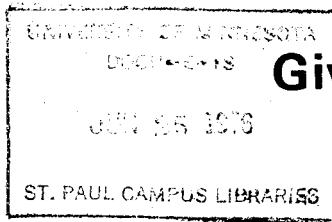


4 POULTRY NO. 31—Revised 1976
MELVIN L. HAMRE



Giving Reasons on Egg Production Classes

A good poultry judge should be able to give sound reasons for his placings. Some contests require oral reasons on placing one or two egg production classes. Giving reasons during practice judging sessions is also a good way to develop a more systematic comparison of the birds in the class. Follow the same procedures for giving reasons during practice sessions as you will be required to do in the contest so you will be more at ease in front of the contest judge.

During the time you are judging the birds take some notes that will be helpful in organizing your oral reasons. Even though you will not be permitted to use these notes while giving your reasons to the judge, they will be helpful in organizing your presentation beforehand. You will be allowed two minutes to give your oral reasons.

If a score card for oral reasons is available, study it so you will know the points on which you are being rated. The following procedure should be considered in giving your reasons:

1. Stand straight and look at the judge when you are giving your reasons. Speak clearly, distinctly, and loud enough to be heard. Try to speak in a confident and convincing manner.
2. Start by identifying yourself by contestant number. Then state the name of the class and your placing.
3. Next give the reasons for your placing. Tell why you placed the top bird first, followed by the comparison of the first and second ranked birds, comparison of the second and third ranked birds, comparison of the third and fourth ranked birds, and then emphasize the weak points of the last place bird. Do not state that birds are pairs unless they are very close in placing. Remember there can be only two pairs in a class: a top pair and a bottom pair, a top pair or bottom pair, or a middle pair with a definite top and definite bottom bird.
4. A sample set of poultry judging reasons is shown on this fact sheet. Never try to memorize one set of reasons and make it fit the class being judged.
5. Develop a systematic order to your presentation. If you follow the suggestions in point 3 above each time you give reasons you will get used to a logical system of developing your discussion.
6. Have your reasons well organized so that they emphasize the major points. Use more comparative terms rather than descriptive terms. Instead of using "good" or "better" in describing the birds tell how or why a bird is good or better than another.
7. Be sure you have covered the most important points, using such terms as pigmentation, handling quality, and abdominal capacity correctly.

8. Cover everything you have to say about each bird or pair and then make the next comparison. Don't backtrack and repeat points you have already covered. If you forget some points, go on to the next bird rather than trying to make up some reasons to replace material that has been forgotten.
9. After giving your reasons on the last bird repeat your placing of the class as your closing statement.
10. Do not discuss your placings with anyone until the judging is completed and the contest is over.

Descriptive Terms for Oral Reasons on Egg Production Classes

To properly develop your set of reasons you will have to be familiar with poultry terminology and some of the descriptive terms relative to egg production. You should know the appropriate names for the various parts of the chicken as well as the terms that are essential to describing egg production characteristics:

- Keel**—the breast bone of the bird
- Pubic bones**—the two slender, flat bones that terminate at the side of the vent
- Abdomen**—the rear region of the body, the area between the ends of the pubic bones and the end of the keel
- Abdominal capacity**—the vertical distance between the public and keel bones and the width between the pubic bones
- Handling quality**—the condition of the bird as indicated by the softness and pliability of the abdominal area and flexibility and thinness of the pubic bones
- Pigmentation**—the presence of yellow pigment in the various parts of the body of yellow-skinned breeds. Refer to disappearance of pigment as bleaching
- Intensity of lay**—the rate of laying, the number of eggs laid during a given time period
- Persistency of lay**—ability to lay over a long time without ceasing
- Plumage condition**—fraying, wearing, soiling of feathers
- Rate of molt**—rapid molt as indicated by loss of primary feathers in groups. Slow molt as indicated by loss of feathers one at a time

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Descriptive Terms for Good and Poor Qualities

<u>Characteristic</u>	<u>Good Quality</u>	<u>Poor Quality</u>
Pigmentation	Less pigment, in her shanks, beak, and vent Well bleached Shows a greater degree of fading	A bird showing more pigment Yellow
Abdominal Capacity	Greater abdominal capacity More width between pubic bones or more spread between pubic bones and keel	Shallow. Lacks capacity Tight and hard abdomen
Handling Quality	Softer, more pliable abdomen Pubic bones are thinner, more pliable	Too much fat in abdomen Pubic bones are thicker, curved in, closer together
Feathering and Plumage Condition	Feathers are more brittle, ragged, worn Late, rapid molter	Feathers are bright, glossy, clean Early, slow molting bird
Head	Feminine, refined Large red, plump, waxy comb and wattles	Masculine, coarse, crow-headed Small, scaly, shriveled comb and wattles
General Characteristics	A longer, wider back Vigorous, active, alert	Narrow and short body. Too shallow Drowsy, not active, lacking vigor

Sample Set of Poultry Judging Reasons

I am contestant No. 3. I placed this class of White Leghorn production hens 1,3,2,4.

I place No. 1 at the top of the class because her shanks are completely bleached indicating the highest rate of past egg production in the class. This complete lack of pigmentation, along with her superior handling qualities indicate that her intensity of lay is continuing.

I placed 1 over 3 because 3 shows some pigmentation yet on the back and front of the shanks and her handling qualities are not quite as good as the No. 1 bird.

In placing 3 over 2 I consider this a close pairing. Both hens show some pigment in the back and front of the shanks with 3 showing a little more bleaching than 2. No. 3 shows greater abdominal capacity, being slightly deeper and wider, and a little more spread between the pubic and keel bones.

I placed 2 over 4 because she has a better indication of past and present production by her pigmentation and handling qualities. Bird No. 4 has a large amount of pigment in her shanks and considerable fat in her abdomen. Her pubic bones are thicker and less flexible than any of the other birds in the class and she has less width between the pubic bones and the keel than the other birds. No. 4 bird has some new primary feathers coming in indicating that she has had an interruption in her production cycle.

I placed No. 4 last because she is showing more pigment and new feather development which indicates that she has the poorest production record in the class. No. 4 shows less refinement about the head and is somewhat lacking in vigor.

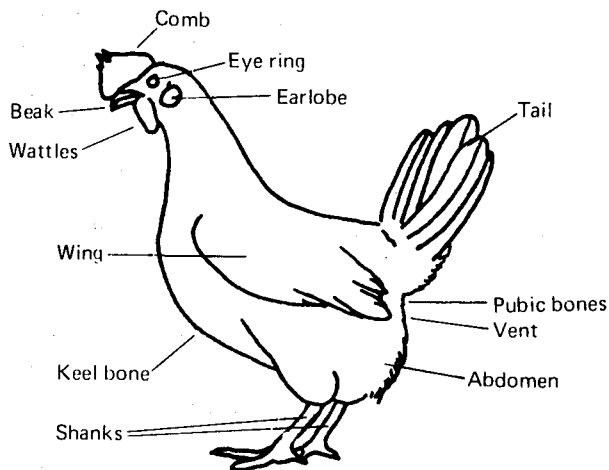
For these reasons I place this class of White Leghorn production hens 1,3,2,4.

Score Card for Oral Reasons on Egg-Production Classes

National 4-H Poultry Judging Contest

<u>Scoring Factors</u>	<u>Value</u>
1. <u>Appearance (general neatness) and delivery</u>	24
a. Did contestant stand still, on both feet, and face the judges?	
b. Did he speak clearly, distinctly, and loudly enough to be heard?	
c. Did he have appropriate opening and closing sentences?	
d. Did he speak smoothly and without long pauses?	
e. Did he have confidence; was he convincing?	
2. <u>Proper use of terms</u>	20
a. Did contestant mention such factors as pigment, handling quality, abdominal capacity, degree of fading, and so forth, or did he use terms that do not apply to judging egg production?	
b. Did he use the terms properly?	
c. Did he understand the terms used?	
d. Was he able to define the terms? (He may be asked to define some.)	
3. <u>Accuracy of statements</u>	20
a. Did the contestant really see the birds?	
b. Were his statements true, partly true, or false?	
4. <u>Completeness of coverage</u>	36
a. Did he actually tell why he placed one bird over another, or did he just vaguely describe the birds? (10)	
b. Did he stress the crucial difference, or did he make stereotype comparisons of numerous factors? (16)	
c. Did he tell all there was to tell of importance, or were there several other good reasons that should have been given for his placing? . . (10)	
Total Possible Score	100

NOTE: The judges may ask contestant to define one or two comparative terms.



Names of common parts often described in production judging