

Examination of a Chicken:

BEGIN

1. Overall
 2. Head
 3. Eyes
 4. Comb
 5. Wattles
 6. Feathers on head
 7. Beak
 8. Earlobes
 9. Neck
 10. Back
 11. Tail
 12. Vent
 13. Laying
 14. Abdomen
 15. Thighs
 16. Shanks
 17. Toes
 18. Feet
 19. Breast
 20. Wings
 21. Crop
- DONE

WHAT AND WHY?

- 1) Overall- examining the whole bird
- 2) head
- 3) eyes- place your finger near the birds eye. You are checking for blindness and pigment
- 4) comb- feel the comb. You are looking for defects and abnormalities.
- 5) wattles- feel the wattles. You are looking for defects and abnormalities.
- 6) feathers on the head.- You are looking for signs of molting.
- 7) beak- Point your finger at the beak. You are looking for crookedness.
- 8) earlobes- You should find out what color the earlobe is on your bird by breed standards. You are also looking for pigment loss.
- 9) neck- Feel for smoothness. Signs of molting.
- 10) back- run your hand over the back. Use your hand to measure length and breadth (width). Check for molting.
- 11) Tail- Press gently the tail feathers forward. Examine and count feathers. This will tell you if there is molting.
- 12) Vent- Here is where you will find lice and mites. If a layer, examine the condition of the vent. Look for color loss. Check "handling" quality. Gently pinch the skin for thickness and flexibility.
- 13) If your bird is a hen, check abdominal capacity. Use your fingers to determine the distance between pelvic bones and the distance between the end of the keel bone and pelvic bones.
If the distance between the pelvic bone is:
 - a) 1 1/2" or less, the bird is probably not laying or has not laid much.
 - b) 1 1/2" or more, the bird is laying now and has been laying for a while.
 - c) 2" or more, the chicken has laid in the past.
- 14) abdomen- checking for softness or hardness.

a) if soft: current layer

b) if hard: poor layer or non-layer

- 15) thighs- Important on meat birds
- 16) shanks- Here you're looking for smoothness. If the scales are crusty or raised, they have mites or lice.
- 17) toes- check for number and look for defects.
- 18) feet- look for pigment loss.
- 19) breast- Check length of keel bone. Check for straightness. Check for breast blisters.
- 20) wings- check feathers for molting and check for bugs.
- 21) examine crop- DO NOT SQUEEZE AND DO NOT FEED MORNING OF SHOW.
- 22) DONE- return your bird to an upright position. Re-pose your bird on the table and step back.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

- 1) Name one of the areas to check for lice and mites.
- 2) If your chicken has lice or mites, how can you treat them?
- 3) How long are eggs incubated for before they hatch? (28 days)
- 4) Who lays the eggs? (hens)
- 5) What is a rooster? What is his age?
- 6) What is a hen? What is her age?
- 7) What is a cockerel? What is his age? (Young male. Born in this calendar year)
- 8) What is a pullet? What is her age? (Young female. Born in this calendar year)
- 9) What color is a silkies skin? (Silkies have black skin)
- 10) What is the "STANDARD OF PERFECTION".
- 11) How many primary feathers are there?
- 12) How many secondary feathers?
- 13) How many tail feathers?
- 14) How many toes? (Silkies have five toes. Other breeds have four toes)
- 15) Purpose of the crop? (Holds the food and grinds the food)