Florida State Fair 2027 Poultry Seminar

Herdsman & Showmanship



1

Herdsman Duties as Assigned



Sweeping the barn.



Handing out chicks for the public to briefly hold.



Feeding chicens at scheduled times only.



Collecting eggs from cages.





Show your chicken to the public and answer questions outside of ask-me-booth times.



Cleaning water and feed cups as needed.



Watering chickens at scheduled times and as needed.

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Poultry Showmanship

Purebred Showmanship

- ❖Presenter
- ❖Demonstration
- ❖Bird Examination (different from commercial examination) You be the judge and tell what parts you are looking at and why.
- ❖Short multiple choice question test during skillathon time.

Commercial Showmanship

- ➢Presenter
- ➢Demonstration
- ➢Bird Examination (different from purebred examination) You be the judge and tell what parts you are looking at and why.
- ➢Short multiple choice question test during skillathon time.

3

Presenter Appearance

All exhibitors will be required to be clean, neat, and properly dressed in accordance with the standards of the youth organization they represent and follow the show rules for attire.

Florida State Fair rules state no caps or hats.

Closed–toe shoe or boots are required.

Exhibitors not conforming to the Dress Code will not be allowed to enter the Show Ring for Showmanship.

Limit jewelry for safety and appearance.



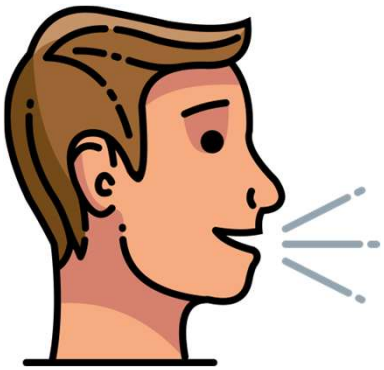






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Presenter Speaking



- Be sure to introduce yourself to the judge.
- Be sure to speak loud enough for the judge to hear you. There can be lots of noise in the barn or arena making it difficult to hear.
- Speak clearly and limit the times that you say “umm” .
- If you don’t know the answer then tell the judge you don’t know but that you will look it up after the competition.
- Speak confidently even if you are not sure that your answer is correct.



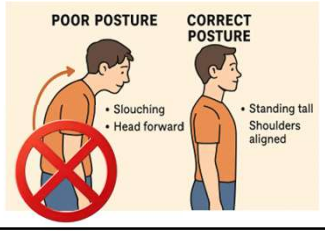
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Presenter Mannerisms



- Stand up straight. Don’t slouch over. Try not to shuffle your weight from side to side.
- Be sure to make eye contact with the judge.
- Do not put your hands in your pockets, cross your arms, or put your hands on your hips.
- Try not to stare off into space while you are trying to remember an answer.
- Don’t forget to smile. Showmanship is not torture. It is a learning experience.





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Presenter Poise & Attitude

- Poise is all about being calm and confident even when you are not sure of an answer, being graceful in how you stand and move.
- Show a positive attitude about being there. Showmanship is a learning experience. You should care about how well you perform so act like you care.
- Show respect towards the judge and other show staff.







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Demonstration: Carrying and Handling

- **Carrying your bird.**
- Hold the bird with one hand underneath it's abdomen with your fingers between and around the legs.
- Your other hand should be over the bird's back securing the wings.
- Hold the bird up against your body for comfort & support.



- **Handling your bird.**
- You will always pass your bird to someone else head first.
- You will always place your bird into a cage and take it out of a cage head first.
- You will always take a bird being handed back to you head first.
- (Notice the theme: **HEAD FIRST**)



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Demonstration: Caging a Bird

- You will need to be able to hold and secure your bird with one hand so that your free hand can open the cage door. **KNOW HOW TO OPEN THE DOOR OF A STANDARD LARGE FOWL COOP.**
- Place your free hand on one side of your bird, Take your other hand from underneath the bird and place it on the other side. Now rotate your bird forward to a head first position.
- Place your bird in the cage head first.
- Pose your bird for the judge before closing the cage door.
- You will remove your bird from the cage head first as well with one hand underneath your bird and the other hand on top.



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Demonstration: Posing Your Bird

- The point of posing a bird is so that the judge can see a **PROFILE** or side view. The profile line of a bird is called confirmation or type. Each breed has its own shape for type. If your bird does not match the type for the breed then the judge is not going to spend much time evaluating the rest of it during a show.
- You should attempt to make your bird stand in the position appropriate for the breed with its head going towards the judge but on an angle so that the judge has a clear view of the bird's profile.
- The more you practice with your bird, the easier this process will become. It doesn't always happen. Try your best. Start practicing long before the show.



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Examination: Head, Comb, Eye, and Beak

- **Head:** check that the size and shape are correct for the breed, check for unwanted crow head shape, check for correct earlobe color for breed.
- **Comb:** check for correct type comb for breed, is it centered on the head, does it stand up or lop over, is it excessively large.
- **Eyes:** check that they are clear and healthy, check for blindness, check for correct color for breed, check for size and placement
- **Beak:** check for correct color, size, and shape for breed.





Crow Head & Beak Shape

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Examination: Color

- Check the color of skin on earlobes, wattles, shanks, and toes.
- Check the color of the surface plummage and the pattern if applicable.
- Check the color of the undercolor or fluff.







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Examination: Wing

- Hold the bird in one hand and fan open the wing with your other hand.
- Examine the wing for shape, position specific to breed, development, color, and condition.
- Check for twisted feathers, split wing, slipped wing, split quills, clipped feathers, missing feathers, shorter feathers growing back in after a molt.





The Japanese breed carries their wings in a lower position









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Examination: Body Structure & Back

- Run your hand over the back from the shoulders to the tail area to feel for any abnormalities.
- Use your hand to measure the length and width of the back area to check the conformation of the bird.
- Check to be sure that the overall body structure and shape matches the “TYPE” specific to the breed.

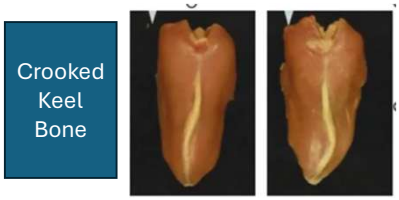


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Examination: Breast

- Examine the breast by using your palm to feel the length of the keel bone and the meat on it.
- Check the straightness of the keel bone and look for any abnormalities such as indentations or being crooked.
- Feel and look at the breast area to determine if there are any breast blisters or other defects on it.





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Examination: Feather Quality

- Do the feathers look clean?
- Run your hand over the feathers to check for broken, cut, twisted, missing, bleached out, sunburned, frayed, roach eaten, or thin feather conditions.
- Do the feathers lay flat and smooth (unless silkie or frizzle)?







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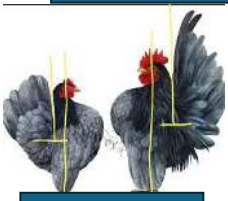
Examination: Tail

- Check for the correct tail type for the breed
- Run your hand down the bird's tail. Press the tail feathers toward you and examine the condition of the feathers.
- You may want to count the tail feathers to determine any sign of molting.
- Check for wry tail, split tail, or squirrel tail.
- Some breeds have males that are "hen feathered" and do not have sickle feathers.





Sebright males are hen feathered. They have rounded tail feathers like the females instead of long pointed sickle feathers like other male breeds.



Squirrel Tail
Some breeds are required to have a squirrel tail.



Wry Tail



Split Tail

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Examination: Feet & Legs

- Examine the shanks to see if they are clean and whether there are mites present. A crusty condition or upturned scales indicate the presence of scaly leg mites.
- Look at the pigment & condition of the front and back of the shanks.
- Check for proper feathering in feather legged breeds.
- Check the toes for correct number for breed. Some breeds have 5 toes instead of 4.
- Check for crooked or broken toes.
- Check for stubs on clean legged breeds.
- Check for missing toenails or parts of toes.









NORMAL SCALY

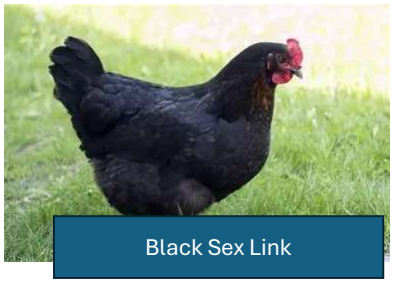
The Silkie breed has 5 toes instead of 4.



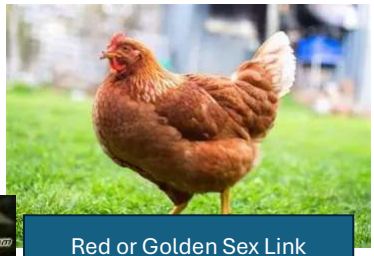
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Commercial Examination:

- Commercial showmanship is more concerned with evaluating the egg laying ability of the hen rather than how well it matches the Standard of Perfection.
- Lots of commercial egg layers are sex-link crosses so there is not a standard breed description to follow.



Black Sex Link



Red or Golden Sex Link



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Commercial Examination: Head and Eyes

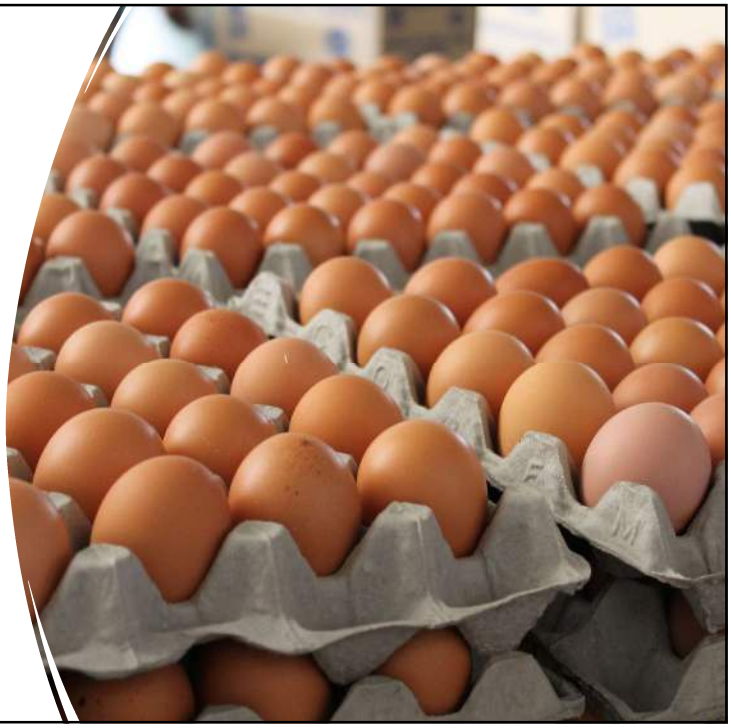
- Even a commercial layer should have a well formed head and clear healthy eyes.
- General good health is important to any breed for any purpose.
- A hen with bright red comb and wattles is showing signs of actively laying eggs.



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Commercial Examination: Body Structure & Back

- This examination is the same as for purebred showmanship.
- A good layer requires a long, wide back to have the body capacity to lay lots of eggs.
- Run your fingers sideways down and over the back to determine the width of the body.



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Commercial Examination: Feet & Legs

- This examination is also the same as for purebred showmanship.
- A bird needs to have strong, straight legs and feet to support the large body capacity of a good layer.
- Yellow skinned birds will "bleach out" skin color including their shanks and feet. A pale skin color on the shanks and upper side of toes is a sign of being deep into a laying cycle since these areas are the last to bleach out.
- Evaluating bleaching is ONLY POSSIBLE IN YELLOW SKINNED BREEDS.





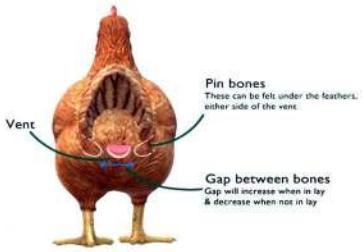
Yellow skinned breeds will bleach in skin color as they lay more eggs.

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Commercial Examination: Distance Between Pubic Bones

- Find the vent and then on both sides of it will be the public bones.
- Place your fingers between the pubic bones to determine their width.
- The wider the width, the easier it will be for a hen to lay larger eggs.
- The cartilage between the public bones will soften and stretch or spread as the hen matures and produces more eggs.





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Commercial Examination: Vent

- The vent in a hen that is in egg production will appear oblong in shape, soft, pliable and moist. It will be larger in size to allow for eggs to pass through it.
- A hen that is not in egg production will have a drier, shrunken vent that does not feel soft.



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Commercial Examination: Distance from Pubic Bones to Keel

- Place your index finger just under the pubic bones.
- Roll the rest of your fingers down over the abdomen until you feel the tip of the keel bone.
- This distance helps to determine the abdominal capacity of the hen.
- Place the palm of your hand over the abdomen. Do you have a full rounded hand over the abdomen or does your hand lay flat that you can feel the keel bone?



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