
EXPERIMENT 8 JUDGING AND CULLING OF LAYERS

Structure

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8.1 INTRODUCTION

Not all the chicks brought into a layer farm becomes a good laying bird. Several factors both external (outside) and internal (inside the body of a bird) may make them a poor layer. But, from the farmer's point of view, retaining a poor layer is not economical. Therefore, it is necessary to identify them as early as possible and remove them from the farm. This process is popularly referred to as "Judging" or "Culling" of layers.

Objectives

After performing this experiment, you will be able to:

- distinguish between good and poor layer; and
- identify and cull sick birds from the farm.

8.2 EXPERIMENT

8.2.1 Principle

Good layers will have different hormonal levels than the poor ones and while laying eggs, she makes certain changes in her body which can be identified when a layer is handled. Depending on these, a guide to identify good layers is developed which can be used by the farmers to remove (cull) poor layers early and minimize economic losses. This is undertaken at 26 to 28 weeks of age when most of the birds are expected to have started laying.

8.2.2 Requirements

- Flock of layer type birds

8.2.3 Procedure

- 1) Visit a layer farm.
- 2) Identify a bird and handle it properly as described in Experiment 3.

- 3) Observe for the condition of comb, eyes, vent, distance between two pubic bones, distance between tip of the breastbone and pubic bones and moulting pattern.
- 4) Note down your observation.
- 5) Give your opinion about the type of the layer bird you observed (whether a good layer or poor layer or a non-layer) based on the judging characteristics given in Table 8.1.

Table 8.1: Judging Characteristics Between Good, Poor and Non-layers

Particulars	Good Layer	Poor Layer	Non-Layer
Comb	Large, red, warm	Small, less warm, shrunken	Underdeveloped
Eyes	Big, bright and active	Comparatively looks smaller and less active	Appears dull and inactive
Vent	Oblong, moist and pink	Less oblong, may be moist and pink	Round, dry and has a yellow ring
Distance between two pubic bones	At least three fingers	Less than 3 fingers	Maximum one finger
Distance between tip of the breastbone and pubic bones	At least four fingers, the region being soft and pliable	Less than 4 fingers, not very soft	Hardly two fingers, very hard and rubbery
Moulting pattern	Not applicable	Moult early and slowly	Moult late and faster

8.2.4 Observations

- i) Comb
- ii) Eyes
- iii) Vent
- iv) Distance between two pubic bones
- v) Distance between tip of the breastbone and pubic bones
- vi) Moulting pattern

8.2.5 Results

- i) The given bird is a layer.
- ii) The given bird (should or should not) be culled from the flock.

8.3 PRECAUTIONS

- Layers should not be subjected to violent handling.
- Layers should never be held in the inverted position for more than half to one minute.