

## The Showroom Do's and Do Not's

1. Fill out the entry correctly, ALWAYS MAKE A COPY FOR YOURSELF, send it in on time and include the entry money.

Coop cards are filled out using the information on your entry form. These cards must be hand written, placed in order and hung on the cages prior to the show. That is why the entry deadline is several weeks in advance of the show. Correct and complete entries make this task go quickly. Making a copy of you entry will remind you what you entered when you go to get the birds for bathing. Unless you have an emergency such as a dead bird or one that decided to molt, do not ask the show to change your entry. Last minute changes involve much paperwork and sometimes even require moving cages in the showroom. Sending your entry fee money in along with your entry reduces mistakes and saves time at check-in. Some shows and fairs will not accept entries that do not include the entry fee.

2. Arrive at least 1 hour prior to the start of judging. This is called "coop-in".

The first thing you will pick up is your show sheet. It will be at the front desk and will have every exhibitors name and number on it, including yours, and you will want to keep it handy during the show. After saying hello, unload your birds and find your cages with the proper information and your exhibitor number on them, (always check to make sure the information is correct). Place your birds in their proper cages and give them water. If judging is to be the next day you will want to feed them also. Now is the time to do your last minute grooming. At times, birds that are placed next to each other will star to spar. If this happens, place a barrier between the cages, such as paper or cardboard, preventing them from seeing each other.

3. During judging - What is there to do? This called "the show".

Here is the best part: Your work is finished; now it is up to the judge(s). Use this time to visit other breeders, get something to eat, check out the sale area, enter some of the contests, buy some raffle tickets, and

always look at the beautiful birds that others have brought to show. Some of the larger shows will have booths set up where you will find poultry supplies, books or other items of interest that are for sale. Some will have breed clubs you can join. Some shows advertise that they are having breed "meets". This means that that particular breed club is sponsoring winners of their breed with special awards. This usually results in many breeders showing lots of birds and it gives you a chance to see many examples of that breed. For example: If the Orpington club holds a meet, you will be able to talk with many Orpington breeders and look at many birds in all stages of development. Looking closely at these birds before and after judging will help you develop your skill of "Looking at birds the way a judge looks at them." The club will also give special awards to the Orpington winners.

During the day, you will see some of the isles roped off. These ropes are there to allow the judges and clerks uninterrupted time to do their jobs. Judges and clerks need the fewest distractions possible. You may watch the judging and clerking process from the next isle if you wish. When the judges have finished an area, the ropes will be removed and you can go see the results. Now is the time to look at how the birds have been placed and see if you can understand how the judge reached his decision. Many times you will say, "They all look alike to me." Over time you will be able to see the differences that make a winner win and a loser lose. Judges also handle most entries and some things reveal themselves upon the handling inspection; that are not seen from the cage. **REMEMBER:** Judges have studied for years, worked and judged under other judges and passed their test. They really make very few mistakes. The best part is that they are usually more than happy to talk with you when they have finished their work for the day. Most fairs set aside a time when the judge will be available to talk to exhibitors. All you have to say is, "Will you come talk to me about my bird?" Then be prepared for one of the best lessons you ever had about showing.

#### 4. Did I Win?

Winners of contests, drawings and the birds are either posted or announced at the end of the show. If they are announced, the crowd will gather near the announcer to listen. At times it is hard to hear over the

noise of the birds and the lack of a speaker system. Trophies and ribbons will be handed to the winners. Now is a good time to see who the winners are and mark their name on your show sheet so you can contact them later if you want.

5. End of the Show. This called "coop-out".

Most fairs have a specific time to coop-out. This can be a very busy time so be prepared and follow all of the checkout rules. Most shows will coop-out after the winners are announced. Although you may see people taking their birds home after they have been judged, the proper coop-out time is after the awards are given out and not before. Check your entry to make sure you have every bird going home that came with you. Many times birds are left behind that were accidentally forgotten. Take your coop-cards with you so you will remember how each bird placed.

6. Before you go.....

Many fairs require you to help with dismantling the cages and cleaning the area. Most shows do not require this but your help is always appreciated. More hands make the hard work of folding cages, storing all of the equipment and cleaning the area easier.

Thank the people who have made this fair or show possible: the show staff, judges and breeders that have helped you will all appreciate a heart-felt thank-you.

At larger shows, a poultry newspaper publication may have an area set up to sell subscriptions, take pictures and receive ads. Why not purchase a subscription, order an ad thanking the show staff, judges or breeder, or advertise your placement in the show. Many times the winning birds will have their pictures taken and published. You could have your picture and your ad in a national publication. Now when the next issue comes out, you have "bragging rights".

HAVE FUN!!!