

THINGS TO LOOK FOR WHEN PREPARING YOUR BIRD FOR SHOW

The different looks of a production leghorn vs. a purebred.

WHAT CAN KEEP THAT BIRD OFF CHAMPION ROW?



This bird definitely needs to have his toenails trimmed. Neatness and care counts when showing chickens the same as it would if you were showing a horse or other animals that have their feet trimmed. This would keep an otherwise perfect specimen from getting on “champion row”.

This bird has an ear infection that is showing a yellowish discharge (see arrow). His ear needs to be cleaned and flushed. There are several types of antibiotic ointments that can be used once the ear is clean. He should not be shown until this is cleared up. There is a possibility he might be disqualified even if he was the best bird in the showroom. You may even be asked to remove him from the premises immediately so it would be best not to take him to the show until he's feeling better.



This bird is not in condition to show yet. The heck and hackle feathers are still growing in from a heavy molt. Many times you can find a few pin feathers under the top layer of feathers even when the feathers look fully grown in, this is ok to show but not when they are this noticeable.

How do you know if your Leghorn is a production egg layer or a fancy purebred? This is easier to tell if you own a “Standard of Perfection” but even then to a newcomer in the chicken fancy it can be confusing.



This picture above is of a production egg layer. Comparing with the photo on the right of a fancy purebred you can see a difference in the length of the back and even though her tail is in roughened condition if you look closely you can see she has a different angle on how her tail sets and the angle she holds her head is somewhat different. She is also has a tendency to be a bit smaller than her fancy purebred counterpart due to select breeding. She will be bred with the thought in mind to being a heavy producing egg layer, never mind what she looks like as far as body type, feather quality and other factors that we look for in breeding fancy purebreds. Her job is to produce healthy large white eggs for the dinner table. She is not judged on the condition of her feathers, the color of her earlobes, the number of points on her comb and other factors that are judged in the purebred shows.



This is a picture of a fancy purebred white leghorn. You can see how the tail set of this bird is sloped differently than on our production bird. It is at a softer angle and doesn't have a tendency to stand straight up or even tilt forward toward the head. The body type of the purebred is somewhat fuller than it is on a production type bird. This breed also is recognized by the America Poultry Association as having two types of combs, the single comb and the rosecomb. Rosecombs are not favored in the production industry. One important factor in breeding and judging this particular species of chicken is the standard weight should be adhered to and this contributes to the difference in the size of a purebred vs. a production leghorn. For the defining difference you should refer to the American Standard of Perfection for more detail.