

4-H Poultry Showmanship Questions



- *What is the function of the vent? Is it common to all poultry?**
It is the uro-genital opening of the bird, the external portion of the cloaca. All poultry have one. It is where the egg, uric acid and feces all exit.
- *In order for a female to lay eggs, does she need the presence of a male?**
No, only for fertile eggs to be produced.
- In what part of the hens reproductive tract is the shell produced?**
Uterus or shell gland
- What are the following?**
Pullet – young female
Hen – female that has laid eggs for about 6 months
Cockerel – young male
Rooster – mature male and capon is castrated male chicken
- *What is the importance of calcium in the diets of laying hens?**
Needed for the calcium of the egg shell
- *What precautions must be taken when you introduce new birds into your home flock?**
First check for disease, next quarantine for three weeks, and check for any symptoms.
- *What are the differences between the plumage of most adult male and female chickens?**
Male: long, sharp hackle feathers, saddle feathers and sickle feathers on tail
Female: short, blunt hackle feathers, no saddle feathers and no sickle feathers on tail.
- *Other than feathers, what other anatomical features are unique to the male chicken?**
Larger comb and wattles, coloring, spurs
- What are the major external parasites of poultry? How do you perform a parasite check on chickens or poultry?**
Lice and Mites, check vent, under wings, on skin under feathers by preen gland, general body area.
- If you found external parasites how should you treat them?**
Use *Sevin* powder or liquid, dust or spray birds and dust nest boxes.
- *What are the two other names for the breast bone of chickens?**
Sternum or Keel
- *How man eggs can a hen potentially lay in one year?**
365, one a day
- What categories of nutrients do chickens and other poultry require each day?**
Protein, carbohydrate, fat, minerals, vitamins, water
- What are the most common feed ingredients used in poultry diets in the United States?**
Corn and Soybean meal



- 15. It has been said that eggs are an almost perfect food, however they are missing one vitamin, what is it?**
Vitamin C
- 16. *Describe width and depth of body.**
Size of abdomen and body across the pelvic bones and ability to hold a forming egg
- 17. *What does width and depth of body indicate?**
Both are required for good egg layers
- 18. *Why do you measure flexibility of the pubic bones?**
To see if they will open enough for an egg to pass
- 19. *Why does the judge ask to see the feet and legs of birds?**
To check for deformities and disease and for parasites
- 20. What does "molt" mean relative to chickens?**
Lose feathers, reproduction stops, renews the bird for another reproduction cycle
- 21. *Why should birds be removed from and replaced into cages head first?**
Prevent possible wing damage, to maintain control
- 22. *What is the function of the uropygial (preen) gland?**
Produces an oily substance the bird wipes onto its feathers with its beak, for preening. In ducks and waterfowl it helps to waterproof their feathers.
- 23. Which nutrient should poultry have free access to at all times?**
Water
- 24. *Do chickens ever have teeth?**
Yes, egg tooth at hatch to help break through the shell
- 25. *What does "dual purpose" mean relative to chickens?**
Can be used for both meat and egg production, like Rhode Island Reds, New Hampshire's, White and Barred Plymouth Rocks, etc.
- 26. *What does "bleaching" mean relative to chickens?**
It refers to the order of loss of skin color in laying hens, particularly in Leghorn type birds, where the yellow pigment, xanthophyll, of the skin fades to white as the pigment is used to color the yolk. Order of bleaching: vent, eyering and ear lobes, beak bottom of feet, front of shanks, back of shanks, tops of toes, hock joints, when birds stop laying eggs they replace pigment in reverse order.
- 27. Where does the yellow color of the skin, beak and shanks of chickens come from?**
Xanthophyll from corn and grass they eat.
- 28. *What color eggs do Rhode Island Red's, New Hampshire's and Sex Linked chickens lay?**
Brown
- 29. *What breed(s) of chicken lay(s) blue-green eggs?**
Araucana and Ameraucana



30. What needs to be supplied in an artificial incubator to hatch eggs?

Heat, Humidity and Turning

31. How long in days is the incubation period for:

Chickens - 21

Turkeys - 28

Ducks – 28

Geese – 30-32

Muscovy Ducks – 33-35

32. At what temperature should most chicken eggs be incubated?

100°F

33. What is the purpose of turning eggs in an incubator?

Keep embryo from sticking to membranes and causing malformations of the embryo

34. Why should incubators be "fumigated" or "Disinfected" prior to use?

To remove any bacteria, virus or mold organisms that might infect the eggs being hatched

35. *How many eyelids does a chicken have? Why?

Three, upper, lower and nictating membrane which moves from the front to the rear of the eye and is clear.

36. *How many feather tracts to chickens have?

10- head, neck, shoulder, wings, breast, back, abdomen, rump, thigh and legs

37. *How many primary and secondary flight feathers do most chickens have?

10 primary and 14-18 secondary

38. What and where are the covert feathers?

Small feathers on wing, fill in spaces

39. *What is the function of the comb and wattles on chickens?

Sex differentiation, Identification and thermoregulation

40. *Where is the axial feather found and how many do chickens have?

On wings between primary and secondary flights, one on each wing.

41. How is *Salmonella pullorum* spread or transmitted?

Through the egg, either by organisms from the ovary or from shell contamination from contact with manure in the nest box.

42. *What are basic signs of good health in chickens?

Alert, active, clear eyes, good manure consistency and free from external parasites

43. How often should poultry flocks that are allowed access to outside for roaming or grazing be dewormed?

As often as needed, but at least twice a year, spring and fall.

- 44. For what disease of poultry should small flock owners be particularly aware of that can cause high mortality and be of great concern to commercial poultry growers?**
Avian Influenza
- 45. If you saw a lot of manure staining on the feathers just below the vent, what health related problem of your bird should you suspect?**
Diarrhea
- 46. Why is the problem described in # 45 of concern and how can it be treated?**
Diarrhea can lead to de-hydration and possible death. One needs to re-hydrate the bird by providing electrolytes and water and then determine why the bird had diarrhea in the first place and treat that. A high load of worms, coccidiosis or bacterial infection of the gut can often lead to diarrhea.
- 47. Sometimes in breeding flocks feather loss is noticed on the lower back and the back of the head of some females. What is the cause of this?**
When breeding, the males stand on the back of the females, and hold onto the feathers on the back of the head with their beak, causing loss of feathers in those areas.
- 48. Many starter feeds for chickens are labeled as "Medicated". What is the medication and for what reason is it in the feed?**
Amprolium or Coban (Monensin), and it is to help the bird build immunity to Coccidiosis, a protozoan disease of the digestive tract of birds. There are nine (9) different types of coccidiosis, so medicated feed is a good preventative measure.
- 49. What is the main difference between Starter Feed, Grower Feed and Layer Feed for feeding chicks, pullets and laying hens?**
Protein levels, Starter 18-19%CP, Grower 14-15% CP and Layer 16-17% CP.
- 50. *What is the difference between a broiler, a roaster and a capon?**
Broilers are young meat birds, usually processed at 6-8 weeks of age, roasters are usually 10-14 weeks of age and capons a castrated meat birds grown to about 18-20 weeks of age.
- 51. What is bumble foot?**
An infection in the foot pad of poultry, usually caused by *Staphylococcus aureus* from the manure.
- 52. If upon checking the sternum of a chicken it is found to be crooked, what nutritional deficiency disease could be the cause?**
Rickets, lack of calcium or phosphorous in the diet.
- 53. If checking the legs of the bird one finds that the scales on the shank are all crusty and bumpy and swollen, what might be the problem?**
Scaly leg mites. How is it treated? Dust with malathion or dip the legs in gasoline and then cover with petroleum jelly.
- 54. *Where is the crop of chickens and what is its function?**
The crop is an enlargement of the esophagus and it is located on the neck just above the junction with the body cavity. It holds the food the bird eats and slowly releases it to the rest of the digestive tract.
- 55. What is the ratio of males to females that will provide the best fertility for a laying flock, without having more males than necessary?**



About 1 male for every 10 females



56. *How many nest boxes should be provided for a flock of laying hens?

Usually 1 for each 5 hens

57. *How can one tell if baby chicks under a brooder stove or light have the proper temperature?

They are spread evenly under the light, not all bunched up or all far away from the heat source, or all to one side or another, which indicates a draft.

58. *In general, what temperature should be provided for growing chicks?

About 95°F for the first week and drop by 5° per week until at ambient temperature

59. How much floor space should be provided for standard and bantam adult laying hens reared on the floor?

About 1.5 - 2 sq. ft for standards and .75 to 1.5 sq. ft for bantams

60. What is "Biosecurity" and why is it important for your flock of birds?

Biosecurity means preventing infectious or disease causing organisms and other pests, like insects, rodents, etc., from coming in contact with your birds.

61. What is a good "Biosecurity" plan?

Keep a foot dip pan filled with disinfectant near the door to your coop and dip your shoes or boots prior to entering your facility. Also keep human traffic to a minimum, and do not allow contact with any sick birds, either directly or indirectly. It will prevent disease transmission to your birds and is very important.

62. What is the gizzard and what is its function?

The gizzard is also known as the ventriculus a part of the digestive system just behind the proventriculus, true stomach, and it is where the food is ground up by the chicken to aid in digestion and absorption.

63. What is cannibalism and how can it be prevented or reduced in your flock?

The pecking of one bird by another and it can cause injury and/or death. Prevent by beak trimming, use of specs or decreasing the density of your flock.

64. To keep a flock of laying hens producing eggs year round, what key environmental factor needs to be controlled and altered to meet the needs of the bird?

Light, maintain 16 hrs of light per day year round.

65. What gaseous product can be produced in manure that can be harmful to chickens?

Ammonia

66. How can you tell an adult male turkey from a female?

Beard and size of bird

*** signifies questions suitable for novice and junior showmen.**

Poultry Sample Questions from “Animals In Pursuit”

Q. What is barring on a chicken’s feather?

A. Two alternating colors on a feather, running across its width

Q. What commercial strain of layers is best for egg production?

A. White Leghorn strains

Q. How many geese will one acre of pasture support?

A. 20-40 birds

Q. To be eligible to be shown in a 4-H Poultry Show, chicken and poultry exhibitors must have a statement of origin or test negative for what disease?

A. Pullorum typhoid

Q. What is a castrated male chicken called?

A. Capon

Q. What is a male goose called?

A. Gander

Q. What is the term used to describe the horny mouthparts of a bird?

A. Beak

Q. Name a dual purpose breed of chicken.

A. Rhode Island Red, New Hampshire, What Rocks

Q. What is the average feed conversion for an eight week old market chicken?

A. 2 pounds of feed per pound of gain

Q. To be eligible for exhibition, an egg production pen should have been hatched before what date?

A. May 1

Q. What is the part of the hen’s reproductive system that produces the female germ cell and the yolk of the egg called?

A. Ovary

Q. What is a young goose called?

A. Gosling

Q. What does it mean when a bird is described as “close feathered”?

A. The feathers are held tight to the body

Q. Approximately how much feed will a Leghorn layer hen eat per year?

A. Approximately 90 pounds

Poultry Sample Questions from “Animals In Pursuit”

Q. A starter ration for market chickens should contain at least what percent of protein?

A. 22%

Q. How many areas will a judge consider when looking at a 4-H Poultry Showmanship Class?

A. 7

Q. What part of the hen’s reproductive system produces the white shell membranes and shell of the egg?

A. Oviduct

Q. What is a poult?

A. A young turkey

Q. What is a cockerel?

A. A male chicken under one year of age

Q. Approximately how many dozen eggs will a Leghorn hen lay per year?

A. 18 dozen

Q. What is the largest expense in raising market chickens?

A. Feed Costs

Q. Out of the 100 possible points a judge can give in a 4-H Poultry Showmanship Class, which area gets the most points?

A. Examination and Handling of Bird – 30 points

Q. How long is the incubation period for goose eggs?

A. 21 days

Q. What is the tube-like fleshy growth near the front of the top of the head in turkeys called?

A. Snood

Q. What is the fleshy protruding part on the top of the head of a fowl called?

A. Comb

Q. How many square feet of floor space should a Leghorn layer have?

A. 2-2 ½ square feet

Q. What percent of protein is recommended in a good poult starter ration?

A. 28%

Q. When removing a chicken from a cage, which end of the bird is brought out of the cage first?

A. Head

Poultry Sample Questions from “Animals In Pursuit”

Q. How long is the incubation period for chicken eggs?

A. 21 days

Q. What is the skin growing between the toes of waterfowl called?

A. Web

Q. What are the feathers called which cover the base of the primary and secondary wing and main tail feathers?

A. Coverts

Q. How many hours of daylight should a laying flock be provided?

A. 14 hours

Q. What is the most important ingredient in a good poultry feeding ration?

A. A constant supply of clean, fresh water

Q. What part of the body should ducks or geese never be caught by?

A. Legs

Q. How long is the incubation period for duck eggs?

A. 28 days

Q. What is a male turkey called?

A. Tom

Q. What is the round tuft of feathers on the top of the head of some chickens and ducks called?

A. Crest

Q. How old should ducklings be before being allowed outside?

A. 4 weeks

Q. What is the average feed conversion of an eight week old pekin duck?

A. 2.8 pounds of feed/pounds of gain

Q. When removing a duck or goose from a cage, which part of the body does an exhibitor grasp first?

A. The neck (loosely)

Q. What are the two types of incubators used to hatch poultry eggs?

A. Forced draft and still-air

Q. What is the soft, fine, fluffy covering of a young bird called?

A. Down

Poultry Sample Questions from “Animals In Pursuit”

Q. What is the enlarged part of the chickens gullet in which food stored temporarily and softened for digestion?

A. Crop

Q. What types of absorbent litter can be placed on the floor of a brooding area for ducklings?

A. Wood shavings, chopped straw, or peat moss

Q. What is the percent of protein that should be in feed fed to a flock of laying hens?

A. 16 to 18%

Q. What is the document called that is used by the American Poultry Association to describe purebred breeds of poultry?

A. The Standard of Perfection

Q. In a goose breeding flock, what is the ratio of males to female?

A. 1 male to 6 females

Q. What does it mean to dub the comb of a chicken?

A. To trim the comb (or wattles) close to the head

Q. What are the rear and side neck feathers of a bird called?

A. Hackles

Q. If using infrared heat bulbs for brooding a small number of ducklings, plan to use one 250 watt lamp for how many ducklings?

A. 30

Q. When a hen flock is laying at a 90% production level, how many pounds of feed does it take to produce one dozen eggs?

A. 3.2 pounds of feed per one dozen eggs

Q. When should show birds be washed?

A. Not less than 48 hours prior to the show

Q. What is the name of the common poultry disease prevented by putting a coccidostat in the feed?

A. Coccidiosis

Q. What is the process called in which old feathers are shed and new ones regrown?

A. Molt

Q. What is a female chicken over one year of age called?

A. Hen

Poultry Sample Questions from “Animals In Pursuit”

Q. What are the names of two of the four basic parts of an egg?

A. Shell, shell membranes, the albumen and the yolk

Q. What important mineral is needed by hens for egg shell formation?

A. Calcium

Q. What temperature should the wash water and rinse water be for washing show birds?

A. Wash water - 90° and rinse water - 85° F

Q. What is the best disease prevention in a poultry flock?

A. Good sanitation

Q. What is a female chicken less than 1 year of age called?

A. Pullet

Q. Where is the keel on a chicken located?

A. On the lower portion of the breast bone

Q. At what weight are geese normally slaughtered?

A. 11-15 pounds

Q. What feed ingredients can provide energy in a feed ration?

A. Corn, coats, barley and other small grains

Q. What can be used to polish the chanks, feet, beak, combs and wattles of show birds?

A. Mineral oil or petroleum jelly

Q. What is the name given to crosses of chickens that result in male chicks of one color and female chicks of another color?

A. Sex-link crosses

Q. What is the cloaca of a bird?

A. The common chamber or receptacle for the digestive, urinary and reproductive systems

Q. What is the collective term for the feather covering of a bird?

A. Plumage

Q. What temperature is recommended for brooding day old chicks?

A. 90-95° F

Q. For economical egg production, which type of bird is usually the most efficient, leghorn-type layers or brown-egg layers?

A. Leghorn-type layers

Poultry Sample Questions from “Animals In Pursuit”

Q. On the 4-H Poultry Showmanship Scorecard, how many points are given for knowledge of poultry terms?

A. 20 points

Q. How long should a breeding flock of chickens be mated before hatching eggs are saved?

A. 2 weeks

Q. What is the purpose of debeaking a chicken or turkey?

A. To prevent feather pulling or cannibalism