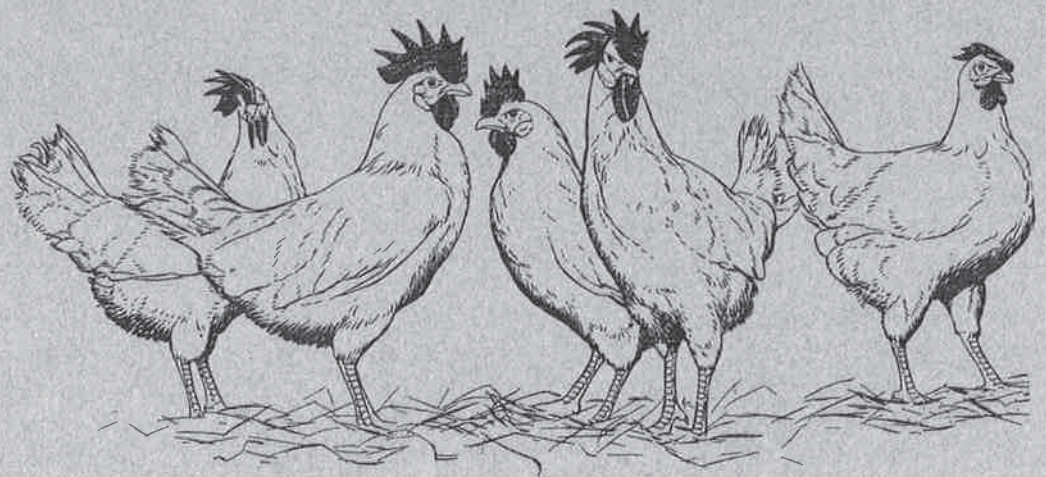


Breeds, Varieties, and Strains



BREEDS, VARIETIES, AND STRAINS

Chickens exist in many colors, sizes, and shapes. There are more than 350 combinations of physical features. In order to be able to identify and classify each of these, we have established a system of designations known as classes, breeds, and varieties.

A class is a group of breeds originating in the same geographical area. The names themselves indicate the region where the breeds originated, such as Asiatic, Mediterranean, or American. The breeds of chickens in this chapter are arranged first according to their class, and then alphabetically by breed name within each class. Lesser known classes, breeds, and varieties are at the end of the text.

Breed means a group, each of which possesses a given set of physical features, such as body shape or type, skin color, carriage or station, number of toes, and feathered or non-feathered shanks. If such an individual is mated to one of its own kind, these features will be passed on to the offspring.

Variety means a sub-division of a breed. Differentiating characteristics include plumage color, comb type, or presence of a beard and muffs. Examples exist in almost all breeds. In Plymouth Rocks, there are several colors, including Barred, White, Buff, and Partridge. In each case the body shape and physical features should be identical. The color is the only difference and each of these colors is a separate variety. Another example is the Leghorn breed where most varieties exist in Single Comb and Rose Comb with all features other than comb type being identical.

Strains are families or breeding populations possessing common traits. They may be subdivisions of a breed or variety or may even be systematic crosses. However, a strain shows a relationship more exacting than that for others of similar appearance. Strains are the products of one person or one organization's breeding program. Many commercial strains exist. Such names as DeKalb, Hyline, Babcock, and Shaver are organizations that have bred specific strains of chickens for specific purposes.

Most of the breeds and varieties we know in the United States today were developed between 1875 and 1925. During that time the emphasis throughout the poultry world was on breeds and varieties. Success was measured in terms of the excellence of individual birds. As

The commercial egg and poultry meat industries developed, the emphasis changed from the individual bird to the average for the entire flock. This caused some breeders to adopt intensive selection programs based on the performance of certain outstanding families while others worked with breed crosses and crosses of strains within a given breed. Today the commercial poultry industry is based almost 100 percent on the strain approach. However, foundation breeders are constantly looking for additional material for gene pools. This must come from fanciers and hobbyists who maintain the various breeds for personal and aesthetic reasons rather than strictly for the production of meat and eggs.

The American Poultry Association issues a book called *The American Standard of Perfection*. This book contains a complete description of each of the more than 300 recognized breeds and varieties. Such things as size, shape, color, and physical features are described and illustrated in detail.

For more information on chicken breeds, consult *The American Standard of Perfection*, American Poultry Association, 26363 S. Tucker Road, Estacada, OR 97023, (503) 630-6759 and *The Bantam Standard*, American Bantam Association, P.O. Box 127, Augusta, NJ 07822.

BANTAMS

Bantams are the miniatures of the poultry world. The word bantam is the overall term for the more than 350 kinds of true breeding miniature chickens. They exist in almost every breed and variety that we see in large chickens. In addition, there are some kinds of bantams that have no large counterpart. The term "Banty" or "Bantie" is often used to describe any nondescript, undersized chicken. This is misleading. Bantams are not unhealthy miniatures. They are raised

primarily for exhibition, a purpose for which they excel. The American Bantam Association issues a book of standards for bantams and licenses persons qualified to judge them at exhibitions.

Bantams have the same requirements for shape, color, and physical features as do the large fowl. They should weigh about one-fifth of their larger counterparts. They should be referred to by the name of their breed and variety plus the word bantam; for example Buff Cochin Bantams.

Bantams are kept for their beauty, for exhibition, or as pets or companion animals. Their wide array of shapes, colors, and personalities give Bantams broad appeal. However, they can be quite useful for the production of eggs, and their meat is fine-grained and nutritious. Often, bantams can be kept in areas too small for regular chickens. They are, in fact, the “compacts” of the poultry business.

AMERICAN CLASS

Jersey Giants

Varieties: Black, White.

Standard weights: Cock, 13 pounds; hen, 10 pounds; cockerel, 11 pounds; pullet, 8 pounds.

Skin color: Yellow.

Eggshell color: Brown.

Use: A very heavy meat-type fowl for heavy roaster and capon production. Fairly good layers. The dark-colored pigment from the shanks tends to move up into the edible portion of the carcass which has hurt the Jersey Giant in commercial circles.

Origin: Developed in New Jersey in the late 1800's, when there was a demand for heavy fowl for capon production, particularly for the New York market. Size was a prime consideration.

Characteristics: Jersey Giants are the largest breed in the American Class. They should be rugged, with an angular shape, single comb, and black (with yellowish tinge) shanks in the Black variety and dark willow shanks in the White variety. Jersey Giants will go broody but are not the best choice for incubating and brooding because of their size. Their tendency to grow a big frame first and cover it with meat later make them a poor fit for today's conditions. The meat yield is disappointing until they are 6 months or older. No fowl with black plumage or dark or willow shanks has ever remained popular in this country for long, although they used to be more widespread. However, good specimens do have an appeal, mainly because of their size.

New Hampshire Reds

Varieties: None.

Standard weights: Cock, 8½ pounds; hen, 6½ pounds; cockerel, 7½ pounds; pullet, 5½ pounds.

Skin color: Yellow.

Eggshell color: Brown.

Use: A dual-purpose chicken, selected more for meat than egg production. Medium-heavy in weight, it dresses a nice, plump carcass as either a broiler or a roaster.

Origin: New Hampshires are a relatively new breed, having been admitted to the Standard in 1935. They represent a specialized selection out of the Rhode Island Red breed. By intensive selection for rapid growth, fast feathering, early maturity, and vigor, a different breed gradually emerged. This took place in the New England states, chiefly in Massachusetts and New Hampshire from which the breed takes its name.

Characteristics: They possess a deep, broad body, grow feathers vary rapidly, are prone to go broody, and make good mothers. Most pin feathers are a reddish buff in color and, therefore, do not detract from the carcass appearance very much. The color is a medium to light red and often fades in the sunshine. The comb is single and medium to large in size; in the females it often lops over a bit. These good, medium-sized meat

chickens have fair egg-laying ability. Some strains lay eggs of a dark brown shell color. New Hampshires are competitive and aggressive. They were initially used in the “Chicken of Tomorrow” contests, which led the way for the modern broiler industry.

Plymouth Rocks

Varieties: Barred, White, Buff, Partridge, Silver Penciled, Blue, Columbian.

Standard weights: Cock, 9½ pounds; hen, 7½ pounds; cockerel, 8 pounds; pullet, 6 pounds.

Skin color: Yellow.

Eggshell color: Brown.

Use: Meat and eggs.

Origin: Developed in America in the middle to latter part of the 19th century. The barred variety was developed first. It was noted for its meaty back, and birds with barred feathers brought a premium on many markets. Most of the other varieties were developed from crosses containing some of the same ancestral background as the barred variety. Early in its development, the name Plymouth Rock implied a barred bird, but as more varieties were developed, it became the designation for the breed.

Characteristics: Plymouth Rocks are a good general farm chicken. They are docile; normally will show broodiness; and possess a long, broad back, a moderately deep, full breast, and a single comb of moderate size. Some strains are good layers while others are bred principally for meat. White Plymouth Rock females are used as the female side of most of the commercial broilers produced today. They usually make good mothers. Their feathers are fairly loosely held but not so long as to easily tangle. Generally, Plymouth Rocks are not extremely aggressive and tame quite easily. Some males and hens are big and active enough to be quite a problem if they become aggressive. Breeders should be aware of the standard weights and not select small or narrow birds for the breeding pen. Size is a definite breed characteristic and should be maintained. Common faults include shallow breast, high tails, narrow bodies, and small size.

Rhode Island Reds

Varieties: Single Comb, Rose Comb

Standard weights: Cock, 8½ pounds; hen, 6½ pounds; cockerel, 7½ pounds; pullet, 5½ pounds.

Skin color: Yellow.

Eggshell color: Brown.

Use: A dual-purpose medium-heavy fowl, used more for egg production than meat because of its dark-colored pin feathers and its good rate of lay.

Origin: Developed in the New England states of Massachusetts and Rhode Island, early flocks often had both single and rose combed individuals because of the influence of Malay blood. It was from the Malay that the Rhode Island Red got its deep color, strong constitution, and relatively hard feathers.

Characteristics: Rhode Island Reds are a good choice for the small flock owner. Relatively hardy, they are probably the best egg layers of the dual-purpose breeds. Reds handle marginal diets and poor housing conditions better than other breeds and still continue to produce eggs. They are one of the breeds where exhibition qualities and production ability can be successfully combined in a single strain. Some Red males may be quite aggressive. They have rectangular, relatively long bodies, typically hard red in color. Avoid using medium or brick red females for breeding because this is not in keeping with the characteristics of the breed. Also, do not breed from undersized birds or birds with black in their body feathers (called “smut”). Black in the main tail and wing feathers is normal, however. Most Reds show broodiness, but this characteristic has been partially eliminated in some of the best egg production strains. The Rose comb variety tends to be smaller but should

be the same size as the Single Combed variety. The red color fades after long exposure to the sun. (A breed of similar size and type to that of the Rhode Island Red has been developed. It has pure white feathering and is known as Rhode Island White.)

Wyandottes

Varieties: White, Buff, Columbian, Golden Laced, Blue, Silver Laced, Silver Penciled, Partridge, Black.

Standard weights: Cock, 8½ pounds; hen, 6½ pounds; cockerel, 7½ pounds; pullet, 5½ pounds.

Skin color: Yellow.

Eggshell color: Brown.

Use: Meat or eggs.

Origin: The Silver Laced variety was developed in New York State and the others in the North and Northeastern States in the latter part of the 19th century and early 20th century.

Characteristics: Wyandottes are a good, medium-weight fowl for small family flocks kept under rugged conditions. Their rose combs do not freeze as easily as single combs and the hens make good mothers. Their attractive “curvy” shape, generally good disposition, and many attractive color patterns (varieties) make them a good choice for fanciers as well as farmers. Common faults include narrow backs, undersized individuals, and relatively poor hatches. Also, it is common to see single combed offspring come from rose combed parents. These single combed descendants of Wyandottes should not be kept as breeders.

Less Popular Breeds in the American Class

Buckeyes: A dark red, muscular bird with pea comb, closely held feathers, and broad shoulders. No varieties.

Chanteclers: Developed in Canada as a dual-purpose farm chicken, they have muscular bodies, small combs (pea) and wattles, and lay brown eggs. Varieties: White, Partridge.

Delawares: A nearly white, rapid growing, dual-purpose fowl developed to figure into broiler crosses, with single comb and brown egg shells. No varieties.

Dominiques: America’s oldest breed. They are rather indefinitely barred black and white, have rose combs, and are relatively small, with tightly held feathers. No varieties.

Hollands: Developed in the 1930’s and ’40’s in an attempt to provide a medium-sized fowl with good meat properties that laid white-shelled eggs. Varieties: Barred, White.

Javas: A medium-sized, angular bird which was a common farm chicken in the United States in the 19th century. Javas possess single combs. Varieties: Black, Mottled.

Lamonas: Lamonas have single combs, appear short-legged, and are one of the few chickens with red ear lobes that lay white-shelled eggs. No varieties.

ASIATIC CLASS

Brahmas

Varieties: Light, Dark, Buff.

Standard weights (Light): Cock, 12 pounds; hen, 9½ pounds; cockerel, 10 pounds; pullet, 8 pounds.

Standard weights (Dark and Buff): Cock, 11 pounds; hen, 8½ pounds; cockerel, 9 pounds; pullet, 7 pounds.

Skin color: Yellow.

Eggshell color: Brown.

Use: A heavy fowl for the production of heavy roasters or capons. Fair egg layers.

Origin: The ancestry of the Brahma dates back to China, although much of their development took place in the United States between 1850 and 1890.

Characteristics: Good Brahmas are beautiful, stately birds. Their large size and gentle nature combined with intricate color patterns make them favorites for the country

estate. The Brahma's appearance in the showroom never fails to command the admiration of one and all. These qualities have made them a favorite with fanciers. Brahmans do go broody and are fairly good mothers. Their small comb and wattles, together with profuse feathering and well-feathered shanks and toes, enable them to stand cold temperatures very well. The relatively slow rate of growth and long time required to reach maturity have caused Brahmans to be passed by as a commercial fowl.

Cochins

Varieties: White, Black, Buff, Partridge.

Standard weights: Cock, 11 pounds; hen, 8¹/₂ pounds; cockerel, 9 pounds; pullet, 7 pounds.

Skin color: Yellow.

Eggshell color: Brown.

Use: Mainly an ornamental fowl, but their ability as mothers is widely recognized and Cochins are frequently used as foster mothers for game birds and other species.

Origin: Cochins came originally from China but underwent considerable development in the United States and now are found and admired in many parts of the world.

Characteristics: Cochins look like big, fluffy balls of feathers. They are mainly kept as an ornamental fowl and are well-suited to close confinement. The profuse leg and foot feathering makes it desirable to confine Cochins on wet days and where yards become muddy to keep the birds from becoming mired or collecting balls of mud on their feet. They exhibit extremely persistent broodiness, are good mothers, and are intense layers for long periods of time. Because of their feathering, it is necessary to clip some of the feathers or resort to artificial insemination to obtain good rates of fertility.

Langshans

Varieties: Black and White.

Standard weights: Cock, 9¹/₂ pounds; hen, 7¹/₂ pounds; cockerel, 8 pounds; pullet, 6¹/₂ pounds.

Skin color: White.

Eggshell color: Brown.

Use: A general-purpose fowl for the production of meat and eggs. The general shape of the Langshan makes them better suited to roaster and capon use than as fryers.

Origin: Langshans originated in China and are considered one of our oldest breeds.

Characteristics: Langshans enjoyed considerable popularity in the United States during the latter part of the 19th century. Today however, they are primarily an exhibition fowl. They appear to be very tall, with long legs and tails carried at a high angle. They are active and quick. The black variety has a deep greenish sheen when viewed in the proper light. Many other breeds were created using Langshan blood in the foundation matings. They are a good general breed; females go broody and make good mothers. Their feet and legs are feathered but not as fully as the Cochins or Brahmans. Long legs and narrow body conformation leave much to be desired as a meat bird by today's standards.

ENGLISH CLASS

Australorp

Varieties: Black.

Standard weights: Cock, 8¹/₂ pounds; hen, 6¹/₂ pounds; cockerel, 7¹/₂ pounds; pullet, 5¹/₂ pounds.

Skin color: White.

Eggshell color: Brown.

Use: Generally a very good egg producer with a fairly meaty body of intermediate size.

Origin: The Australorp was developed in Australia from Black Orpington stock. It is smaller than the Orpington with a trimmer appearance.

Characteristics: Australorps are black, with an intense beetle-green sheen. They have dark eyes and deep bodies and are very active. They are one of the best dual-purpose fowls, having gained attention in the 1930's and '40's by being one side of the successful Austrawhite cross. This cross of Australorp with White Leghorn became the successor to purebred breeds on many Midwestern farms. Broodiness was a problem with the cross and some markets discounted the tinted eggs they laid. Therefore, it soon fell victim to the inbred hybrid crosses of "Hyline" and "DeKalb." Australorps are good egg producers and hold the world's record for egg production, with one hen having laid 364 eggs in 365 days under official Australian trapnest testing.

Cornish

Varieties: White.

Standard weights: Cock, 10½ pounds; hen, 8 pounds; cockerel, 8½ pounds; pullet, 6½ pounds.

Skin color: Yellow.

Eggshell color: Brown.

Use: Developed as the ultimate meat bird, the Cornish has contributed its genes to build the vast broiler industry of the world. Its muscle development and arrangement give excellent carcass shape.

Origin: Cornish were developed in the shire (county) of Cornwall, England, where they were known as "Indian Games." They show the obvious influence of Malay and other oriental blood. They were prized for their large proportion of white meat and its fine texture.

Characteristics: The Cornish has a broad, well-muscled body. Its legs are of large diameter and widely spaced. The deep set eyes, projecting brows and strong, slightly curved beak give the Cornish a rather cruel expression. Cornish males are often pugnacious, and the chicks tend to be more cannibalistic than some breeds. Good Cornish are unique and impressive birds to view. The feathers are short and held closely to the body, and may show exposed areas of skin. Cornish need adequate protection during very cold weather as their feathers offer less insulation than can be found on most other chickens. Because of their short feathers and wide, compact bodies, Cornish are deceptively heavy. Due to their shape, good Cornish often experience poor fertility and artificial insemination is suggested. Cornish are movers and need space to exercise and develop their muscles. The old males get stiff in their legs if they do not receive sufficient exercise. The females normally go broody but because of their very minimal feathers can cover relatively fewer eggs. They are protective mothers but are almost too active to be good brood hens.

Dorkings

Varieties: Silver Gray, Colored, White.

Standard weights: Cock, 9 pounds; hen, 7 pounds; cockerel, 8 pounds; pullet, 6 pounds.

Skin color: White.

Eggshell color: White.

Use: A good, general-purpose fowl for producing meat and eggs. It was developed for its especially fine-quality meat.

Origin: The Dorking is believed to have originated in Italy, having been introduced into Great Britain at an early date by the Romans. Much of its development took place in England, where it gained much acclaim for its table qualities. The Dorking is one of our oldest breeds of chickens.

Characteristics: The Dorking has a rectangular body set on very short legs. It has five toes and has a relatively large comb, thus requiring protection in extremely cold weather. Dorkings are good layers and are one of the few examples of a bird with red earlobes that lays a white-shelled egg. Most Dorking hens will go broody, make good mothers, and are quite docile. Because of their white skin, Dorkings are not as popular in the United States as in Europe.

Orpingtons

Varieties: Black, White, Buff, Blue.

Standard weights: Cock, 10 pounds; hen, 8 pounds; cockerel, 8½ pounds; pullet, 7 pounds.

Skin color: White.

Eggshell color: Brown.

Use: A heavy dual-purpose fowl for the production of both meat and eggs.

Origin: Orpingtons were developed in England in the town of Orpington in County Kent during the 1880's. They were brought to America in the 1890's and gained popularity very rapidly, based on their excellence as a meat bird. As the commercial broiler and roaster market developed, the Orpington lost out partly because of its white skin.

Characteristics: Orpingtons are heavily but loosely feathered, appearing massive. Their feathering allows them to endure cold temperatures better than some other breeds. They are solidly colored, are at home on free range or in relatively confined situations, and are docile. Hens exhibit broodiness and generally make good mothers. Chicks are not very aggressive and are often the underdogs when several breeds are brooded together. They are a good general-use fowl.

Sussex

Varieties: Speckled, Red, Light.

Standard weights: Cock, 9 pounds; hen, 7 pounds; cockerel, 7½ pounds; pullet, 6 pounds.

Skin color: White.

Eggshell color: Brown.

Use: A general-purpose breed for producing meat and/or eggs. One of the best of the dual-purpose chickens, a good all-round farm fowl.

Origin: Sussex originated in the county of Sussex, England, where they were prized as a table fowl more than 100 years ago. They continue to be a popular fowl in Great Britain, and the light variety has figured prominently in the development of many of their commercial strains. Sussex is one of the oldest breeds that is still with us today in fair numbers.

Characteristics: Sussex are alert, attractive, and good foragers. They have rectangular bodies; the speckled variety is especially attractive with its multicolored plumage. Sussex go broody and make good mothers. They combine both exhibition and utility virtues but are more popular in Canada, England, and other parts of the world than in the United States.

Another Breed in the English Class

Red Caps A rare member of the English class, these are characterized by having a large rose comb. They are one of the few breeds with red earlobes that lay white-shelled eggs.

MEDITERRANEAN CLASS

Anconas

Varieties: Single Comb, Rose Comb.

Standard weights: Cock, 6 pounds; hen, 4½ pounds; cockerel, 5 pounds; pullet, 4 pounds.

Use: A small fowl that lays a fair number of rather small eggs.

Origin: Anconas take their name from the port city of Ancona, Italy, where they are said to have originated.

Characteristics: Anconas resemble Leghorns in shape and size. They are small, active, alert, and black with white tipped feathers evenly distributed. Anconas are noisy, good foragers, and considered non-broody. They were once a prime egg-producing breed, but today they are mainly kept as an ornamental fowl.

Blue Andalusians

Varieties: None.

Standard weights: Cock, 7 pounds; hen, 5½ pounds; cockerel, 6 pounds; pullet, 4½ pounds.

Skin color: White.

Eggshell color: White.

Use: An ornamental fowl with fairly good egg-production potential.

Origin: Developed initially in Spain, the breed has undergone considerable development in England and the United States.

Characteristics: Andalusians are small, active, closely feathered birds that tend to be noisy and rarely go broody. Andalusians are a typical example of the unstable blue color we see in the poultry industry. It is the result of a cross of black and white. When two blues are mated, they produce offspring in the ratio of one black, two blues, and one white. These whites and blacks when mated together will produce mainly blues. Andalusians are beautiful when good, but the percentage of really good ones runs low in many flocks because of this color segregation. Hence, they are not widely bred and never in large numbers.

Leghorns

Varieties: Single Comb Dark Brown, Single Comb Light Brown, Rose Comb Dark Brown, Rose Comb Light Brown, Single Comb White, Rose Comb White, Single Comb Buff, Single Comb Black, Single Comb Silver, Single Comb Red, Single Comb Black Tailed Red, Single Comb Columbian.

Standard weights: Cock, 6 pounds; hen, 4½ pounds; cockerel, 5 pounds; pullet, 4 pounds.

Skin color: Yellow.

Eggshell color: White.

Use: An egg-type chicken, Leghorns figured in the development of most of our modern egg-type strains.

Origin: Leghorns take their name from the city of Leghorn, Italy, where they are considered to have originated.

Characteristics: A small, spritely, noisy bird with great style, Leghorns like to move about. They are good foragers and can often glean much of their diet from ranging over fields and barnyards. Leghorns are capable of considerable flight and often roost in trees if given the opportunity. Leghorns and their descendants are the most numerous breed we have in America today. The Leghorn has relatively large head furnishings (comb and wattles) and is noted for egg production. Leghorns rarely go broody.

Minorcas

Varieties: Single Comb Black, Rose Comb Black, Single Comb White, Rose Comb White, Single Comb Buff.

Standard weights: Single Comb Black: cock, 9 pounds; hen, 7½ pounds; cockerel, 7½ pounds; pullet, 6½ pounds. All others: cock, 8 pounds; hen, 6½ pounds; cockerel, 6½ pounds; pullet, 5½ pounds.

Skin color: White.

Eggshell color: White.

Use: Developed for the production of very large chalk-white eggs, the Minorca is today principally an exhibition fowl.

Origin: Developed in the Mediterranean area, they take their name from an island off the coast of Spain. Development may have been as an offshoot of the Spanish breed.

Characteristics: The largest of the Mediterranean breeds, they are long, angular birds that appear larger than they are. They have long tails and large, wide feathers closely held to narrow bodies. Minorcas have relatively large combs and wattles. Good Minorcas are stately, impressive birds and can give a fair return in eggs, although in recent years they have not been intensively selected for that purpose. They are rather poor meat fowl because of their narrow angular bodies and slow growth. Minorcas rarely go broody and are very alert and fairly good foragers.

White-Faced Black Spanish

Varieties: None.

Standard weight: Cock, 8 pounds; hen, 6½ pounds; cockerel, 6½ pounds; pullet, 5½ pounds.

Skin color: White.

Eggshell color: White.

Use: An egg-type bird that has, in recent years, had very little selection for that purpose.

Origin: Coming from Spain, this bird arrived in the United States via the Caribbean Islands. Spanish are the oldest breed of chickens that exist in the United States today. At one time known as “The Fowls of Seville,” they were very popular in the South during the Colonial period.

Characteristics: The large area of snow white skin surrounding the face and wattles makes this breed unique. Actually this is an overdeveloped earlobe. Its color offers a marked contrast with the black plumage and the red comb and wattles. They are considered non-broody and hold their feathers close to their body contours. Spanish are active and noisy. Many birds are below recommended weight, and at this time, most of the population is highly inbred.

Other Breeds in the Mediterranean Class

Buttercups: A small, spritely breed from Sicily, their chief distinguishing feature is their cup-shaped comb. Buttercups are non-broody, lay a fair number of small eggs, and are kept strictly as ornamental fowl.

Catalanas: The Buff Catalana is a medium-sized bird noted for its hardiness. It is not well-known in the United States but is widely distributed through South America. Catalanas come closer to being a dual-purpose breed than any of the other Mediterranean breeds.

CONTINENTAL CLASS

Northern European

Hamburgs

Varieties: Golden Spangled, Silver Spangled, Golden Penciled, Silver Penciled, Black, White.

Standard weights: Cock, 5 pounds; hen, 4 pounds; cockerel, 4 pounds; pullet, 3½ pounds.

Skin color: White.

Eggshell color: White.

Use: An ornamental fowl capable of laying fair numbers of relatively small eggs.

Origin: Hamburgs carry a German name but are generally considered to have originated in Holland.

Characteristics: Hamburgs are active, flighty birds. They are trim and stylish with delicate features and are wild in nature. They forage well and are capable of flying long distances. Although good egg producers, their eggs are often very small.

Campines

There are two varieties of campines, Golden and Silver. Campines are a fairly small, closely feathered breed with solid-colored hackles and barred bodies. They are chiefly an ornamental breed but will lay a fair number of white-shelled eggs and are non-broody. They are thought to have originated in Belgium.

Lakenvelders

An old German breed best known for its color pattern (black hackle and tail on a white body). They are quite small, non-broody, lay white-shelled eggs, and are rather wild and flighty.

Polish

Polish

Varieties: White Crested Black, Non-Bearded Golden, Non-Bearded Silver, Non-Bearded White, Non-Bearded Buff Laced, Bearded Golden, Bearded Silver, Bearded White, Bearded Buff Laced.

Standard weights: Cock, 6 pounds; hen, 4½ pounds; cockerel, 5 pounds; pullet, 4 pounds.

Skin color: White.

Eggshell color: White.

Use: Strictly an ornamental fowl.

Origin: Probably eastern Europe, although they are so old that their history has been obscured.

Characteristics: Polish are an unusual and beautiful breed. They have a crest (some also possess a beard and muffs) and are small, tightly feathered birds, fairly active despite restricted vision due to their large “head gear.” They need plenty of space to avoid damaging each other’s crests by picking. Ice forming in their crests from drinking water can be a problem in colder weather. Sometimes their crests restrict vision and cause them to be easily frightened.

French

Houdans

Varieties: Mottled, White.

Standard weights: Cock, 8 pounds; hen, 6½ pounds; cockerel, 7 pounds; pullet, 5½ pounds.

Skin color: White.

Eggshell color: White.

Use: An ornamental fowl that is also a good egg producer and fairly good as a meat bird.

Origin: Houdans originated in France where they enjoy a good reputation as a high-class table fowl.

Characteristics: Houdans possess a crest, beard, and muffs and have five toes on each foot. Their rectangular bodies are set on fairly short legs. They are one of the better ornamental breeds for general utility use. Because of their crest, they require plenty of space and feed and water containers that prevent them from getting the crest wet and dirty, especially in cold weather. Because of the fifth toe, baby Houdans often walk with a skipping gait.

Faverolles

An interesting breed that combines a beard and muffs with a single comb and feathered legs and feet. Faverolles are a medium-sized breed and fairly loosely feathered, giving them a rather large appearance. They also have a fifth toe on each foot and while chiefly ornamental, do possess some utility characteristics as well.

Crevecoeurs

A very rare, crested breed, solid black in color, Crevecoeurs are strictly an ornamental fowl.

La Fleche

A very rare breed with a pair of spikes in place of a conventional comb. La Fleche are black, of medium size, and very active. They are strictly an ornamental fowl.

ALL OTHER STANDARD BREEDS CLASS

Games

Old English

Varieties: Black Breasted Red, Brown Red, Golden Duckwing, Silver Duckwing, Red Pyle, White, Black, Spangled.

Standard weights: Cock, 5 pounds; hen, 4 pounds; cockerel, 4 pounds; pullet, 3½ pounds.

Skin color: White.

Eggshell color: White or light tint.

Use: Old English Games are strictly an ornamental fowl.

Origin: Old English Games are the modern-day descendants of the ancient fighting cocks. They are associated with England, but their heritage is almost worldwide and they have changed little in shape or appearance in more than 1,000 years.

Characteristics: A small, tightly feathered bird, Old English Games are very hardy, extremely active, and very noisy. Old English have figured in the development of many other breeds. The mature cocks should be dubbed (have the comb and wattles removed) with a characteristic cut. This is in keeping with their heritage. Old English hens usually show broodiness but are so small and aggressive as well as defensive that they are not always the best choice as mothers. Old English are capable of considerable flight and may revert to a feral (wild) state in some areas. They are the domestic breed most like the old jungle fowl in appearance.

Modern Games

Varieties: Black Breasted Red, Brown Red, Golden Duckwing, Silver Duckwing, Birchen, Red Pyle, Black, White.

Standard weights: Cock, 6 pounds; hen, 4½ pounds; cockerel, 5 pounds; pullet, 4 pounds.

Skin color: White.

Eggshell color: White or light tint.

Use: Strictly an ornamental fowl.

Origin: Modern Games were developed in Great Britain.

Characteristics: A tightly feathered bird with long legs and neck, which give it a tall, slender appearance. The males of the Modern Games should have their combs and wattles removed to enhance their long, slim shape. The feathers of Modern Games should be short, hard, and held very close to their bodies. They do not stand cold weather well because of their short feathers and need plenty of exercise to maintain muscle tone.

Orientals

Malays

Varieties: Black Breasted Red.

Standard weights: Cock, 9 pounds; hen, 7 pounds; cockerel, 7 pounds; pullet, 5 pounds.

Skin color: Yellow.

Eggshell color: Brown.

Use: Strictly an ornamental fowl.

Origin: A very old breed coming from Asia, they have changed little in modern times.

Characteristics: Maylays are very tall and appear bold and perhaps cruel due to their projecting eyebrows. They are closely feathered with short feathers and carry their bodies inclined upward with tail low or drooping. They are rugged and have a reputation for vigor and long life. They require exercise to maintain muscle tone and hardness of feather. Most hens will go broody but are not a good choice because their long legs do not fit easily in a nest.

Sumatras

Varieties: None.

Standard weights: Cock, 5 pounds; hen, 4 pounds; cockerel, 4 pounds; pullet, 3½ pounds.

Skin color: Yellow.

Eggshell color: White or light tint.

Use: Strictly an ornamental fowl.

Origin: Sumatras come from the island of Sumatra from which they take their name.

Characteristics: Sumatras are a distinctive fowl which look less like domestic poultry than other chickens. They have rather long tails carried low enough to appear drooping. They have multiple spurs on each leg, dark purple faces, and a high degree of greenish luster on jet black plumage.

Cubalayas

A hardy bird developed in Cuba, they resemble a Sumatra in shape. Cubalayas exist in three varieties and should be considered a strictly ornamental fowl.

Miscellaneous Sultans

Sultans come from Turkey. They are strictly an ornamental fowl of very distinctive appearance. They have a large crest, muffs and beard, together with profuse feathering of the feet and legs.

Frizzles

While listed in the *Standard of Perfection* as a breed, frizzling is a genetic modification that can be easily introduced into any population of chickens. It causes each feather to curl back toward the bird's head instead of lying naturally pointed toward the tail.

Naked Necks Turkens

The Transylvania Naked Neck is often called Turken. Some people think it is a cross between a chicken and a turkey because of the unfeathered area on the neck. This skin turns red when exposed to the sun, further paralleling the turkey. However, this is actually the result of a single gene that affects the arrangement of feather-growing tracts over the chicken's body. It can be easily introduced into any breed. Turkens have no feathers on a broad band between the shoulders and the base of the skull. They also have a reduced number of feathers on their bodies, but this is not evident until the bird is handled. Turkens should be given protection from extremely cold temperatures as they have far less insulation than their normally feathered cousins. This characteristic is a novel feature that does not detract from the utility of the bird.

Araucanas

These fowls were discovered in South America. A few were brought to the United States but have been crossed with other chickens so much that characteristics of size, shape, etc., were dispersed. The trait of laying blue or greenish eggs persisted and now breeders are attempting to standardize the physical make-up of the population and gain them recognition as a breed. Some of the Araucanas were rumpless and possessed some interesting ear tufts. Probably at some time in the future, these fowls will be developed into an interesting breed with both economic and ornamental attributes.

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