



GUIDELINES FOR POULTRY SHOWMANSHIP

Poultry showmanship is a contest where the youth will be given an opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge of poultry as well as his/her ability to carry, examine and position their bird in the cage for a judge.

In general, this is an activity where 4-H'ers will be evaluated even more than their birds. The breeding or quality of the bird does not count, but its cleanliness, condition, freedom from parasites, health and vigor are important. In other words, the contestant will be mainly scored on those things he/she knows and how well they cared for the birds.

The arena for judging should be set up so that the public can observe but be far enough back so they do not scare the animal(s) being shown or intimidate the contestant.

Contestants can be evaluated one at a time or in groups, but no more than ten should be judged simultaneously. It is impossible for a judge to watch the movements and the animals of a larger number of contestants at one time.

Contestants who are waiting to make their presentations should be held in an area where they cannot view or hear those being evaluated. This is so the later contestants cannot profit by an earlier contestant's mistakes, since they are not all being evaluated at the same time.

The showmanship event may be divided according to age and/or experience. Examples: first year attempt – 13 and under, 14 and over, etc.

Clubs may wish to conduct an elimination trial or two at the club level and send only the top one or two members to the county competition. This would give everyone a chance to compete, give the youngsters some experience in scoring each other, and reduce the time required for county competition.

This is the type of event that should not be hurried. Allow plenty of time for a true evaluation of each contestant.

Suggested Procedure

1. The show person carries the bird to the judging area and places it into an exhibition cage.
2. The show person removes the bird from the cage and proceeds to examine it section by section. The judge may ask the contestant to identify the parts and what he/she is looking for in each section of the bird.
3. The show person returns the bird to the cage and poses it.

4. The judge may quiz the contestant on the parts of the bird, the breed, its age, sex, or anything pertinent to its use, origin, requirements, or its strong or weak points as an individual.
5. Contestants may be quizzed by judge on their general knowledge of poultry. This can include, but is not limited to, questions on feeding, breeding, management, and poultry products such as eggs, incubation, and so forth.
6. Advance members may be asked to poise the birds on table outside of the cage or remove and comment on an “unknown” bird.
7. Contestants should be neat, clean, and wear clothing appropriate to the occasion. For example, an eyelet top in which a bird could easily catch a toenail would not be the best choice.
8. Each contestant should wear an identification number large enough to be easily seen by the judge and so positioned on the person as to be in view from the front while the bird is being examined.

Judging Showmanship

It is suggested that not more than 10 exhibitors be judged at one time and that exhibitors waiting call not be allowed to view or hear those being scored.

Try to arrange the showmanship area so that the judge is between the contestants and the public.

A public address system is a real assist in this procedure in that the public can be more aware and the exhibitors being evaluated can then all hear the same things.

Allow plenty of time to observe and score contestants. A score should be tabulated for each show person as they appear before the judge.