girls between the ages of 9 and 19. 4-H is the youth program of the Ohio State University Extension and is organized through the cooperation of the United States Department of Agriculture, The Ohio State University and your county commissioners.
As a 4-H member, you are expected to attend 4-H meetings. Also, you must be an active member of your club and give a demonstration about your project. You must take good care of your project and learn as much about chickens as you can. You may want to show your birds at the county fair. You also may want to attend 4-H camp.

Project Plan

The purpose of this project is to give you an opportunity to care for an animal. You will feed, water and take care of your birds. At first, you may want to obtain only one or two birds as pets. One male and one or two females will make an excellent start for your first year. Later, if you have the breeding stock, equipment and facilities, you can raise some chicks as a part of continuing the project. Talk it over with your parents and 4-H advisor, then decide how many chickens you will care for as a project this year.

It is important that you read all of this project book. You should answer all of the questions. They are there to help you check your learning. Also, be sure to keep the records at the back of the book.

Ask your county 4-H Agent if there are additional poultry bulletins in the Extension office. Often, you can find books on poultry at libraries, pet shops and feed stores. Also, ask your 4-H Agent if there is an adult purebred poultry association in your area. In some areas, these associations meet regularly and have special events for those interested in poultry.

Talk with your 4-H advisor about what you can exhibit at your county fair. If you have purebred poultry, you may want to exhibit at open poultry shows or even the Ohio State Fair.

Getting Started Questions

1. Who is your county 4-H Agent?
2. Have you met your county 4-H Agent?
3. Where is his or her office located?
4. How many chickens do you want to care for this year?
5. List additional project resources (books, people, etc.) that you were able to find to help you with your poultry project.

Bearded White Silkie, Pullet

History

The chickens of today came from the red jungle fowl of Southeast Asia. People living in that area were the first poultry men. They domesticated these birds for use as egg layers and for meat. As early as the 14th and 15th centuries B.C., chickens were being exported from India. The Chinese and ancient Egyptians kept and bred domestic fowl. Chickens were brought to Europe from Egypt.

By the time Columbus landed in the New World, many different types of chickens could be found in Europe. Columbus discovered that there were many fowls here in the New World, too. Records show that he took the turkey with him back to Europe. It is believed the first colonists from Europe brought chickens and other fowls with them to the New World. From these birds came the American breeds of today.

People's interests in chickens began to change in the mid 1800's. This was because new breeds from Asia, such as the Cochins and Brahmas, were introduced in Europe and America. These new breeds from the East were much larger than birds being produced in the West. Also at this time, laws were passed which made cockfighting illegal. Poultry men began to breed their birds for more commercial purposes as well as for their colors and shapes. Breeders also began to have shows to see who had the best birds. The first poultry show in America was held in the Public Gardens in Boston, Massachusetts on November 14, 1849. From this beginning, the poultry shows of today have been developed.

White Cochin, Bantam, Cock

Many breeds got their names from the area of the world from which they were developed. Examples include the Cornish of England, the Rhode Island Red of America and the Andalusian of Spain. Miniature, or bantam, breeds were also developed which look just like the large fowl. Chicken fanciers also have produced several bantam breeds, such as the Japanese and Sebrights, for which there are no large fowl counterparts.

Today's poultry fancier has a small flock of birds that he or she raises for show. Birds that are not show quality are kept for egg layers or eaten. This is in contrast to the commercial producers who have large flocks kept only for commercial purposes.

History Questions

1. What wild bird is the ancestor of our present chickens?

2. Where were chickens first kept for eggs and meat?

3. Name a ship that probably brought chickens to the new world.

4. When and where was the first poultry show held in America?

5. What is a bantam?

Breeds

Today, breeds of large fowl poultry are grouped according to the area of the world where the birds originated by the American Poultry Association in its **Standard of Perfection**. These groups are American, Asiatic, English, Mediterranean, Continental and All Other Standard Breeds (AOSB). The table on page 9 gives each breed presently in the **Standard of Perfection** and its class.

Bantams are classified into classes based on traits or characteristics that are shared by all members of the class. These are the Modern Games, Old English Games, Single Comb Clean Legged (SCCL), Rose Comb Clean Legged (RCCL), All Other Combs Clean Legged (AOCCL), and Feather Legged. The American Bantam Association also includes the Bantam Ducks in its Standard of Perfection as bantams.

Ducks in the American Poultry Association system are grouped into Heavy, Medium, Light and Bantam classes. Geese are divided into Heavy, Medium and Light groups. Turkeys are all shown in one class.

Look at the pictures to see what is meant by breed type. Notice that each different breed has a different shape. Also notice the differences in the combs and feathering. Each breed has its own features which will identify it. The **Standard of Perfection** gives the description of each breed type. It also describes the color for each variety and gives the type of comb, number of toes, etc. and tells about any special characteristics of the breed.

Breeds Questions

1. What books give the class and describes the characteristics of each breed?

2. If you developed a new breed of large fowl, what class do you think it would be put in?

3. Suppose you developed a new breed of bantam which has a rose comb and feather legs. Which class would it be put under?

Selecting Your Birds

There are many things to consider in selecting your first fancy birds. For your first project, it is probably best to purchase a young pair or trio. These birds should be between six and 12 months of age at the time you purchase them. If you are planning to show these birds this year, try to buy ones that will be about 11 months old at the time of the show. Purchasing young birds will enable you to raise your own youngsters in following years.

Black Rosecomb, Bantam, Cock

It is best to buy your birds from reliable breeders. Visit the breeder and look over the operation carefully. Are the pens clean? Do the birds look healthy? Can the owner tell you about the strengths and weaknesses of his birds? Talk to the owner to see if he has shown his birds at any poultry shows and how the birds have done in competition. In general, if the owner takes good care of his stock and is proud of them, you will be pleased with your purchase.

What Breed To Buy?

The success of any 4-H livestock project depends to a large extent on the proper selection and care of the breeding stock.

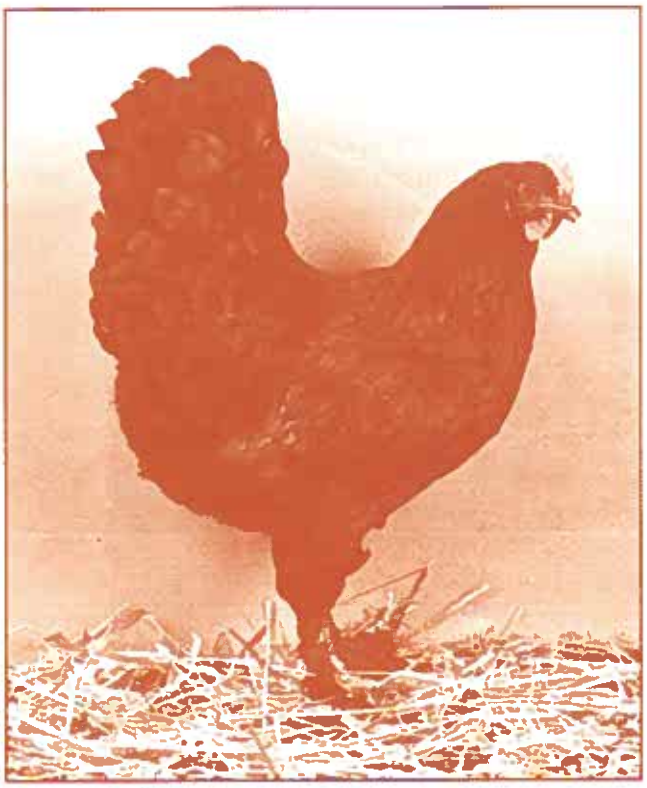
There are many breeds of chickens and most breeds have more than one variety. Chickens are identified by breed the same as other fowl and all livestock. The breed is identified by a particular body shape or style. In chickens this is call "breed type." As you look at the pictures of the birds, look at the great variety of shapes found in chickens.

The breeds are further divided into varieties, usually because of differences in color pattern. Sometimes other special features will show the differences between varieties. For example some breeds, such as the Leghorns, can have either single or rose combs. In other breeds, such as Silkies, extra feathers on the bird's face, called beards, establish the variety differences.

When we think of chickens, most of us probably think of the full sized birds. These are called large fowl. Poultry men have developed miniatures of the large breeds called bantams. These birds have been produced mainly for show purposes, although they will produce eggs that are good to eat. Bantams can also be eaten, but the amount of usable flesh will be much less than that of a large bird. Some breeds of bantams have been developed for which there is no similar type of large chicken.

There is no one best breed. The selection of shapes, features and colors is so large that there is literally something for everyone. The table on pages 12 and 13 lists most of the recognized breeds and the most common varieties in each breed. Listed below is a guide which may be helpful in selecting the breed which is best for you.

- Games and Cornish need plenty of exercise to develop the desired hard feathering and muscle tone. They also need a large amount of space to prevent broken feathers.
- Cochins stand extreme confinement very well.



Black Langsham, Pullet

- Crested breeds such as Polish and Houdans should not be allowed to get their heads wet in cool or cold weather. They need to be checked regularly for lice and mites, especially in the crests.
- Feather legged breeds should not be allowed to run in wet or tall grass or in extremely muddy areas.
- All white varieties tend to become "brassy colored" if kept in direct sunlight, especially if they are also eating too much green grass or yellow corn.
- It is sometimes easier to produce good specimens of black or white varieties than those that are parti-colored. The color genes in parti-colored varieties can be less stable and it can be harder to get these birds to breed young of true color. A good individual of a parti-colored variety is frequently more beautiful. If you choose a parti-colored bird, be prepared for challenges!
- Adult Modern and Old English Game males must be dubbed (combs, wattles and ear lobes removed) in order to show them.

(These suggestions were adapted from Bantams, University of Wisconsin Extension, p. 3, 1970)

Other things to consider are the space you have available to house your birds, your size in relation to the size of the birds and the breeds and varieties available in your area. Before you decide, talk with other 4-H members, your 4-H advisor and your parents. You might want to visit some local poultry breeders or attend a poultry show to see the different breeds available.

Selection Questions

1. What breed(s) did you select? Why?

2. Where did you purchase your birds?

3. How old are your birds?

4. Describe the color, size and condition of your birds.

American Poultry Association Classes And Breeds

Class	Breeds
LARGE FOWL	
American	Plymouth Rocks, Dominiques, Wyandottes, Javas, Rhode Island Reds, Rhode Island Whites, Buckeyes, Chanteclers, Jersey Giants, Lamona, Hollands, Delawares
Asiatic	Brahmas, Cochins, Langshans
English	Dorkings, Redcaps, Cornish, Orpingtons, Sussex, Australorps
Mediterranean	Leghorns, Minorcas, Spanish, Andalusians, Anconas, Sicilian Buttercups, Catalanas
Continental	Hamburgs, Campines, Lakenvelders, Polish,Houdans, Crevecoeures, La Fleche, Faverolles
A O S B	Modern Games, Old English Games, Sumatras,Malays, Cubalayas, Phoenix, Yokohamas, Assels, Shamos, Sultans, Frizzles, Naked Necks, Araucana, Ameraucana
BANTAMS	
Modern Game	Varieties - Birchen, Black, Black Breasted Red, Blue, Blue Breasted Red, Brown Red, Golden Duckwing, Lemon Blue, Red Pyle, Silver Duckwing, White, Wheaten
Old English Game	Varieties - Birchen, Black, Black Breasted Red, Blue, Blue Breasted Red, Blue Golden Duckwing, Blue Silver Duckwing, Brown Red, Crele, Cuckoo, Ginger Red, Golden Duckwing, Lemon Blue, Red Pyle, Self Blue, Silver Duckwing, Spangled, Wheaten, White
S C C L	Anconas, Andalusians, Australorps, Campines, Catalanas, Delawares, Dorkings, Frizzles, Hollands, Japanese, Javas, Jersey Giants, Lakenvelders, Lamonas, Leghorns, Minorcas, Naked Necks, New Hampshires, Orpingtons, Phoenix, Plymouth Rocks, Rhode Island Reds, Spanish, Sussex
R C C L	Anconas, Antwerp Belgians, Dominiques, Dorkings, Hamburgs, Leghorns, Minorcas, Redcaps, Rhode Island Reds, Rhode Island Whites, Rosecombs, Sebrights, Wyandottes
A O C C L	Ameraucana, Araucana, Buckeyes, Chanteclers, Cornish, Crevecoeurs, Cubalayas, Houdans, La Fleche, Malays, Polish, Shamos, Sicilian Buttercups, Sumatras, Yokohamas
Feather Legged	Booted, Brahmas, Cochins, Faverolles, Frizzles, Langshans, Silkies, Sultans
DUCKS	
Heavy	Pekin, Aylesbury, Rouen, Muscovy
Medium	Cayuga, Crested, Swedish, Buff
Light	Runner, Campbell, Magpie
Bantam	Call, East India, Mallard
GEESE	
Heavy	Toulouse, Embden, African
Medium	Sebastopol, Pilgrim, American Buff, Saddleback Pomeranian
Light	Chinese, Tufted Roman, Canada, Egyptian
TURKEYS	Bronze, Narragansett, White Holland, Black, Slate, Bourbon Red, Beltsville Small White, Royal Palm

Dark Cornish, Cock

Dark Cornish, Bantam, Hen

Single Comb Light Brown Leghorn, Hen

New Hampshire, Bantam, Cockerel

Buff Orpington, Cock

Buff Brahma, Bantam, Cock

Single Comb Light Brown Leghorn, Cock

Buff Laced Polish, Hen

Speckled, Sussex, Pullet

Table of Breeds and Varieties

Breed	Varieties	Characteristics	Special Features
Plymouth Rock	White, Barred, Silver Pencilled, Black, Blue, Buff, Partridge	Single Comb, Clean Legs	Dual purpose, meat and eggs, close feathered
Wyandotte	White, Black, Blue, Buff, Silver Pencilled, Silver Laced, Golden Laced, Partridge,Columbian	Rose Comb, Clean Legs	Dual purpose, meat and eggs, close feathered
Rhode Island Red	Single Comb Rose Comb	Single Comb, Clean Legs Rose Comb, Clean Legs	Dual purpose, meat and eggs, close feathered
Brahma	Light, Dark, Buff	Pea Comb, Feathered Legs	
Cochin	Buff, Black, White, Mottled Partridge, Barred, Red	Single Comb, Feathered Legs	Soft, fluffy feathers
Langshan	Black, White, Blue	Single Comb, Feathered Legs	
Cornish	Dark, White, White Laced Red	Pea Comb, Clean Legs	Tight feathered, solid bodies, short heavy legs
Orpington	Buff,White,Black, Blue	Single Comb, Clean Legs	White skin and shanks
Leghorn	White, Light Brown, Dark Brown, Buff, Black, Red Also exist in above varieties with Rose Combs	Single Comb, Clean Legs Rose Comb, Clean Legs	Excellent layers, flighty (nervous), light weight
Minorca	Black, White, Buff Also exist with Rose Combs	Single Comb, Clean Legs Rose Comb, Clean Legs	White skin and shanks
Hamburg	Silver Spangled, White, Black, Golden Spangled, Silver Penciled,Golden Penciled	Rose Comb, Clean Legs	
Spanish	White Faced Black	Single Comb, Clean Legs	Extensive whitening of facial skin
Malays	Black Red	Strawberry Comb, Clean Legs	Tall, cruel expression
Naked Necks	White, Black, Buff	Single Comb, Clean Legs	Reduced number of feathers all over and none on neck and fore-part of body
Polish (Non-Bearded)	White Crested Black, White, Black Silver, Golden, Buff Laced	V Comb, Crested, Clean Legs	

Breed	Varieties	Characteristics	Special Features
Polish (Bearded)	White, Silver, Golden,	V Comb, Crested, Clean Legs	Bearded Buff Laced
Houdan	Mottled	Bearded, Crested, Clean Legs	Five toes
Rosecomb	Black, White, Blue	Rose Comb, Clean Legs	
Booted	Mille Fleur, Porcelain	Single Comb, Feathered Legs	May be Bearded or Non-Bearded, vulture hocks
Silkies	Black, White, Blue, Partridge May be Bearded or Non-Bearded	Strawberry Comb, Crested, Feathered Legs	Five toes, black skin, hair-like feathers
Frizzles	Black, White, Buff	Single Comb	Reverse curl to all feathers
Sebrights	Golden, Silver	Rose Comb, Clean Legs	Hen Feathered Males
Japanese	Black Tailed White, White, Black, Mottled Gray, Black Tailed Buff	Single Comb, Clean Legs	Very short legs, large tail carried upright
Old English Game Golden Duckwing,	Black Red, Black, White, Red Pyle, Brown Red, Silver Duckwing, Birchen, Spangled	Single Comb, Clean Legs	Adult males must be dubbed, very tight feathered, white skin
Modern Game	Black Red, Brown Red, White, Birchen Black, Silver Duckwing, Golden Duckwing	Single Comb, Clean Legs	Adult males must be dubbed, very tight feathered, long legs
Belgium D'Anver	Quail, White, Black, Blue, Mottled	Rose Comb, Clean Legs	Bearded
Araucana	Black, Black Red, Silver Duckwing, White	Pea Comb, Clean Legs	Lay eggs with blue to green shells tufted and tailless
Ameraucana	Black, Blue, Blue Wheaten, White	Pea Comb, Clean Legs	Beards and muffs, do have a tail

Varieties listed are the most common ones, although other recognized color patterns may be seen at some shows. Group characteristics are the basis for breed groupings into classes for special awards and premiums at many shows. Adapted from Bantams, University of Wisconsin Extension, pp. 6-7, 1970.

Blue Andalunsian, Cockerel

Golden Seabright, Bantam, Cock

Mille Fleur D'Uccle, Bantam, Hen

Partridge Cochin, Cock

B.B. Red Old English Game, Bantam, Cock

Single Comb Rhode Island Red, Cockerel

Black Sumatra, Cock

Red Pyle Modern Game, Bantam, Cock

Silver Gray Dorking, Cockerel

Buff Cochin, Cockerel

Housing and Equipment

Housing

Good housing is very important for any animal. Without the proper facilities, your birds will not develop properly. Also, poor housing can often lead to a variety of health problems. Chicken pens, called coops, should be made so that they can be cleaned easily. They should provide for the comfort and easy feeding of the birds and yet be inexpensive to build. Your birds deserve the best care you can provide.

In building your coop, be sure to make it strong enough to keep the birds in and cats, dogs, rodents and other animals out. You may want to consider building a portable pen that can be moved outdoors in the summer and inside in the winter. Your coop should not be placed in a draft or in direct sunlight. Drafts can cause colds, however birds must have good ventilation to remain healthy. Also, the direct sunlight can change the color of your birds' feathers.

Coops can be built with a variety of materials and in a variety of ways. The floor of your pen should be solid. Chickens do not do well on wire floors for show purposes. The sides of the coop can be made from 1-inch by 1-inch or 1-inch by 2-inch welded wire. If you use wire for the sides, you may want to put a solid skirt of some kind, such as a three inch board, around the base. This will help to keep in whatever you use for bedding. At least one side should be solid to help protect from drafts and also to provide shade. The door to your coop should be big enough to allow for easy cleaning. If you have space available in a shed or other building, a pen can often be built very easily in a corner or along a wall. Chickens should be housed inside in the winter.

The size of pen you need is going to be determined by the kind and number of birds you decide to purchase. The largest large fowl will need about three to four square feet of space per bird. Small bantams, such as the Old English Games and Sebrights, will do quite well with only about one and one-half square feet per bird. Ask the person who you buy your birds from to give you some suggestions on space. Your coop should be tall enough so that your birds can stand without touching the top of the coop. Chickens like to roost at night, so you should plan to put an elevated platform in their pen for them to get on at night. The roost doesn't need to be very high from the floor. Four to six inches is tall enough for most birds.

Whatever type of coop you decide to use, the most important thing to do is keep it clean. Your birds, like you, will not do well in a dirty pen. Diseases and parasites can and will develop in your pen if it is not kept clean and dry. Your birds will not feather properly in a dirty pen. Also, it is easier to keep a bird clean than it is to get it clean after it gets dirty.

Feeders and Waterers

There are many different types of feeders and waterers available. The ones that you select will depend on the type of birds you have, the amount of money you have to spend, and the amount of work you want to do. Simple feeders and waterers can be made from plastic milk jugs, old tin cans, and many other items we would usually throw away. If you want to buy your equipment, feed stores usually carry a wide selection. Whether you make your own or buy them, be sure your equipment allows your birds easy access to their feed and water. Try to choose materials that will keep the birds from walking on their feed and water. Chickens love to scratch and will get into their feed and scratch it out. You can often stop this habit by placing the feeder on a small block of wood or a brick.

The equipment you choose should allow you to give your birds enough feed and water for one day. Some feeders will let you put in enough feed for several days. Water should always be changed daily. In the summer months the water often gets too warm for the birds to drink. A good way to tell is stick your finger in the water. Ask yourself, "Would I want to drink this water?" If the answer is no, then your birds probably don't want to either. Fresh, clean

water is the most important nutrient for any animal. Poultry can live twice as long without feed than without water.

Litter

Many things can be used for litter in chicken houses. Straw, wood chips and coarse sawdust can all be used. Whatever you choose, try to select a bedding that is not too dusty. Dust in the litter, especially in a very confined environment, may cause your birds to have problems breathing. Most feed stores carry straw and wood chips for their customers. Cedar and walnut wood chips should be avoided. These woods will stain your birds when they get wet.

Housing and Equipment Questions

1. Why should you keep your chicken coop out of direct sunlight and drafts?

2. Give two reasons why it is important to keep your chicken coop clean.

3. What is the most important nutrient for your birds?

4. Describe your chicken coop and feeding system.

5. What are you using for litter?

Care And Maintenance

Feeding

Feeding your birds, like the feeding of any livestock, is very important. The diet your chickens eat will greatly affect their growth, development and possible success as future breeders. You will need to use different diets depending on the age of your birds. Feed will probably be your largest expense, so you will want to get the most for your money.

Baby chicks should be fed a starter ration with about 18 to 20 percent protein until they are six weeks old. This feed will be in either granular or crumble form. Your chicks should have no other feed, but the chick starter should be kept in front of them at all times. Most chick starters today have medications in them to help prevent disease problems such as coccidiosis. Medicated feeds should not be fed to ducks, geese, or turkeys unless the feed has been prepared specifically for them.

Birds that are six weeks old can be switched gradually to a grower ration. Start by mixing one-fourth grower with three-fourths starter for about a week. During the next week, mix starter and grower in equal amounts. In the third week of your feed change you mix one-fourth starter with three-fourths grower. The next week you can go completely to the grower ration. You can also start giving your birds small amounts of scratch grains at this time.

When your birds reach their adult size, they are ready to be switched to an adult ration. The choice of your feed at this time depends on many different things. Large fowl and the larger bantams will need a feed a little higher in protein than the smaller bantams. For most birds, a commercial layer ration will be fine. Scratch grains and other treats may be added to give your birds a treat. Be careful with feeding corn to white birds or birds with white ear lobes. The corn can cause the lobes and feathers to turn yellow. Use scratch feed sparingly with layer or breeder feed because this causes a nutritional problem and the birds will not lay as well.

If you are planning to hatch eggs from your birds, you should feed them a breeder ration. The birds need to be started on this feed about one month before you start setting your eggs. The breeder ration provides extra vitamins and nutrients that will help you produce strong, healthy chicks.

Birds of any age should receive clean, fresh feed that is easy to reach by the birds. You should be feeding your birds once each day and provide only what they will eat between feedings. Remember that fresh water is also important. Water should be changed at least once a day, and more often in hot weather.

You should plan to store your feed in containers that will keep out moisture and rodents. The lids of your feed containers should fit tightly and be kept closed except when feeding. Grocery stores, bakeries and other food processors can often supply feed containers at little or no cost.

Blades of grass, some fruits like apples, and other green vegetables make good treats for your birds. You should give these in small amounts so they won't spoil in your coop. Grit and oyster shell flakes should also be provided. These help your birds digest their food. The oyster shells give the hens calcium needed to make strong egg shells.

Litter

Whatever you choose for litter in your pens, it needs to be kept clean and dry at all times. A good way to care for the bedding in your coop is to "pick" it each day to remove the previous day's droppings. You will also need to give your coops a thorough cleaning once every two weeks. Dirty litter will allow your birds to get dirty and they may be hard to get clean. Also, dirty bedding can cause many health problems for your birds.

Health Problems

One of the most common diseases that can infect chickens is with coccidiosis. This disease, caused by protozoa (microscopic, single-celled animals), infects the chicken's digestive system. Infected chicks huddle together, look pale and ruffled, may have diarrhea with bloody droppings, and die soon after symptoms appear. Chick starters and growers should be purchased with a medication to prevent an outbreak. Should you have problems, you will need to seek qualified advice, suck as a poultry producer or your feed dealer.

Pullorum, another disease that can infect chickens, is transmitted to the chick through the egg. Pullorum will spread to healthy birds and there is no cure. Most states require a negative pullorum blood test for birds placed on exhibit. In Ohio, the Department of Agriculture has trained poultry men from around the state to test birds. Your county Extension office should be able to help you in finding someone in your area that is a pullorum tester.

The most common internal parasites of poultry are round worms, whose eggs are laid in the soil. These will be more of a problem if your birds are allowed to run outside. Worms can be treated with medications added to either the feed or drinking water. Check for worms in your birds twice a year to be safe. Read and follow the label directions when using any medicine.

The control of external parasites can be easy if you keep your coops clean. If you notice lice on the bird (look around the vent and at the base of the tail), your feed dealer should have a good poultry dust to use. It is a good management practice to dust your chickens monthly. Another external parasite that sometimes infests chickens is the scaly leg mite. These mites get under the scales of the bird's legs and feet. Over time the scales will push upward and cause the legs to look very rough. Should you have a problem with these mites, work some vaseline or other greasy substance into the bird's legs to cut off th e mites' oxygen

Anytime you have a health problem with your birds, be sure you know what is wrong before you try to treat it because the symptoms of many diseases are similar. If you are unsure, contact someone, such as a veterinarian, who can help you treat the problem.

Care And Maintenance Questions

1. List the name of your feed as well as the percentages of protein, fat, and fiber.

2. How often should you feed and water your birds?

3. What do your birds like for a treat?

4. Why should you keep your litter fresh and clean?

5. Name one health problem chickens can have and what you would do for it.

Getting Ready For The Show

Most junior fair shows ask judges to evaluate both the 4-H member and the birds entered. The bird will be evaluated in a class such as "fancy poultry" and the member is evaluated in showmanship. At fairs with larger entries, the fancy poultry may be further divided by age, sex, breed, or the variety of the birds. Listed below are some hints to help you in getting ready for the show.

Selection Of Birds To Show

The birds you show should be the best you have available. A couple of weeks before the fair you should go through your birds and decide which birds are in the best condition. Condition refers to the birds health and feather quality. You don't want to show birds that are sick or have a lot of broken feathers. From the birds in top condition, choose those that have the best type and markings for their breed and variety. Some fairs require you to show a male and female or other combination. Be sure to check what is required so you will have the proper number of birds to enter.

Grooming

About a week before your show you should give your birds a bath. To do this you will need two tubs or buckets, some soap and water and lots of patience. Chickens do not really like to take a bath. There are many different types of soaps you can use. Any shampoo or liquid detergent will work fine. Liquid laundry detergents that contain blueing work very well for white birds. Ask your 4-H advisor or someone who shows poultry what soap they use to be sure you don't choose one that will harm your birds. Fill your buckets or tubs about one-half to three-fourths full of warm water. By warm we mean water that you would be willing to take a bath in. One bucket will be for your soapy water and the other will be the rinse water. Don't get it too hot or your bird's feathers will fall out.

The bird can be put in the water as long as you are careful not to dunk the bird's head. You should never put the bird's head under water. As you wash the chicken, always rub the feathers away from the bird's body. Spots that are heavily stained may need extra attention. Also, be sure to wash the legs and feet. Once you have got the bird clean, you will need to rinse it. Again, put the bird into the rinse water and rub the feathers away from the bird. Keep rinsing until you get all the soap out. Birds that are not properly rinsed will not fluff back out properly.

If the temperature is above seventy degrees, your birds can dry outside without getting sick. For colder temperatures, you should blow dry your birds with a hair dryer. Blow drying will make the birds fluff up more and so is recommended for birds like Cochins, Orpingtons and Silkies. However you dry your birds, be sure they are completely dry before putting them back in their coop. Also, never put a clean bird back into a dirty pen.

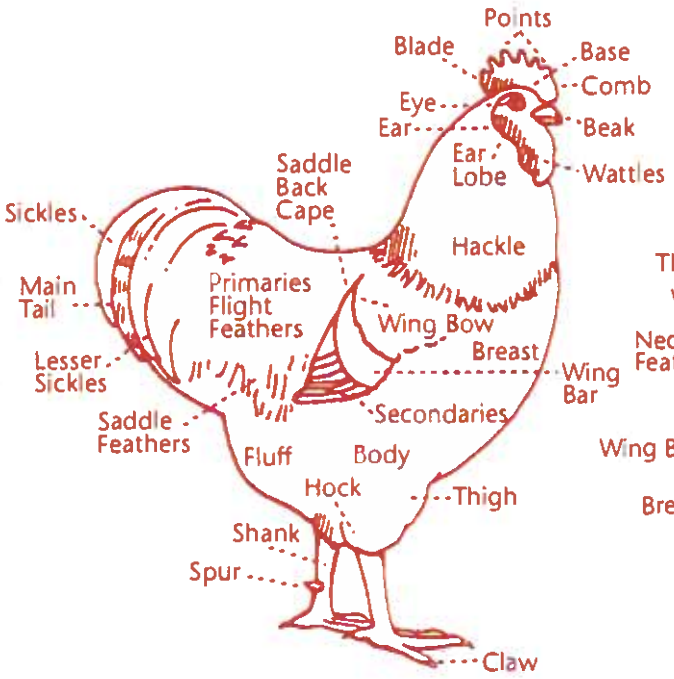
When washing the birds you may wish to inspect for other problems. Sometimes you will need to trim your bird's toe nails. A chicken's toe nails are very similar to ours. Look at your own nails. You can see the part which is dead and can be cut off without hurting yourself. When you look at the nails on your birds, you should also see a part in the center of the nail which is slightly different in color than the rest of the nail. It can be lighter or darker, depending on the color of the nails. Do not cut the nails into this central portion. If you do, the bird's nail will hurt and bleed. You may also need to trim the bird's beak. Usually only the top beak will need to be trimmed. If the top beak hangs down over the bottom beak very far, it probably needs trimmed. The bird should have a slight overbite. Toe nail trimmers for people work well on chickens.

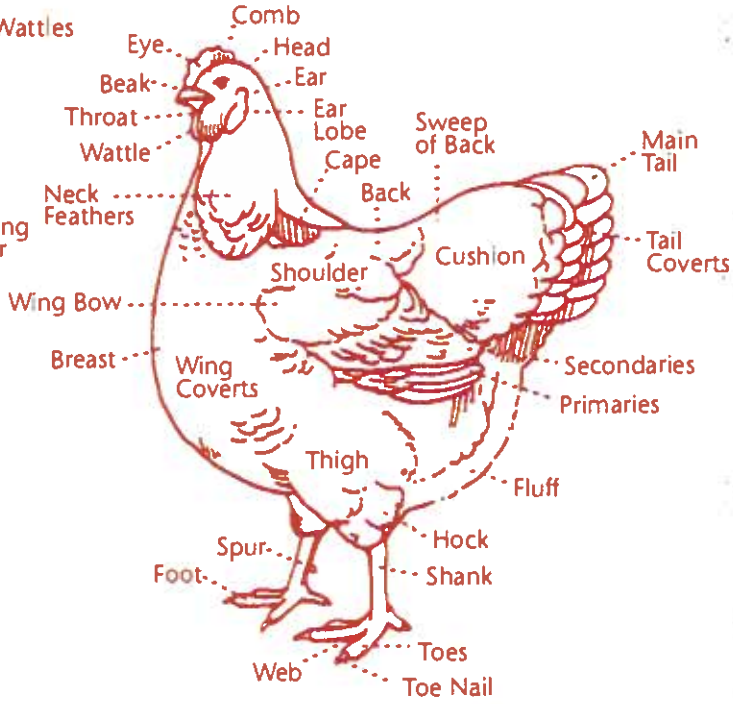
You will probably want to wash your birds again and inspect them one more time before taking them to the fair. At the fair, keep their pen clean at all times so you won't have to wash them while on exhibit. Your birds and you will be under enough stress at the fair without adding in the stress of an additional bath. Should your birds get dirty while at the

fair, try to spot wash with a rag or towel. On show day, be sure your birds are clean and ready for the judge. A little baby oil or vaseline put on the combs and legs will help to brighten them up. No other grooming should be needed. Any broken or poorly colored feathers may be pulled from the main body. The main wing and tail feathers should never be pulled. The deduction for broken feathers is less than that for missing ones. Be proud of your exhibit and hard work.

Parts Of A Chicken

The judge may ask you to name some parts of a chicken. Study these parts carefully so you will be able to answer questions. You should be able to show a judge the parts on your bird as well as name them. Also, study the different classes of birds and know what class your birds are in. The pictures of the combs should help you identifying different types of chickens.





Parts of a Chicken You Should Know

Showmanship

In showmanship classes, you are being judged on your knowledge, care and handling of the birds. Be sure you know how to properly handle a chicken. The table on page 21 should help you in learning showmanship techniques.

Getting Ready For The Show Questions

1. What is meant by the term condition ?
2. When is your fair?
3. Do you plan to exhibit at your fair?
4. Name six parts of a chicken.

Procedure	How Done	Reason
1. Remove bird from exhibition coop.	Always head first with one hand over back, the other under body with fingers around legs.	Prevents excitement and struggle of bird to get away.
2. Hold the bird.	Pick up bird by spreading your fingers and placing your hand palm up under the bird's breast as it faces you. As your palm touches the breast, you will find that the bird's legs will be between your fingers. As you lift the bird, gently grasp the legs by closing the fingers. You can now lift the bird without having it squirm and fight	Makes the bird feel at ease. Isn't so likely to struggle. The bird is easy to handle.
3. Examine head.	Hold head of bird alert by prodding at the region of the wattles.	To note comb, eyes, shape of head, and any defects present.
4. Examine wings.	Open either wing with free hand. To open the other wing, merely pass hand, palm up, over to that side. Grasp wing bow and fan out wing. (There is no need to transfer bird to other hand.)	To note color, absence of feathers, slipped wings, split wings and twisted feathers.
5. Examine body plumage.	Over back, on breast and body.	To note color and quality, presence of lice.
6. Examine tail plumage.	Give the tail piece a quick flip up and down.	For color and feather quality. To detect tail defects.
7. Examine shanks and feet.	Place free hand on back of bird. Turn bird upside down. Back of bird should rest in the palm of the hand.	To note color, crooked toes, feather stubs between toes and on shanks.
8. Examine body.	Hold as in No. 7	To note width and depth of body and amount fo fleshing on body – also body defects.
9. Hand bird to judge.	Head first.	To let him check and verify and points he desires.
10. Return bird to coop.	Head first.	To keep bird smoothe and unruffled.
11. Return to position by the coop.	Keep your bird on the alert until judge has made a decision.	Give judge better opportunity to see the bird.

From 4-H Poultry Production: Raising Pullets, Allen W. Auck, The Ohio State University. October, 1987.

Record Keeping

Keeping accurate records is very important in raising poultry. It will help you understand the total costs of raising your birds this year. Do not be concerned if your expenses are greater than your income. Record tables should show a complete list of expenses from the time your project begins until it ends. Using the following example, create an Income/Expenses Form to keep track of your project

INCOME

(Sales of birds, eggs, and any other items produced; value of birds used at home.)

Date	Kind Sold or Used	Amount (pounds or number)	Value

TOTAL INCOME$ _____

EXPENSE

Date	Feed		Bedding		Other Expenses	
	Lbs.	Value	Amt.	Value	Kind	Value
Totals		$ _____		$ _____		$ _____

TOTAL EXPENSES$ _____

Next Year

The time to decide if you want to continue with your same birds or purchase new ones for next year is after the county fair. Autumn is a good time to purchase adult birds, because most breeders have extra birds they do not want to keep during winter. You may also want to consider raising chicks from your birds.

Where To Go For More Information

Organizations

American Poultry Association
26363 S Tucker Road
Estacada, OR 97023

American Bantam Association
P. O. Box 127
Augusta, NJ 07822

Poultry Supply Dealers

Bowles Poultry Supplies
312 O'Connor Road
Lucasville, OH 45648

Patterson Poultry Supplies
Route 9 Box 169
Martinsville, VA 24112

Magazines

Poultry Press
P. O. Box 542
Connersville, IN 47331

National Poultry News
P. O. Box 1647
Easley, SC 29641

Poultry Project Record

Purchases

Date	Kind of Poultry	Breed	From Whom Purchased	Cost
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				

Sales

Date	Product	Quantity	To Whom Sold	Amount ($)
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				

Matings

Date	Male - Variety	Female - Variety	Number of Eggs	
			Set	Sold
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				

Hatchings

Date Eggs Set	Number Set	Date Eggs Hatched	Number Hatched	Incubation Method Used
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				

Different Types of Standard Male Combs

Single Comb
1. Base 2. Point 3. Blade

Rose Comb
1. Base 2. Rounded Points 3. Spike

Pea Comb

Sultans Head, Male (Ideal)
1. V-shaped Combs
2. Crest 3. Muff 4. Beard

Cushion Comb (Ideal)

Buttercup Comb (Ideal)

Strawberry Comb (Ideal)

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I pledge
My Head to clearer thinking,
My Heart to greater loyalty,
My Hands to larger service and
My Health to better living, for
My Club, My Community, My Country
and My World.