

BREEDING AND SELECTION OF COMMERCIAL POULTRY.

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HERE is probably nothing in the poultry world to-day receiving so much attention as commercial or utility poultry. Infallible systems for selection are advertised in many forms and ways, yet the hen goes on about her work, and many are still guessing. The majority will agree that some of the systems are good as far as they go. Much has been, and can still be, written on this important phase of the poultry business. The fact still remains, that if a hen has not the breeding ability, constitution, capacity, quality, and bone which are essential, she can neither be a good producer nor reproducer. The fowl that is lacking or poorly developed in any one of these points, irrespective of any of the others, cannot respond profitably nor economically to the food and care given her.

This bulletin is written to give information on the selection and building up or keeping up the strong breeding characteristics of the stock without sacrificing egg production. It is not supposed to be information on how to pick out the best layer or to tell how many eggs a hen can or will lay in a year. Our endeavour is to assist one and all to build up a good laying strain of birds. And, further, after one has achieved this result, this bulletin, we trust, will prove useful in assisting the breeder to keep up the size and vigour without any sacrifice.

One must be able to reasonably presume that an extra good laying pullet will pass on this characteristic to her progeny if she is to be of any value. To do this properly the ancestry of the strain and individuals must be known.

ANCESTRY IS FIRST NECESSITY.

Biological influences and differences play a great part in breeding, yet they are not mentioned in many instances. Because a strain or individual proves good in the first generation is not good enough. It must prove good in its progeny as well. The only way this can come about is by understanding how to breed properly. This can neither be done by measurements or mathematical calculations, nor without knowing the ancestral blood lines.

Ancestry is the first thing or foundation from which to breed. One must know in mating up his stock what blood lines are being used. The breeder can then go to work with the printed score and select his stock for commercial purposes, providing he carefully reads the detailed matter relating to the score-card.

We have endeavoured, in getting up this score-card, to benefit by the experience of others in their score-card work, and using our experience with it in an endeavour to give the public of our best.

To try and make all points plain we will discuss each point in detail.

Firstly: What is a utility male? A utility male bird is one that is true to type, which is so constituted as to be capable of begetting utility females and males, and also capable of producing marketable flesh in profitable quantity; whose exact conformity to exhibition standard points is of secondary consideration, where such appears to conflict with what we understand as egg-producing requirements at the present time.

Secondly: What is a utility female? A utility female bird is one which is true to type, which is so constituted as to be capable of producing, firstly, marketable eggs; secondly, marketable flesh, both in profitable quantity; whose exact conformity to exhibition standard points is of secondary consideration, when such appears to conflict with what are understood to be egg-producing requirements at the present time.