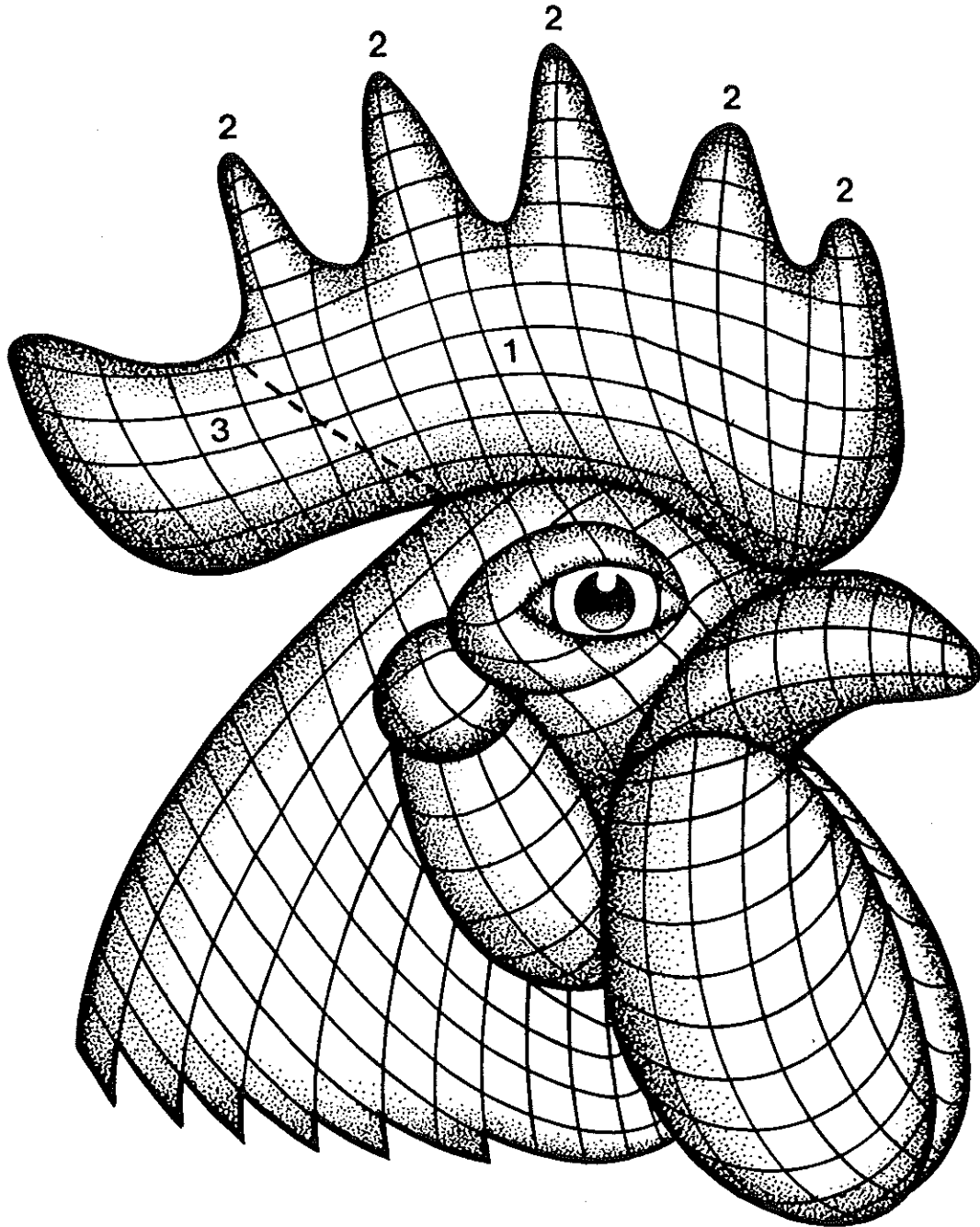


# Selecting and Grooming 4-H Exhibition Poultry

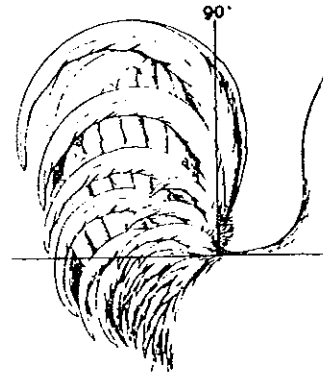


Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Leo E. Lucas, Director of Cooperative Extension Service, University of Nebraska, Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources.





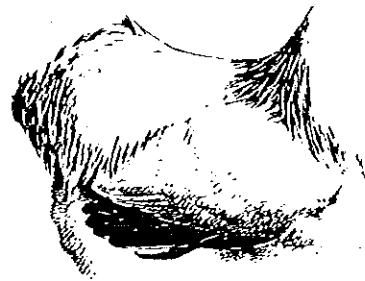
**FIGURE 5.**  
Split Tail.  
Abnormal or sub-normal  
feather development in  
young birds a defect — in  
old birds a disqualification



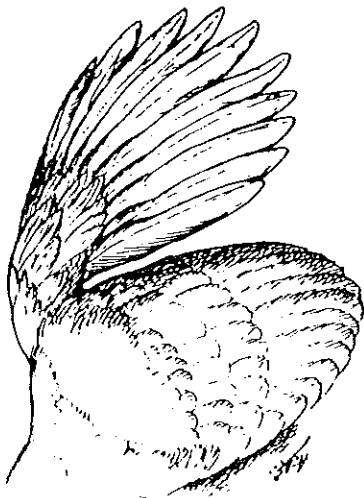
**FIGURE 8.**  
Squirrel Tail.  
(A disqualification except  
in Japanese Bantams)



**FIGURE 6.**  
Split Comb  
Showing the tendency of  
the blade to divide  
perpendicularly.



**FIGURE 9.**  
Slipped Wing and  
Twisted Feather



**FIGURE 7.**  
Split Wing.



**FIGURE 10.**  
Vulture Hocks  
(as shown, a  
disqualification, except in  
Sultans and some breeds of  
feather legged Bantams).



**Pea Comb**



**Strawberry Comb**



**Sultans Head, Male**  
1-1, V-shaped Comb;  
2, Crest; 3, Muffs;  
4, Beard



**Cushion-Comb**



**Buttercup Comb**

### **Training**

The first step in showing is to "tame" or train your bird so it will be accustomed to being handled and examined by the judge. If you plan to participate in a showmanship contest this training will be essential. The training can be accomplished by working with your bird daily. This will accustom the bird to being caught and examined.

Whenever the opportunity presents itself, place the bird in a judging cage so it will become accustomed to being closely confined. At this time teach the bird to pose while in the cage. You want the bird to hold its head up. Do this by lightly lifting the beak with your index finger or judging stick. Also, lift the wing tips up if they start to droop. This training can go on during the entire year but must be started at least a month before you plan to show your bird. When the bird does what you want you can reward it with some grain or pellets that it likes. Then, as the bird tames down, you can begin to work with it outside the cage, such as on a flat table as is done in showmanship.

### **Show Preparation**

Now that you have your birds selected and trained you are ready to prepare for the show. To prepare the birds you will need to clean (wash) and groom the birds. The birds should be washed 48 hours before the show.

played. As you go through your routine, point out any strong or weak points your bird may have. These would include structural faults, like crooked toes or crooked back, or mis-marked feathers in particular breeds. The routine should last no longer than 10 minutes, and 5 to 7 minutes is preferable. Remember, it's not the quality of bird that's being judged but your ability to show the bird and your knowledge about the bird.

Steps in poultry showmanship:

1. Remove your bird from the coop and carry it to the judging table. Figure 14 shows the proper way to carry your bird. The bird should be carried in the palm of your hand with one leg held between the thumb and index finger and the other between the middle and ring finger. The bird will feel relaxed and comfortable in this position. You may use either hand depending on whether you are right- or left-handed. Place the bird on the judge's table and keep the bird under your control.
2. When the judge approaches you it is time to show your bird. Start your presentation with an introduction of yourself and your bird (Figure 15). Your introduction might go something like this:  
"I am contestant number 2046 and my bird is a Barred Plymouth Rock Cockerel. These birds are a good utility bird producing both eggs and meat." You might make any comments you feel necessary. Remember to keep it brief.  
Start with the head (Figure 16). Hold the bird up at approximately eye level. Use the thumb and finger of your free hand to turn the bird's head. Make comments on the features of the head such as color of wattles, shape of head, etc. and any defects or outstanding features.
3. Spread the wings next. This will show the color patterns if they exist. You will also show feather conditions and any feathers that might be missing (Figure 17). Comment on the color of wing feathers at this



FIGURE 14.



FIGURE 15.



FIGURE 19.



FIGURE 20.

7. Show tail carriage by flipping the bird quickly up and down. Do not do this with a lot of force but gently and your bird will fan its tail out and then let it return to a normal position (Figure 21). At this time examine the tail feathers for proper color and condition.
8. Return your bird to the table and pose it for the judge (Figure 22). Give the judge time to see your bird then pick it up and ask the judge if he or she has any questions.

Some guidelines which might help you.

1. Begin working your bird several weeks before you plan to show.
2. Be clean and well groomed and have proper clothing; no shorts, sandals, tank tops, or jewelry.
3. Speak clearly and loud enough for judge to hear and understand you. Look at the judge when talking to him or her.
4. Show your bird and not yourself to the judge.



FIGURE 21.

## SCORE CARD FOR POULTRY SHOWMANSHIP

Exhibitor Number: \_\_\_\_\_

<i>Possible Points</i>	<i>Points Awarded</i>	
10		1. Introduction
20		2. Grooming and condition of bird
5		3. Routine in any order should be smooth
5		A. Examination of head, wattle, etc.
5		B. Wings, color pattern, condition of feathers, check for lice or mite damage.
5		C. Show width of back, undercolor.
5		D. Check keel bone, breast, feather color, undercolor.
5		E. Feet, toes, shank.
5		F. Tail, proper carriage, condition.
5		G. Place bird on table and pose for judge.
20		4. Exhibitor's appearance and attitude
15		5. Exhibitor's speaking ability and knowledge of subject
100		<b>Total</b>