

# Exhibition Poultry

The #1 Internet Publication For Information On Showing & Breeding Exhibition Poultry

Volume 9 No. 3 • <https://www.ExhibitionPoultry.net> • June/July/August 2020



A Tufted Roman Goose on pasture. Photo by Nate Rynish.

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# Exhibition Poultry

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**On The Cover . . . . .** A Tufted Roman Goose bred by Nate Rynish. Photo by Nate Rynish.

## Exhibition Poultry Magazine®

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### Exhibition Poultry Magazine

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## From the Editor . . .

There was some good news this week! California is once again open for business, poultry wise at least. After 2 years, the Newcastle Quarantine has been lifted and now, the whole state is open for shipments of live birds, chicks, and hatching eggs. Not just the Northern part. The lifting of the quarantine bodes well for the 2020 APA which was scheduled there for February 2021. I had a chance to chat with newly elected APA president Mark Podgwaite on this very subject a few days ago.

When questioned regarding the location of the 2020 APA National he told me:

*"Modesto, in February 2021, but due to the Newcastle issue, we will be making our final decision on that on our July Conference call. Based on what was just released from California, it's looking good but that is not official."*

President Podgwaite continued, *"On another note, the officers and directors will be holding a strategic planning meeting on 31 July and 1 August in Webster City, Iowa. The website continues to be updated and the Education and Training Committee is doing a great job updating their content and adding some great podcasts."*

When asked about APA's thoughts on the Fall shows and the Covid-19 situation he replied: *"Right now the position with COVID-19 is wait and see. Since each state has its own set of regulations, its difficult to develop a one size fits all program."*

Well, that's it for me this issue. Just like all of you, I continue to hatch as many as I can and focus on growing them out as healthy, and correct as possible. Regardless of what Fall brings it does not hurt to be prepared to show our birds. I pray for the best on all fronts.

Ann Charles  
Editor



## APA News—June 2020

Hello again from the APA office. I hope this message finds all of you in good health and busy taking care of all of those chicks you hatched out this spring. I wish I could tell you we will be out showing again soon, but I am sorry that I cannot give you that news. It appears to me that it will be some time before we are able to gather again in the sometimes close confines of a show hall. When we do, I believe we will all be approaching it a lot differently than what we did before. What I am sure of is that eventually we will be able to attend shows again. For now, we all need to do the things the experts are telling us that will stop the spread of the corona virus and allow a safe return to the new normal at an appropriate time.

There is not a lot to report from the APA office. Despite not having any shows there are a surprising number of new members joining. Sales have also been pretty steady with the Standard of Perfection continuing to be our most popular item. As a reminder, a ten percent discount is given to members who purchase merchandise through the website. You pay full price at checkout and I then refund the ten percent when I process the order. It might be a great time to order that hat, T shirt, or other item that has been on your wish list.

I would like to thank Mark Fields for all of his hard work in getting the new website for the APA up and running. I know he had several other volun-

teers helping him and I thank them as well. The changes seem to be well received for the most part. Please let Mark know by sending him an email at [markmidmo@yahoo.com](mailto:markmidmo@yahoo.com) if you see anything that needs fixed or have suggestions for improvement.

The Board of Directors have tentatively planned a Strategic Planning Meeting for July 31<sup>st</sup> through August 2<sup>nd</sup>. The purpose is to determine how the APA will move forward in a positive way to meet the future needs of the exhibition poultry industry. This would be a great time for you to contact your District Director or any of the other officers if you have any suggestions. Obviously, the meeting depends on it being safe to travel at that point and plans can change as necessary. The Board has determined that this planning is needed and, even if these tentative plans have to be changed, will occur at some point in the future.

Time to close and get this off to the publications that are kind enough to print my monthly ramblings. At least I am on time this month! Take care and please contact me at 740-876-4845 or [apasecretaryadkins@gmail.com](mailto:apasecretaryadkins@gmail.com) anytime you have questions or concerns.

David Adkins  
Secretary  
American Poultry Association

**Advertising and article submission deadline for our 'Fall Show Issue' (September/October 2020) is August 15th.**

(We have adjusted our print schedule during the summer months so that in the future all 6 issues of each 'volume' falls within one calendar year.)



## ABA News—June 2020

It is to say the least – a different time in the history of our nation AND our hobby. Many shows are cancelling or tentatively planning their fall shows. Even if the country is moving in the right direction –

we still need to consider the facilities and their willingness to rent the building to us. This is a time of many considerations and we all need to be aware of this. Some that I have spoken with are very unsure that they will have a 2020 show and others are confident that it will go as planned. We will just have to take it one month at a time and see how it goes. To the clubs who are the backbone of the hobby (after the breeders of course) I certainly hope that your membership and volunteers stick with you. It's a strange time and there is much at risk.

Volunteerism has not been on the rise (before COVID-19) so if we are to continue to be able to hold our shows we will need to address this – and maybe start thinking outside the box. I certainly do not have the answers but I encourage everyone to consider talking about it. Everyone is Zooming these days. Yes – the online meeting platform which has really caught on quickly. Many of us have signed up for the free accounts and from what I hear – this is how some groups are continuing their monthly meetings and discussions. However you choose to do this – it is im-

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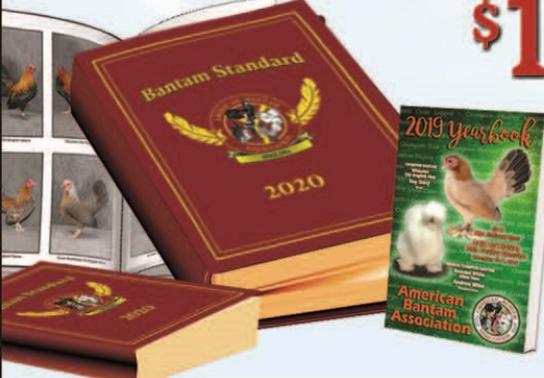
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portant that we keep connected – so that is my wish for the hobby in general.

The ABA is still in the 2020 Legband business – BUT NOT FOR LONG. Sales are extraordinarily strong with most of the larger sizes being close to sold out as of today (May 17th).

To order your legbands – the best way is online at [www.bantamclub@gmail.com](mailto:www.bantamclub@gmail.com).

If you need to send via USPS – please mark the envelope “legband order” so I make sure I pull that one out and process first. We fill on a first come first serve basis.

I want to thank everyone who supported the 2020 yearbook with an ad or article this year. I expected this yearbook to be small due to the country’s situation and the uncertainty of show schedules. It may be smaller –but not by too much. This is truly a reflection of your dedication and love of our hobby and our birds. Thankyou! If you still have interest in advertising in the 2020 yearbook – please email me at [bantamclub@gmail.com](mailto:bantamclub@gmail.com). The extended deadline of 6/1/2020 has passed. Any additional ads will be taken on a case by case basis and only if the production has not begun.

I also want to take a moment to thank the ABA Team. I certainly cannot do this all by myself. We first must thank the officers and directors who play a major role in the advancement of our hobby and the ABA. In addition to that – I am thrilled to share the “tasks” with Russell Crevoiserat (not only the Legband King but also our financial and tax advisor), Kim Munden (the yearbook would not happen on time without her) and Michelle Lynch who busily processes the memberships and helps to schedule the shows (not to mention other duties as assigned.) We are a team and we are busy. Your patience is always appreciated. Please make sure you thank them when you can. Remember, we all have other jobs and duties. Many of us are working remotely from home at our full-time positions, and in some cases being out in the workforce as essential workers. This, all in addition to navigating our responsibilities for the ABA. It is an honor to work with this team amid all this uncertainty and I want to take this opportunity to simply say - Thank you!

To the ABA Membership, also Thank you for sticking together . We will continue to raise beauti-

ful bantams and get back to showing them off soon. This, I believe is the common goal for most of us.

If you are not currently an ABA Member, I highly recommend that you consider changing that status. You can fix this at our website - [www.bantamclub.com](http://www.bantamclub.com). Membership is \$25 per year, \$70 for three years, or \$100 for five years. Our mailing address is PO Box 127, Augusta, NJ 07822. The American Bantam Association has been servicing our membership since 1914 and we plan to continue on with your help and love of our hobby.

Karen Unrath - ABA Secretary

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## After 2 Years - California’s Newcastle Quarantine Is Lifted: *According to the US Post Office.*

5-27-2000 . . . <https://about.usps.com/newsroom/service-alerts/residential/welcome.htm>

### California

Effective Monday, June 1, 2020, the Virulent Newcastle Disease (VND) Regional Quarantine in the state of California will be lifted.

Effective June 1, 2020, the United States Postal Service will allow the shipments of all birds and hatching eggs into or out of zip codes 90000-93599.

This quarantine will be lifted in the following Districts beginning June 1, 2020.

- San Diego
- Los Angeles
- Santa Ana
- Sierra Coastal

Please refer to Publication 52, Hazardous, Restricted, and Perishable Mail - Section 526 for more information on shipping. The publication is viewable on our website here: <https://pe.usps.com/text/pub52/welcome.htm>.

# Virulent Newcastle Disease

May 22, 2020

Update from State Veterinarian

Dr. Annette Jones

[https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/ahfss/animal\\_health/newcastle\\_disease\\_info.html](https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/ahfss/animal_health/newcastle_disease_info.html)

The [regional quarantine](#) is still in effect. For a list of virulent Newcastle disease cases since the outbreak began in May 2018, visit the [USDA VND website](#).

CDFA/USDA continues to make significant progress towards eradicating virulent Newcastle disease, completing freedom of disease testing, and are on track to release the regional quarantine in the first half of June. An update will be posted on here when the regional quarantine is officially released.

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## Ohio National News

May 4, 2020

We hope you survived the winter fine and your hatches have been good.

We've got the following National meets for 2020 thus far:

- American Buckeye Poultry Club
- JBBA
- National Call Breeders Association
- 1st National Meet Heritage Poultry Conservancy

To celebrate the Heritage Poultry Conservancy's 1st national meet, they are providing \$4,500 in prize money, equally divided between the junior and open shows, for specific breeds of large fowl and waterfowl. These breeds will be listed in the catalog.

The Ohio National will host an Egg Show that will include large fowl, bantam & design eggs.

The Show hotel listings are on the Ohio National website [www.ohionational.org](http://www.ohionational.org) Be sure to men-

tion the Ohio National Poultry Show when making reservations for our special room rate. Show Headquarters will be the Hilton Garden Inn Columbus/Polaris - 8535 Lyra Drive, Columbus, OH - Phone: 614-846-8884.

The Ohio National is excited to announce our list of judges for the November 14-15 Show.

### Open Show Judges:

Terry Britt  
Tom Carey  
Jamie Carson  
Dan Castle  
Jeff Halbach  
Matt Lhamon  
Jonathan Patterson  
Ben Porter  
Tom Roebuck  
Gary Rossman

### Junior Show Judges:

Rick Hare  
Troy Laroche  
Danny Padgett  
Bart Pals

The Ohio National will host an Egg Show that will include both large fowl and bantam eggs. Details coming soon ....

Our sponsors will be at the show this again, including -

ADM Pen Pals Feeds  
Fluffy Layers  
Heritage Poultry Conservancy  
Meyer Hatchery

If your company would like to become a sponsor, contact Tim Johnson at [tejpoultry@gmail.com](mailto:tejpoultry@gmail.com)

We have four national meets confirmed for the 150th APA Anniversary Show in 2023.

If your breed club would like to place a meet for the show in 2020, 2021, 2022 and/or 2023, contact Clell Agler at [cagler@columbus.rr.com](mailto:cagler@columbus.rr.com)

Hope your hatching season is going great!

Until Next Time,  
Tim Johnson,  
President

# The Power Of Interpretation

*By: Nate Rynish*

Exhibition poultry is one of the most unique and enjoyable hobbies that I've ever taken part of. I've met a multitude of friends and learned so many new things from judges and breeders of all breeds and varieties. Of course, there is also the competitive aspect of showing. All these put together is what makes shows intriguing and enjoyable. But, as they say, somebody is always going to complain.

This used to be me. My perspective was that the American Poultry Association sets a Standard. That Standard is to be specifically followed, and choosing birds to win a class shouldn't be terribly difficult because it's all listed in the Standard. As we are learning with the current revisions and edits in the APA Standard of Perfection, some details in breed standards are missing and others lack detail. This can be viewed in a positive or a negative manner.

To some, lack of detail is discouraging. They want something cut and dry with distinct detail. Perhaps this is to avoid favoritism of a particular individual's strain of poultry. More detail should also result in fewer questions and an obvious right and wrong answer. But the lack of detail can be a benefit as well. The Standard of Perfection is open to interpretation. The word interpretation does not hold much power, but the act of an individual's interpretation (the judge's interpretation) determines the champion and the loser.

A prime example of the effect interpretation can play on an individual or group of people is religion. I find this analogy to be fitting regardless to actual belief in higher powers or atheism, especially since the SOP is often referred to as the "Poultry Bible." There are numerous religions and religious organizations that utilize the same Bible. Whenever people read the Bible, they have different viewpoints and thoughts on teachings, laws, and more. If one looks into religious history, different people having different understandings is what results in multiple groupings of people. The same can be said for Standard descriptions. When the description of



*Chris Hawes judging bantams at Columbia, MS.*

any breed is read, an image is developed of what the ideal bird looks like. When another individual reads the same description, he or she may view something a bit different. The pictures should not be relied on to determine what the breed should look like. The Standard does not have specific measurements of back lengths, leg lengths, girth, etc. It uses general terms such as "moderately long," "deep," and many more. How long is moderately long? . Finding a bird that has adequate balance of all qualities listed in the description is the most important. The only measurement provided is weight. The experienced judge and breeder will know that a bird can have a large frame and not weigh very much. It can also look rather small and feel like you're holding a boulder. (Reminder that this is why handling of a bird is important and exhibitors do 100% of judging the bird OUTSIDE the cage)

The type of wording used in the SOP is very general. This is why anyone can often go to a show and find birds of the same breed that have slightly different appearances in structure. Does that mean that every bird is incorrect? My personal answer to



*Anthony Ashley and Steven Beatty judging Champion Row at Baton Rouge, Louisiana in 2019*

this question is “no.” A bird can look slightly different from the one next to it, but that doesn’t mean it is incorrect. Those experienced in exhibiting and breeding know that an individual can often go to a show and recognize certain people’s birds because they have slightly different “styles.” This is why it is often said that “it’s just one person’s opinion on that day.” I prefer to imply that it is one person’s interpretation of the breed description because an opinion can involve personal preferences. This allows an individual to breed towards his or her interpretation of the Standard without having a disadvantage over any other individual.

No judge is perfect and this hobby is supposed to be fun and enjoyable. Judges are human and will make mistakes; it’s part of life. For me, the hobby became a lot more enjoyable when I realized the power of interpretation and stopped getting upset because they didn’t always view birds the same way I did. I recommend talking to judges and pick their brains in a kind and meaningful manner. You may learn something new from their interpretations.



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# RAISING POULTRY ON PASTURE

Raising poultry on pasture isn't exactly new.

Most domesticated fowl were raised outdoors before the advent of the now-dominant confinement method in the late 1950s.

In the early 1990s, Virginia farmer Joel Salatin published a book detailing a new system to compete for the small but growing niche of consumers who want to buy poultry raised outside the corporate system. His *Pastured Poultry Profits*, 10,000 of which have sold, explains the innovations Salatin made to the old practice of allowing poultry to range free around the barn lot. Chickens are raised in floorless, 10' x 12' x 2' pens. Producers move the pens daily to fresh pasture. While receiving exercise and fresh air foraging for plants and insects, the chickens drop manure that adds fertility to the soil. According to many, Salatin's book sparked a renewed interest in raising poultry on pasture. Salatin held workshops for those interested in learning more about pastured poultry.

## Before taking the plunge, consider...

- In penned systems, expect to move pens daily.
- Pastured birds are susceptible to weather-related stress and predation.
- While some are concerned that pastured poultry might be exposed to avian influenza through migratory waterfowl, others claim that flocks and pasture managed with care to avoid parasites are at less risk than in confinement houses.

**PASTURED POULTRY PENS** – Encloses birds in floorless portable pens that are moved daily to fresh pasture. Birds feed on grass or other forages, worms and insects, and supplemental grain-based feed. They work their manure into the soil by scratching.

**"NET" RANGE (OR "DAY RANGE")** – Contains birds in movable housing, with electric poultry netting defining a series of paddocks surrounding the house, (often a hoop-like structure). Producers move flocks through paddocks, shifting them as the condition of the pasture dictates. With access to the

shelter for feeding, rest and shade, birds can escape from both predators and inclement weather. Birds feed on grass or other forages such as vegetable or grain crops, worms and insects, and supplemental grain-based feed. Birds remain vulnerable to predation – especially avian predation – but may be better protected from the more common nocturnal predation because the housing units are usually more resistant than field pens to raccoons, foxes and skunks.

**YARDING** – Keeps birds in stationary housing, but allows them access to yard or pasture during daylight. This model has been a popular way for some confinement poultry producers to tap into the growing market for "free range" poultry, including the new USDA certified organic program. They can use the same houses designed for the industrial confinement model, modifying the practice simply by fencing a yard or pasture surrounding the house and allowing flocks to range on it. Without taking care to subdivide the area into paddocks, however, farmers using this method risk concentrating birds, which can denude the soil, deplete nutritious forages and concentrate pathogens. Again, because birds are not contained in pens, they are more open to predation, at least during daylight hours.

**"CHICKEN TRACTOR"** – Contains poultry in small pens to help prepare the soil usually for garden plots. Birds feed on weeds, garden plants, insects and grubs, and supplemental grain based feed – while "tilling" and "fertilizing" the soil. Andy Lee, a Virginia farmer and researcher, wrote a book about this system, claiming the birds can do wonders in weed suppression and soil revitalization.

**FREE RANGE** – Allows birds to range freely across pastures, gardens, and/or cropland, and to return at night or in inclement weather to portable housing. Skids or "egg-mobiles" are moved regularly to encourage grazing of particular areas. Birds are vulnerable to predation.

The comparative value of the various poultry systems depends on the vision you have for your operation.

## PRODUCTION BASICS

Housing: The least expensive approaches are

the chicken tractor and the portable field pen models described by Andy Lee and Joel Salatin, though most producers concede they also demand the most time and labor. The “tractor” model, which Lee designed – and describes in his book, *Chicken Tractor* – calls for small numbers of birds to control weeds and insect pests and increase fertility in garden plots. Simple and inexpensive, the “tractor” is intended primarily to work in concert with vegetable production.

Salatin’s model - Simple to-build pens made of inexpensive wood, sheet metal or plastic, and chicken wire. Making a 10-feet by 12-feet pen should cost no more than \$200, plus labor.

At the other end of the spectrum are the portable houses favored by many farmers involved in day range or free-range poultry production. Typically much larger and made of sturdier materials, they can cost more.

Tim Shell, a range poultry farmer and breeder in Virginia’s Shenandoah Valley, estimates the costs for one of his portable “hoop houses,” made from PVC plastic pipes, metal rebar, wood and polymer sheeting, at nearly \$1,000, including labor.

“It holds more birds and provides a lot more protection from weather and predators than a field pen,” Shell said. He expects his structures to last nearly twice as long as a field pen designed and built to Salatin’s specifications.

Lee designed and built structures he calls “mini-barns” for his day range operation. They are made from lumber, plywood, corrugated tin and fiberglass, and have wooden runners, or “skids,” at their bases that allow them to be dragged with

relative ease by tractor to fresh stands of pasture when needed. Systems like Shell’s and Lee’s usually depend on portable fencing.

Most producers favor electric fencing designed for poultry, called poultry netting, or feather netting. It costs about \$160 per 165-foot roll (including step-in posts, not the power source).

Feed and Water Delivery. Beyond a field pen, producers only need containers for feed and water. They can be simple and inexpensive, even home-made. Ensure that any feeder or watering unit, whether made at home or purchased from a com-

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(318) 209-9802 (LVMsg)

mercial source, does the job properly. For example, improperly anchored or poorly designed feeders and watering units can be tipped over or clogged, increasing opportunities for spoilage and contamination as well as inducing unnecessary stress or endangering the lives of a flock. (Look for poultry equipment suppliers in "Grit!," the American Pastured Poultry Producers Association (APPPA) newsletter.

### **FEED**

Most poultry diets contain corn for energy, soybeans for protein, and vitamin and mineral supplements. In pasture systems, producers do not include medications. Some range poultry producers mix their own feed. Other producers work with local mills to design the right custom mix. Feeds can be ordered in various forms, such as cracked, mashed and pelletized. Healthy debate rages as to which form is better utilized by pastured birds.

### **MORTALITY AND PREDATION**

A major factor in premature loss of birds is predation. Flocks raised in a field pen system tend to be safer from daytime predators such as dogs, hawks and the occasional eagle because they are securely enclosed. Nocturnal predators such as raccoons, foxes, coyotes and skunks, however, will exploit even the smallest opening in the pen. Other range poultry producers are much more vulnerable to avian predation. Alabama Day Range producer Charles Ritch, for example, says hawks and owls are "a big, big problem, and they have been ever since I started."

#### To minimize loss:

- Place pens well inside pastures rather than along wooded fence lines because many predators will be reluctant to travel across open territory.
- Consider installing electric fences or using a trained dog.

### **SOIL**

Poultry can do a lot to remedy problem soil and control both insect pests and weeds.

Poultry free to roam act a miniature manure spreaders that fertilize the soil. They turn and mix soil and manure as they scratch for insects and worms, increasing organic matter and improving fertility. Take care not to keep birds too long in one

area or in high concentrations, or you risk denuding and compacting the soil. Steve Stevenson of Wisconsin's CIAS worked with farmers who raise other livestock in addition to poultry on pasture. In each case, the chickens followed the larger animals, from dairy sheep to beef cattle. "We heard again and again that chickens do wonders for soil quality and nutrients," he said. In Louisiana, SARE-funded researchers studying the benefits of integrating vegetables with broilers or layers found that vegetables grew best when planted 14 days after birds were moved across the plot.

"We found significant improvement in plant performance 14 days after birds were on the land," said James McNitt, a researcher at Southern University, who tested for the optimum time to plant cucumbers, summer squash, mustard greens and collard greens after pastured poultry.

Mark and Robin Way of Cecil County, Md., appreciate the extra nitrogen their flocks give to their hay fields. They move seven pens at a time across one of their four hay fields, and rotate to a new field each year.

"We've had soil tests, and we're right where we should be," Robin Way said. "The animals do well on the fields. They pick out bugs, and what they give back is extra nitrogen."

Tom Delahanty's birds help him overcome an obstacle endemic to New Mexico: poor soil. His birds are building a layer of rich organic matter atop the sandy desert ground to the point that he is considering expanding into organic produce.

"Between the rye and oats I plant both as cover crops and forage, and the scratching the birds do that works their manure down into the ground, I'm getting fertility like they've never seen around here," he said.

"I've got grain farmers coming from all over the valley to look my pastures because they stay green all year long."

### **FORAGES**

Research, along with observations of many producers, suggests that birds and pasture offer mutual benefits. Planting diverse forages that improve soil quality by fixing nitrogen or adding organic matter makes good sense, even though poultry producers sometimes debate how much grass or other forage



*A lightweight, inexpensive PVC chicken tractor that should be moved daily. Key components are PVC, 1" chicken wire, cable ties, bungy cords, lightweight reflective tarp, and outer perimeter fence.*

meat birds and layers actually eat, and how much benefit they get from it. Birds are not true ruminants and cannot digest the cellulose in most plants very efficiently (though turkeys and geese are better at it than chickens), but they do get some nutrients. Joel Salatin has established what he calls a "permanent polyculture" of clovers and grasses in his pastures, with varieties, such as native grasses, broadleaves, clovers, chickories, oats and rye that mature at different times of the season. His chickens will, "eat almost anything as long as it's not too tall and not too tough," he said. Oregon egg producer Robert Plamondon has found that pasture research from the early 1900s still applies. "Everything I've read points to oats as the ideal cool season green feed," he said, "while ladino clover, alfalfa, and to a lesser extent other clovers are better summer feeds. My own experience with oats has been very favorable."

Salatin maintains that his broilers get enough nutrition from forage, insects, and grubs that they need 30 percent less feed than broilers raised under the industrial confinement model.

#### **ANIMAL HEALTH**

Pastured flocks are generally resistant enough to disease and infections that many producers forego the use of antibiotics or medicated feed. Few, if any, pastured or range producers report significant problems with cannibalism.

By contrast, chickens raised in confined houses remain at risk for a host of respiratory illnesses because of air quality marred by dust made up of excrement, ammonia, litter, skin and feathers.

Pastured birds, however, are more susceptible to weather-related stress. They can get too cold, too hot, be rained upon or be injured by predators or pen walls. Wildlife can transmit disease-causing microbes.

Diseases such as coccidiosis can occur. Use frequent rotations and allow pasture plots time to rest to knock back pathogens.

*(This article was condensed from a bulletin which was co-written by Valerie Berton and David Mudd. This publication was funded by USDA-CSREES under Cooperative Agreement 00-ESAG-1-0857 for the Sustainable Agriculture Network.)*

# POULTRY JUDGING TECHNIQUES

By: Doris Robinson,  
National Director/Coordinator

*"Judging instills the confidence in those people who may be timid and humbles those who tend to be conceited." (Quoted from an Agricultural Publication, 1992 submitted by Dr. Ben Mather, UF)*

Poultry judging consists of carefully analyzing animals and measuring them against a standard that is commonly accepted as being ideal. In this case, purebred exhibition poultry accepted by the American Standard of Perfection and the ABA Bantam Standard.

Poultry judging also has been defined as a study of the relationship between an animal's form and function in both the fancy purebred at sanctioned shows and production/commercial class's at most fair shows. Judging commercial/production birds is not judged by the APA or ABA "standard".

There are numerous benefits to gain from learning to judge poultry, both purebred and commercial birds. In the course of training and competition you are given the opportunity to interact with future leaders of the poultry hobby and industry. You develop a keen sense of judgment and confidence to make a decision that you can defend in a set of oral reasons if needed.

Most prominent poultry judges who are masters of judgment and selection have been affected by their involvement with poultry judging.

Participation in judging poultry builds your character and makes you a more complete person.

## Taking the right steps:

Techniques for judging poultry can be broken into four steps:

1. Information: You must develop a mental image of the ideal for the species, breed and sex involved.

2. Observation: Successful poultry judging requires a sharp eye and a keen mind. As poultry judge you must learn to develop a greater perception for the animals that are being judged. Furthermore, these observations must be accurate and complete in every way.



*Donald Barger reaching for a bantam during judging, Clanton, Alabama*

3. Comparison: A successful judge must make comparisons of each animal against each of the other animals in the class. Judges must be able to weigh the good and bad characteristics of each animal and make their decisions based upon their findings. The animal that will eventually be selected to top the class will be the one with the "most of the best points for its breed."

4. Decision: The final, and perhaps most difficult, step involves ranking, or placing, the animals in the class. Many people have the necessary information and the ability to observe and compare but they may lack the skill and courage required to make the right decision. Judges' decision must be accurate and logical, and they must be able to stand by that decision.

## Tips for judging a poultry class:

See the animals exactly as they are, not as you would like to see them.

- Break each class down into sections: 1st Cock, 2nd Cock, 3rd Cock, etc., using the same technique in each of the hen, cockerel, and pullet classes.

- When evaluating a class, your first impression is usually the most unbiased and most accurate if it is the result of careful analysis.

- For general observation of a class, maintain a minimum distance 2 – 3 feet if possible. This will allow you a full unobstructed view of the class. If you need to see two possible top place birds together, ask a clerk to move them along with their coop tags into cages that are side by side.

- When finishing a placing on a class, make sure to mark the coop card. Double check to make sure you placed the birds as you want them. There should be no room for error once you leave the class.

• Nearly all judges go into a slump at some time during their judging careers. When this happens, do not get discouraged or upset with yourself. Just keep your wits, maintain a positive attitude and work hard — you will pull out

of it.

### Benefits of giving reasons

There are two parts to the format when judging poultry:  
- Placing the birds and giving oral reasons on your placing. The second part can be the most difficult because you have to learn to communicate your thoughts to the other judge or judges you are working with.

1. You learn how to become organized; you get your thoughts in line with what you have written on the coop tag. You learn to recall a situation clearly in your mind that happened several hours ago or longer. You learn to express yourself in a convincing manner.

2. You become able to clearly enunciate words.

3. You learn to defend your decisions. This not only benefits you in judging poultry, it is also an asset for everyday life. You learn how to sell yourself and your ideas.

### Evaluating a set of reasons:

There are several schools of thought concerning oral reasons. The style you choose to express yourself is of little importance. The truly important factors involved in giving an effective set of oral reasons include:

1. Accuracy of statements.
2. Completeness of all the important points.
3. Ability to bring out the important points between selections of birds.
4. Complete vocabulary of poultry terminology.
5. Correct grammar.
6. A sincere, emphatic and

precise presentation.

7. Clear enunciation, don't mumble.

8. Voice inflection.

9. A logical order to your reasons.

10. Proper presence, e.g., eye contact, correct posture, no distracting mannerisms.

11. Use carcass terms in production classes.

12. Ability to communicate

from a visual image of the birds either set by the purebred standards or industry standard.

*Credits: Interviews with sanctioned APA & ABA poultry judges (Thank you all: August Vinhage, Danny Padgett, Johnny Batson, Jamie Carson, Jim Sallee, Jerry Yeaw, Paul Kroll, Troy Laroche and others I have forgotten over the years – the names are gone but the lessons are well remembered) Interview with Dr. Ben Mather, retired, University of Florida, Gainesville.*

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# Which Roads, or Rather Colors, Lead to Rome?

Article & Photos by Nate Rynish

Tufted Roman geese are one of the most majestic and unique breeds of geese. Many are attracted to them when they see the tuft on top of their head. A pure white goose that is broad, plump, and round, with elegance in its structure, striking viewers with

their crown-like tuft. Some say that a pink bill and legs is what really makes a Roman unique and pop out at people. However, many judges seem to want to pick birds with pink bills and feet but never anything with orange.

For those who are not aware, there are very few Grand Master Exhibitors of Tufted Roman Geese in the APA, myself being one of 2 or 3. Every point that I earned to achieve this feat was with birds that had pink bills and pink feet. I've asked many judges that I have shown under if they would



*Top: Tufted Roman exhibiting solid pink bill. Bottom: Tufted Roman exhibiting a reddish orange bill. This bill is not solid bright orange. Notice a darker or more pink tone near the base and a more orange tone near the tip.*

ever pick a bird with an orange bill. The answer I received from everyone I had asked was, "NO." This happens to be a major controversy amongst the breeders as well. The standard states that bill color is supposed to be "pinkish to reddish orange." If this is the standard description, why do so many judges insist on docking orange billed birds as if it is a flaw? Why are breeders culling these birds from their flocks?

The Standard of Perfection is open to interpretation. The word "interpretation" can yield the cause for some outlooks on this description. My interpretation of the description is that it's essentially a color scale giving a potential range of this bill color. Some of the veteran breeders and exhibitors interpret this description by stating that the bill should be pink at the end of the bill and orange at the base, or vice versa. From a breeding standpoint, both interpretations could be correct. I've been raising Romans for 10 years, and I have hatched birds with solid pink and solid orange bills. Several even have bills where the mix of both colors can be clearly seen, usually presented as described above (pink towards the beak, orange by the base). I spoke to Rodney Haefs, a well known veteran breeder and respected judge. He informed me of the importance of needing both colored bills in a breeding program. Both colors are needed to achieve that particular interpretation. In reality, there appear to be fewer pink billed birds than or-

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ange billed birds in Canada and the U.S. If one looks to the origin of the Tufted Romans, many European birds are also orange billed. This demonstrates that orange is not just part of the written standard description but also vital to origin and genetic makeup.

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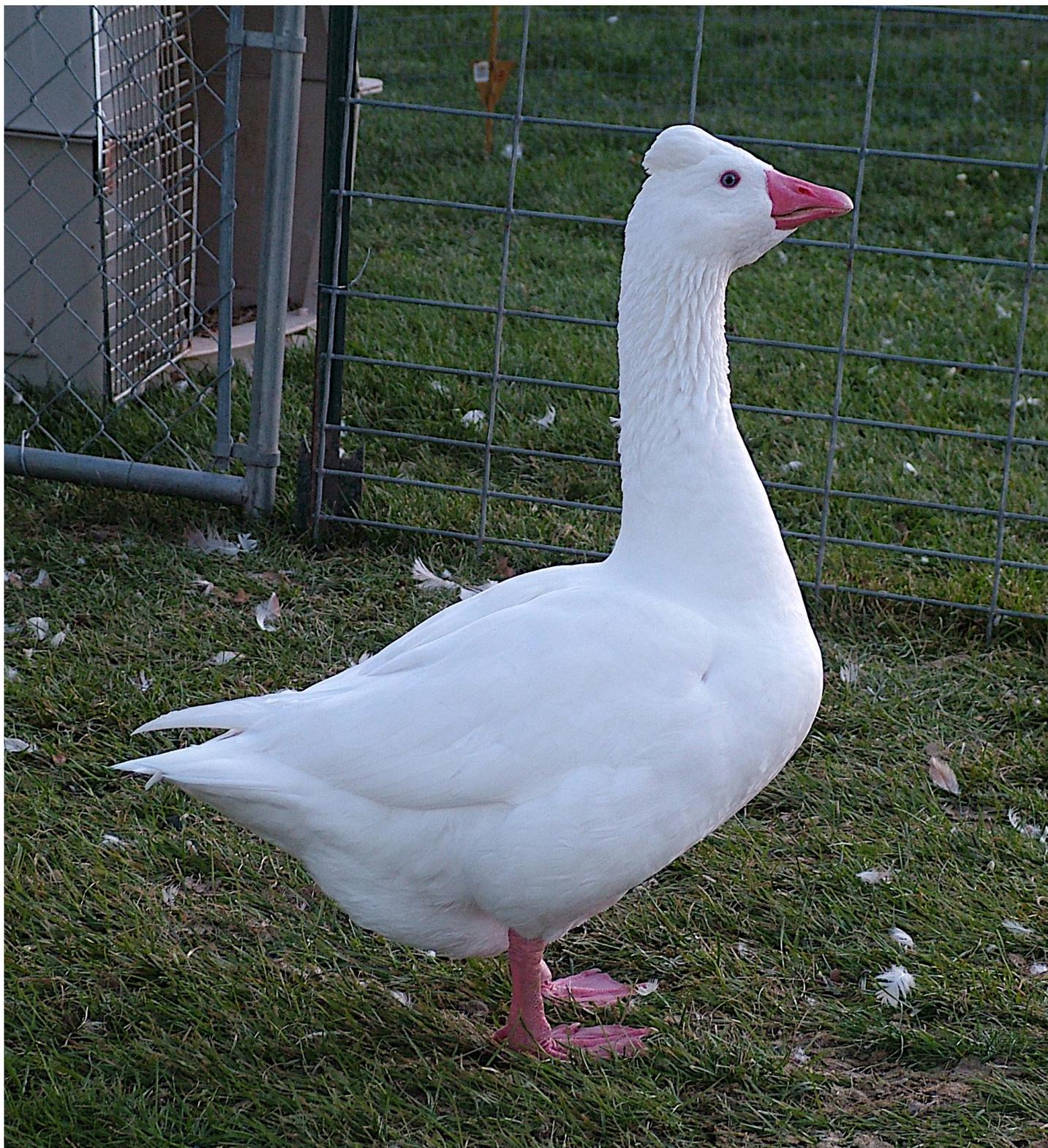
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Some of the other popular responses I receive when asking about bill color is that it “is just wrong,” “the standard was changed,” and “it’s for marketing.” Tufted Romans were accepted into the

Standard of Perfection in 1977. Reading the Standard of Perfection edition that was published after the acceptance will expose the original bill color description: pinkish to reddish orange. Nothing



*A Tufted Roman Goose. Pink bill, shanks, and feet. Nate Rynish photos.*



changed from the original description. Poultry breeders need to continue striving for perfection of the descriptions stated in our standard. By discriminately judging against orange, breeders are being discouraged from attempting to breed to the standard and are culling birds for a fault that is stated in the standard as a correct, original description. Tufted Romans are supposed to be viewed as Tufted Romans, not a pink billed bird with a tuft. Judges are supposed to be considering a point scale, not personal preference. When breeding, there shouldn't be a problem with personally breeding for pink bills as the description clearly states "pinkish" within the description. Pink is acceptable, but the standard description does not state point deductions for having any orange in it. This is not an argument to try and make it easier to show birds with faults. This couldn't have been a fault to begin with when orange is in the original description.

People can be influential, whether it is good or bad. There is information on the Internet stating

pink to be desirable and orange undesirable. The same information travels via word of mouth. Maybe that is a personal preference or a marketing ploy, but that doesn't make it right to dock a bird with orange in the bill to the bottom of the class if it's type is up to par or better than others in the class.

This subject has been controversial and debated since I began raising Tufted Roman Geese. Of course, one can interpret the standard in his or her own way. Maybe that interpretation is that "pinkish to reddish orange" means pink is preferable, but orange is acceptable. However, most breed descriptions would make a point of including preferable descriptions if this were the case. For example, East Indies' bill color is "black preferred, black with olive tip permissible." Perhaps some will look at this description differently now. This discussion is one that needs to continue amongst Tufted Roman enthusiasts in order to arrive at a clearer, standard based conclusion.

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*June 6, 2020*

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Large Fowl, Bantams, Waterfowl, Geese  
and Serama show.



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