



## For the Beginner How a Poultry Showroom for "Purebred Exhibition Poultry" is Set Up for APA and ABA "sanctioned" shows



Photo's are of a showroom before all of the birds have been checked in.

**Are you visiting OR showing "purebred exhibition poultry" show?**

**Hopefully this will help you understand what you are seeing when you walk in and see all those cages in rows for the first time.**

### HOW IS A SANCTIONED SHOWROOM LAID OUT AND WHAT WILL I SEE?

Poultry shows are generally open to four types of fowl recognized by the American Poultry Association (APA) and the American Bantam Association (ABA). Each club has a book listing the breeds that are accepted by each association. The American Standard of Perfection published by the APA is one book and the Bantam Standard published by the ABA is the second book.

Chickens, turkeys, guineas and all types of waterfowl are shown at most shows but chickens are the most common. It may appear at first glance that there are wall-to-wall cages in no particular order. *However*, they are in order, someone has worked hard to organize and layout the cage set up. The pattern may not be apparent, but once you know what you are looking at, it will start to make sense.

The first thing you will notice is there is row after row after row of cages. Some of the cages are bigger than other cages. The reason for this is there are very large birds and very small birds. As you walk along the cages you might even notice that some of the small birds look almost identical to the large birds except for the size. The large birds are known as large fowl and the small birds are known as bantams.

A few types of birds come only in one size; either large fowl or bantam, but several breeds can be both. The relationship is similar to toy or miniature dogs and their "normal" size counterparts. For example: a toy Poodle, a miniature Poodle or a standard Poodle.

The goal of a breeder is to have virtually the same bird, except for size. Typically large fowl will weigh in at 6 to 12 pounds while a bantam will weigh 2 to 3 pounds. Large fowl are the standard size for a chicken, what you are used to seeing in a backyard if you visit a farm, but bantams are popular because they are smaller, easier to handle, take up less space, eat less food and still provide many of the benefits of owning chickens. In the showroom large fowl and bantams will be shown in separate areas of the showroom. The same with different breeds of waterfowl, turkeys & Guineas.

### **WHAT DOES IT MEAN WHEN A SHOW IS SANCTIONED by the APA and/or the ABA?**

Sanctioning a poultry show means that the poultry club putting the show together have joined with the American Poultry Association and/or the American Bantam Association to host a poultry show following the rules and guidelines of these associations. This means the host club must hire licensed poultry judges to judge all birds in the showroom and the showroom will be set up according to classes set forth in the "Standards" set forth by these associations.

Many local county fairs, some state fairs do not sanction their shows and do not hire licensed judges. Therefore, they do not have to meet a particular standard of laying out a showroom and birds may not be judged according to the American Poultry Association or American Bantam club standards.

At your local county fairs & some other shows the standard for judging what are considered commercial or production birds (egg layers & meat pens) is completely different than judging "purebred exhibition" birds.

### **WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY CLASSES? (see Breed & Breed Classes)**

The next thing you may notice is that the cages are set up with all of one breed located in one area. This is because the showroom is set up by classes. *There are several breeds in one "class".*

For example: In the English Class is breeds such as Orrington's, Dorking's, Cornish, Sussex, Australorp's and Red Caps. Therefore, when you are walking down an aisle you will see all of these breeds in the row. Many shows are now putting signs on the top of a row of cages to designate the type of class you are looking at.

In the large fowl classes the classes are named after the area of origin of these breeds. You will notice an American Class, Asiatic Class, English Class, Mediterranean Class, Continental Class and an All Other Standard Breed Class (ASOB).

In the bantam classes they are named after physical characteristics. These include Game Bantams, Single Comb Clean Legged (S.C.C.L.), Rose Comb Clean Legged (R.C.C.L.), All Other Comb Clean Legged (A.O.C.C.L.), and Feather Legged Classes.

### **WHAT IS THAT TAG HANGING ON EACH CAGE? (see reading a coop tag)**

These are called "coop tags". On the tag it will tell you what breed the bird is, what *color* it's supposed to be (*known as variety* in the poultry hobby) and at the very bottom is a number that is assigned to the person that owns this particular bird. It also tells you the approximate age of the bird. Cock is a male over 1 year old, Cockere is a male under 1 year old, Hen is a female over 1 year old and Pullet is the female under 1 year old.

If you look at a breed you will find that there are often many *color patterns* represented, this color pattern is *known by the term "variety"*. For example: everyone outside the poultry hobby is familiar with Barred Rocks.....did you know these are actually the breed "Plymouth Rocks" – of the barred variety (color)? A Plymouth Rock can be barred, white, buff, silver penciled, partridge, Columbian or blue. Each of these varieties has distinctive traits that set it apart from other varieties. You may find some of the same varieties appearing in a number of breeds, for example, there are also Buff Cochins, Buff Cornish and Buff Orrington's as well as a few other breeds.

*The American Poultry Association Standard of Perfection* will list the characteristics of all breeds of fowl and the *ABA Bantam Standard* will list each characteristic for just the bantam sizes.