Poultry Breed choices for small farms

Jon Moyle
Have a goal

- Select the breed that best fits your goals
  - Breed Preservation – keeping breeds from going extinct
  - Dual-purpose – both meat and eggs
  - Meat production
  - Egg production
  - Developing your own breed – when you just can’t find a breed that meets your goals
  - Showing birds for competition
Know your market

- If you are producing meat, what do your customers want
  - Yellow or white skin
  - Large plump breast or lots of dark meat
- For egg production consider
  - Size of the eggs
  - Color of the eggs
    - White, green, brown, dark brown, tinted or blue
Introduction

- Chickens are traditionally classified into groups based on:
  - Size
  - Where they come from
  - Shape
  - Color

Keith Bramwell
Introduction

- Chickens come in two sizes;
  - Standard or Large fowl
    - These are the normal size birds
  - Bantam – A miniature size chicken or duck, usually about \( \frac{1}{4} \) of the regular size
    - Used mainly as ornamental birds
    - Most are miniature copies of the large breeds
      - Silkies have no large counterpart
      - Some do have good egg production
      - Eggs are small

https://www.backyardchickens.com/a/brahmas-chicken-breed-page
Terminology

- **Class**
  - Typically refers to groups of birds from a common geographical area
    - American, Asiatic, English, Mediterranean, Continental and All Other Standard Breeds

- **Breed**
  - Birds within a class that differ in body shape or size, skin color, the number of toes or feathering of the shanks
Terminology

- **Variety**
  - Birds within a breed that differ in feather color or pattern, or in the type of comb

- **Strain**
  - Birds within a variety that are developed for specific traits using breeder programs
    - Egg production
    - Meat production
    - Color of eggs

http://4hembryology.psu.edu/c-biology.html
Other Important Terms

- Broody – this is when the hen wants to set on the eggs and hatch them
  - Includes taking care of the young as well
- Forage – the ability to find their own feed
Other Things to Consider

- Climate
  - Some chickens do better in cold areas others do better in hot areas
    - Mediterranean breeds generally do well in hot humid areas
    - Most American breeds do better in cool areas
  - Usually birds with large combs will perform better in hot areas
    - Combs can get frost bite
    - Some breeds have varieties with different combs
      - Use a small comb variety in cold areas
Breed Preservation

• If you are interested in raising a rare breed then this may be for you
• The American Livestock Breeds Conservancy has a list of poultry that are disappearing at an alarming rate along with ways to find them
  • [http://albc-usa.org/](http://albc-usa.org/)
Breed Groups

- For convenience breeds have been divided into groups based on their productive attributes
  - Dual-Purpose
  - Meat Production
  - Egg Production
  - Designing your own
  - Some sources of chicks
Dual-purpose

- These breeds were developed to lay a reasonable number of eggs and still produce a good carcass
- Egg production and growth are negatively correlated, this means in selecting for growth you lose egg production and in selecting for eggs you lose size and growth rate
- They are what we think of when we talk about the traditional farm chicken
## Dual Purpose

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Breed</th>
<th>Egg Production</th>
<th>Egg Size</th>
<th>Egg Color</th>
<th>Disposition</th>
<th>Foraging Ability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plymouth Rock</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Brown</td>
<td>Calm</td>
<td>Fair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhode Island Red</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Brown</td>
<td>Calm</td>
<td>Fair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominique</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Brown</td>
<td>Calm</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delaware</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Brown</td>
<td>Calm</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wyandotte</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Brown</td>
<td>Calm</td>
<td>Fair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brahma</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Brown</td>
<td>Calm</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orpington</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Brown</td>
<td>Calm</td>
<td>Poor-Fair</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Plymouth Rock

- Developed in America in the middle 19th century.
- Foundation breeds used were Dominique, Java, Cochin, and perhaps the Malay and Dorking.
- Barred Rock first and most popular Plymouth Rock.
Plymouth Rock

- Varieties
  - Barred
  - White
  - Buff
  - Partridge
  - Silver Penciled
  - Blue
  - Columbian
Plymouth Rock

- Skin color:
  - yellow

- Egg shell color:
  - Brown

- Size:
  - Roosters ~ 8 – 9.5 pounds
  - Hens ~ 6 – 7.5 pounds

[Source: http://chickenbreedslist.com/Plymouth-Rock.html]
[Further information: http://www.bornfreeeggs.com/faq.php]
Plymouth Rock

- Commercial use
  - Dual purpose breed, used for both meat and eggs
  - Used as a foundation stock for commercial meat strains
  - Some selected more for egg production
- Characteristics
  - Good general farm chicken
  - May show broodiness and can be good mothers
  - Calm, but poor foragers
Plymouth Rock

- Utilized to produce modern broiler strains
  - 1920’s began use to select for meat production
  - Commercial broiler breeders used the White Plymouth Rock to produce the female line
Rhode Island Red

- Developed in the New England States of Massachusetts and Rhode Island in the very early 1900’s
- Foundation breeds are the black-breasted Malay Game, Leghorn, and Asiatic stock
- Currently the state bird of Rhode Island

http://www.livingthecountrylife.com/animals/poultry/raising-rhode-island-red-chickens/

http://www.poultryhelp.com/rirpics.html

http://www.howdobuildachickenhouse.com/choosing-a-good-laying-chicken/
Rhode Island Red

- Varieties:
  - Comb type
    - Single comb
    - Rose Comb
  - Color
    - Red
    - White

http://www.backyardchickens.com/products/rhode-island
Rhode Island Red

- Skin color:
  - Yellow

- Egg Shell color:
  - Brown to dark brown

- Size:
  - Roosters ~ 7.5 – 8.5 pounds
  - Hens ~ 5.5 – 6.5 pounds
Rhode Island Red

- Commercial use
  - General purpose breed, although used more for eggs than meat
  - Will lay through moderate cold weather
- Characteristics
  - Tough, resistant to illness
  - Good foraging, free range
  - Docile, quiet, friendly
    - Roosters can be aggressive
Rhode Island Red

- Utilized to produce many modern hybrids
  - Cinnamon queens, Bovans, sex-links, Red Stars, production reds, etc.

http://www.churchmans.co.uk/chickens.shtml
Dominique

- Little reliable information is available on the origin of this breed
- Considered the oldest ‘American’ breeds, possibly from Asiatic and Hamburg bloodlines
Dominique

- Skin color:
  - Yellow

- Egg shell color:
  - Brown

- Size:
  - Roosters: 6 – 7 pounds
  - Hens: 4 – 5 pounds

http://www.blueprintfinder.com/plymouth-rock-chickens.html
Dominique

- Dual purpose bird for meat and eggs
- Medium weight, very pleasant farm bird
- Good foragers, and can go broody


http://www.backyardchickens.com/breeds/images/breeds/nominque/dominique-36723678616.jpg

http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/5c/DominiqueCockZeus.JPG
Delaware

- Egg shell color:
  - Brown

- Size:
  - Roosters 8.5 pounds
  - Hens 6.5 pounds

http://chickenbreedslist.com/Delaware.html
Delaware

- Developed in 1940 by crossing off-colored Barred Plymouth Rock males and New Hampshire females

- Comb type:
  - Single comb

- Skin color:
  - Yellow
Delaware

- Commercial use:
  - Great for meat production
  - Good layers of large brown eggs

- Characteristics:
  - Calm disposition
  - Fast growing
  - Good at foraging for feed
Wyandotte

- Originated in New York State in the late 1800’s with the original Silver Laced Wyandotte known as ‘American Sebrights’ or ‘Sebright Cochins’
- Foundation breeds were the Dark Brahma and the Spangled Hamburg
Wyandotte

- Varieties:
  - Silver Laced
  - Golden Laced
  - White
  - Buff
  - Partridge
  - Silver Penciled
  - Columbian
  - Blue

http://www.rarebreedauctions.com/102019,auction_id,auction_details

http://www.backyardchickens.com/breeds/wyandottes.html

Wyandotte

- **Skin color:**
  - Yellow

- **Egg shell color:**
  - Very light to rich brown shell

- **Size:**
  - Roosters 7.5 – 8.5 pounds
  - Hens 5.5 – 6.5 pounds

http://helenmarylesshankman.files.wordpress.com/2011/06/chickens.jpg

Wyandotte

- Commercial use:
  - Medium weight, dual purpose breed for utility of meat and eggs as well as show
  - Does well in colder climates due to body shape and style
- Characteristics:
  - Relatively docile and a good overall bird
  - Does better in cooler climates
Brahma

• Asiatic breed originating from China in the mid 1800’s
• Foundation breeds were the Malay and the Cochin
• Very large heads and loose feathers are consistent characteristics
Brahma

- Varieties:
  - Light
  - Dark
  - Buff

- Comb type:
  - Pea

http://www.sustainablefarmer.com/profiles/brahma.html
Brahma

- Skin color:
  - Yellow

- Egg shell color:
  - Light to dark brown

- Size:
  - Roosters 10 – 12 pounds
  - Hens 8 – 9.5 pounds

Brahma

- **Commercial use:**
  - General purpose fowl for heavy meat production
  - Slow growing but large birds
  - Do well in cool climates due to heavy feathering on body and shanks and comb type

- **Characteristics:**
  - Slow moving birds with deep vocalizations
  - Calm birds that forage well
  - Will go broody

http://www.perkiomencreekranch.com/Felines%20&%20Chickens.htm/
Silkie

- Very old breed that originated in the Far East
  - Mentioned by Marco Polo
- Have several unique features
  - Hair-like feathers
  - 5 toes
  - Black skin, combs, wattles, bones, and meat
  - Come in both bearded and non-bearded varieties
- Available in lots of colors and patterns

Silkie

• Have a walnut comb
• Egg shell color is white

• Size:
  • Silkies are actually bantam chickens with no large counterpart
  • Roosters 36 oz.
  • Hens 32 oz.
Silkie

- Commercial use:
  - Excellent mother hens
  - Used to hatch eggs of other breeds
  - Good layers of small white eggs
  - Can be crossed with larger birds to produce a black skinned bird for specialty markets

- Characteristics:
  - Calm disposition
  - Make good pets
  - Not good foragers

Orpington

- Originated in England in the late 1800’s
- Foundation stock produced from Black Langshan, Black Minorca, and Black Plymouth Rock bloodlines
- Cochin bloodline introduced as new varieties were added
- Large frame, very loose feathering (fluff)
Orpington

- Varieties:
  - Buff
  - Black
  - White
  - Blue

- Comb type:
  - Single
Orpington

- Skin color:
  - White

- Egg shell color:
  - Light to dark brown

- Size:
  - Roosters 8.5 – 10 pounds
  - Hens 7 – 8 pounds
Orpington

- **Commercial use:**
  - General purpose fowl for heavy meat production and eggs
  - Often go broody and can be used as natural incubators

- **Characteristics:**
  - Calm, docile birds but don’t forage well
  - ‘Extra’ feathering can cause breeding and cleanliness issues

Meat Breeds

- These birds produce a great carcass
- They do not lay well
# Meat Breeds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Breed</th>
<th>Growth Rate</th>
<th>Skin Color</th>
<th>Disposition</th>
<th>Foraging Ability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cornish</td>
<td>Slow-Medium</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>Calm</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jersey Giant</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>Calm</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Hampshire</td>
<td>Fast</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>Calm</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom Rangers</td>
<td>Fast</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>Calm</td>
<td>Fair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modern Broilers</td>
<td>Very Fast</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>Calm</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Cornish

• Originated in England in the late 1800’s and often called “Indian Game”
• Foundation bloodlines include: Aseel, Black Red Old English Game, and Malay
• Male and female body conformation similar, feathers lay very close to body

http://www.heritagefoodsusa.com/farmers/poultry.html
Cornish

- Varieties:
  - Dark
  - White
  - White Laced Red
  - Buff

- Comb type:
  - Pea
Cornish

- Skin color:
  - Yellow

- Egg shell color:
  - Brown

- Size:
  - Roosters 8.5 - 10.5 pounds
  - Hens 6.5 - 8 pounds

Cornish

- Commercial use:
  - Super heavy meat producing fowl
  - Valuable for crossing with other breeds to produce market poultry

- Characteristics:
  - Can be very aggressive (game birds)
  - Aggressive eaters
  - Poor foragers

http://fastgrowtheweeds.com/2008/04/03/on-chickens-and-meat-birds/
Java

- Second oldest American breed

- Varieties:
  - Black
  - White
  - Mottled

- Comb type:
  - Single
Java

- Egg shell color:
  - Brown

- Size:
  - Roosters 9.5 pounds
  - Hens 7.5 pounds

Java

- Commercial use:
  - Heavy meat producing fowl

- Characteristics:
  - Calm disposition
  - Hens are good brooders
  - Cold hardy
  - Very good foragers
Jersey Giant

- Varieties:
  - Black
  - White

- Comb type:
  - Large single comb

- Skin color:
  - Yellow
Jersey Giant

- Egg shell color:
  - Brown

- Size:
  - Roosters 13 pounds
  - Hens 10 pounds

http://www.lesblancs.co.uk/animal&poultry.htm
Jersey Giant

- **Commercial use:**
  - Super heavy meat producing fowl
  - Fair layers of extra large eggs

- **Characteristics:**
  - Calm disposition
  - Slow growing and have a poor feed conversion
  - Not good at foraging for feed

Naked Neck

- Sometimes incorrectly called ‘Turkens’, it is not a breed, but a genetic trait
- Genetics first appeared in Eastern Hungary but reached its perfection in Germany
- Trait can be added to any breed
Naked Neck

- Birds must have very distinct areas of bare skin on the neck
- Other traits vary dependent upon original breed characteristics
- Trait will express itself upon crossing in the first generation

http://www.omlet.us/breeds/breeds.php?breed_type=chickens&breed=Naked+Neck

Naked Neck

- Commercial use:
  - Used primarily for meat production
  - Possess less than half the feathers of commercial birds, provides smooth skin and easy plucking
  - Fewer feathers make them more heat tolerant

http://reocities.com/Petsburgh/6624/
http://farmerjon67.wordpress.com/
New Hampshire

- Developed in New Hampshire from Rhode Island Reds that were selected only for growth (not color or egg production)

- Comb type:
  - Single comb

- Skin color:
  - Yellow
New Hampshire

- Egg shell color:
  - Brown

- Size:
  - Roosters  8.5 pounds
  - Hens     6.5 pounds

http://www.ansi.okstate.edu/breeds/poultry/chickens/newhampshirered/
New Hampshire

- Commercial use:
  - Great for meat production
  - Mature early
  - Fair egg production

- Characteristics:
  - Fast growing
  - Usually calm by can be aggressive
  - Poor at foraging
Broiler (Cornish Cross)

- Commercial broilers have been selected for increased growth rate since the early 1900’s
- Foundation stock were the Barred and White Plymouth Rocks and Cornish breeds
Broiler (Cornish Cross)

- 90% of the increased growth rate is due to better genetics of the birds
- The rest is due to nutrition
- Hormones have **never** been used!
- Some lines of broilers have white skin so if you are looking for that it is available
- Broilers are very efficient at converting feed to meat
Broiler (Cornish Cross)

- Several choices are available internationally, but fewer in the US
  - US market
    - Cobb, Aviagen
    - Hubbard, Heritage Farms
    - Pureline, Peterson
  - International market, same companies but a greater variety of products
    - Colored birds, naked neck, slow growing, etc.
Freedom Rangers

- These are an alternative to modern broilers
- Developed in France in the 1960’s
- Ready for processing at 12 weeks
- Comb type:
  - Single comb
- Skin color:
  - Yellow
Freedom Rangers

- Commercial use:
  - Great for meat production
  - Mature early
  - Poor egg production

- Characteristics:
  - Fast growing
  - Usually calm
  - Good at foraging

Jon Moyle 2011
Egg layers

- Great at laying eggs
- Birds grow slowly and produce a carcass that lacks meat
## Egg Layers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Breed</th>
<th>Egg Production</th>
<th>Egg Size</th>
<th>Egg Color</th>
<th>Disposition</th>
<th>Foraging Ability</th>
<th>Broody</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leghorn</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Very Active</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minorca</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>X Large</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Active</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australorp</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Brown</td>
<td>Calm</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ancona</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Active</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ameraucana</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Blue-green</td>
<td>Calm</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamburg</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Very Active</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fayoumi</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>Tinted White</td>
<td>Very Active</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Some</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maran</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Bark Brown</td>
<td>Active</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex-link</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Brown</td>
<td>Calm</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Leghorn

- Original breed came from Italy in the mid 1800’s
- Other varieties developed in England, Denmark, and America
- Production stock and show stock have very different characteristics

http://houseoffeathers.net/photo-gallery/leghorn.aspx
Leghorn

- Varieties:
  - Color:
    - White, Black
    - Buff, Red
    - Silver, Columbian, Duckwing
    - Light Brown, Dark Brown

- Comb types:
  - Single
  - Rose
Leghorn

- Skin color:
  - Yellow

- Egg shell color:
  - White

- Size:
  - Roosters: 5 lbs.
  - Hens: 4 lbs.
  - Bantam: 24 oz, 20 oz
Leghorn

- Commercial use:
  - Egg production only!
  - Very prolific, efficient and economical producers of table eggs

- Characteristics:
  - Very high energy, active
  - Will forage over large areas
  - Will not go broody!
Minorca

- Breed developed in England from Spanish Castilian Fowl
- Largest and heaviest of Mediterranean breeds, very sturdy frames
- Large head, comb and wattles
- Similar to WF Black Spanish and Andalusians


www.allaboutchickens.tk
Minorca

- Varieties:
  - Color:
    - Black
    - White
    - Buff
  - Comb type:
    - Single
    - Rose

http://www.mypetchicken.com/chicken-breeds/Minorca-B73.aspx

http://www.mcmurrayhatchery.com/black_minorcas.html
Minorca

- Skin color:
  - White

- Egg shell color:
  - Chalk white

- Size: Standard Bantam
  - Roosters 9 lbs. 32 oz
  - Hens 7 lbs. 26 oz

http://www.poultpages.com/minorca.html
Minorca

- Commercial use:
  - Excellent producer of large white eggs
  - Unique blend of large lean frame and egg production
  - May not be as good in cold climates

- Characteristics:
  - Somewhat flighty and full of energy
  - Forage well
Ancona

- Originated in the city of Ancona in Italy
- Original bloodlines from other Italian breeds and Leghorn type fowl
- Came to the United States in the late 1800’s
Anconas

- Varieties:
  - Color:
    - Black mottled
    - Red mottled
  - Comb type:
    - Single
    - Rose

http://www.wilkamdai.com/breed_of_the_mont_h_poultry_ancona.html

http://www.mcmurrayhatchery.com/anconas.html
Anconas

- Skin color: Yellow
- Egg shell color: White
- Size:
  - Roosters: 6 lbs.
  - Hens: 4 lbs.
  - Bantam: 26 oz, 22 oz
Ancona

- Commercial use:
  - Excellent egg producers
  - Good mix of visual appeal and production
  - Very ‘leghorn like’

- Characteristics:
  - Can be flighty and high energy birds
  - Great at foraging
  - Rarely go broody
Australorp

- Developed in Australia primarily for egg production
- Foundation bloodline is only the Black Orpington. Basically, it is an Australian bred Orpington selected for egg production and not meat
- Smaller than the Orpington as a result of selection for egg production
Australorp

- Skin color:
  - White

- Egg shell color:
  - Light brown

- Size: Standard Bantam
  - Roosters 8 lbs. 30 oz
  - Hens 6 lbs. 26 oz

http://www.fowlvisions.com/?p=323
http://www.longmeadowranch.com/Gardens/Egg-laying-Poultry
Australorp

- Commercial use:
  - Medium weight, active bird which lays a tinted egg
  - Good egg producing bird that does not sacrifice too much meat quality
  - Popular egg producing bird for backyard flocks
  - Calm friendly birds

http://chickenpic.blogspot.com/2008/03/australorp-chickens-black-australorp.html

http://www.squideo.com/colorfulchicken
Hamburg

- Origin is Dutch although the name is German
- Original breeders selected for “pheasant fowl” characteristics
Hamburg

- Varieties:
  - Color:
    - Silver spangled & penciled
    - Golden spangled & penciled
    - White
    - Black
Hamburg

- Skin color:
  - White

- Egg shell color:
  - White

- Size:  
  - Roosters: Standard 5 lbs.  Bantam 26 oz
  - Hens: Standard 4 lbs.  Bantam 22 oz
Hamburg

- Commercial use:
  - Egg production only
  - An ornamental non-sitting fowl
  - Exhibition quality

- Characteristics:
  - High energy and flighty bird, good fliers
  - Forage very well
  - Good for free range egg production systems

http://www.mcmurrayhatchery.com/silver_spangled_hamburgs.html
Houdan

- Old French breed imported into England in the mid 1800’s
- Foundation breeds include the Dorking, Crevecoeur, and possibly Polish
- Possesses a fifth toe on each foot
Houdan

- Comb type:
  - V shaped
- Skin color:
  - White
- Egg shell color:
  - White
- Size:
  - Roosters: 8 lbs.
  - Hens: 6 lbs.
  - Bantam: 34 oz
  - Bantam: 30 oz
Houdan

- Commercial use:
  - A general purpose non-sitting fowl originally bred for both meat and egg production
  - Not a good ‘yard bird’, due to visual impairment and predation

- Characteristics:
  - Gentle and friendly bird
  - Good foragers
Polish

- Old breed from Holland
  - Shown in paintings form the 1500’s
- They are a “Crested” breed
- Have a large knob on top of there head from which their head feathers grow
Polish

- Comb type:
  - Small V shaped
- Skin color:
  - White
- Egg shell color:
  - White
- Size:
  - Roosters : 6 lbs.
  - Hens : 4 lbs.
  - Bantam Roosters : 30 oz
  - Bantam Hens : 26 oz

http://www.chickencrossing.org/forum/viewtopic.php?id=7384
Polish

- Commercial use:
  - A general purpose non-sitting fowl originally
  - Good egg production
  - Not a good ‘yard bird’, due to visual impairment and predation

- Characteristics:
  - Gentle and friendly bird but startle easily
  - Not good at foragers
  - Not broody
Araucana

- First imported into the US in the 1930’s
- Mapuche Indian tribe in South America developed these from Collonca and Queteros breeds.
- Collonca – clean faced, rumpless, blue egg laying fowl.
- Queteros – ear tufts, tailed, lays a pinkish brown egg.
Araucana

- Different from the Ameraucana
- The ear tuft gene carries a lethal gene which causes embryo mortality
- Blue egg trait is dominant so these birds have been cross bred with a number of American breeds to increase hatchability and are called “Ameraucana’s”

http://araucana.ipower.com/

Araucana

- Do better in open production systems
- Poor at foraging for feed
- Breeding can be a problem because of the lethal gene (associated with the ear tufts) that kills ~25% of chicks prior to hatch

http://www.mcmurrayhatchery.com/araucanas_americanas.html
http://araucana.ipower.com/photos.html
Ameraucana

- Early 1970’s these began to be developed from the Araucana imports from Chile
- Considered the ‘Newest American Breed’

Jon Moyle 2011
Ameraucana

- Varieties
  - Comb type
    - Pea comb
  - Color type
    - Blue, Blue Wheaton
    - Black, Silver
    - White, Buff
    - Brown Red, Wheaton

http://www.sweeth2o.us/sweetwateramericana.html
Ameraucana

- Skin color:
  - Varies with color variety

- Egg shell color:
  - Green to blue eggs

- Size:
  - Roosters: 6 lbs.
  - Hens: 5 lbs.
  - Bantam Roosters: 30 oz
  - Bantam Hens: 26 oz

http://www.cornerstonefamilyfarm.com/animals.html
Ameraucana

- **Commercial use**
  + Used primarily for egg production with some lines heavily selected for egg production
  + Easter Eggers?
  + Eggs low in cholesterol?

- **Characteristics**
  + Good general farm chicken
  + Some lines will exhibit broodiness
  + Good at foraging
Fayoumi

- Often called Egyptian Fayoumi
- Very old breed goes back to the time of the pharaohs
- Mature very quickly
  - Some start crowing at 4 weeks
Fayoumi

- Egg shell color:
  - Off-white, some may be pink-tinted

- Size:
  - Roosters 4.5 lb.
  - Hens 3.5 lb.
Fayoumi

• Commercial use:
  • Excellent layers of small eggs

• Characteristics
  • Feral-like, being self-sufficient and tough,
  • Forage very well
  • Good flyers
Maran

- Breed from France
- Lays very dark colored eggs
- Not a recognized breed by the APA
- Color varieties
  - Cuckoo
  - Black
  - Wheat
  - White
Maran

- Egg shell color:
  - Very dark brown (chocolate or coppery)
  - Good layers of large eggs
- Size: Standard Bantam
  - Roosters 8 lbs. 38 oz
  - Hens 7 lbs. 32 oz
- Active, do well when given access to outside
- Don’t forage well


http://waymartequestrian.wordpress.com/2011/04/04/more-chickens/
Sex-link

- Not a breed of chicken
- Sex-links are a result of a predetermined cross that results in sexable male and female chicks at hatch

http://www.robbocoop.com/art18.html

http://www.welphatchery.com/EggLayerTypes/black_sexlink.asp

http://www.welphatchery.com/EggLayerTypes/red_sexlink.asp
Sex-linked

- Most often used in the commercial egg industry to produce brown egg laying strains
- Often called Red Stars, Cinnamon Queens, Bovans, Cherry Eggers, Production Reds
Make your own

- Modern broilers are crosses
- Almost all modern breeds were derived by crossing older breeds
  - Even older breeds have been crossed with other breeds to improve them
Make your own

• Crossing improves performance
  • Many breeders cross egg laying breeds into their birds to improve egg production
  • Then select the birds so that they appear the same as before the cross was made

• Crossing breeds also allows for the use of traits from different breeds
Make your own

- Look for the traits that you desire then breed those birds to produce the results that you want
  - Cross Silkies with Cornish to get a black skinned meat bird
    - Good for Asian markets
  - Cross Americanas with Leghorns for a good blue egg producing bird
    - Create your own specialty market
Make your own

• Want a fast growing bird?
• Purchase broiler breeder males and use on pure breed hens
  • Plymouth Rock
  • Rhode Island Red
  • Or whatever your favorite breed is
• F1 generation will have improved growth
• Makes a good terminal cross
Sources

- Usually best to get day-old chicks and raise them to fit the intended program
  - Improved biosecurity!
  - Purchase from commercial hatcheries,
    - NPIP
  - Purchase or trade from other local producers
- Or, maintain breeding stock to produce replacement stock in house
Sources

- An internet search will find dozens of hatcheries
- The following are a few
Address:  P.O. Box 458
         191 Closz Drive
         Webster City,
         Iowa 50595

Phone:   515.832.3280
Toll Free Phone:  800.456.3280
Fax:      515.832.2213

www.mcmurrayhatchery.com
© 1998 Morris Hatchery, Inc.
18370 SW 232 St.
Goulds, FL 33170-5399
Tel: 305.247.1070
Tel: 305.248.5589
Fax: 305.247.0982
morrishatchery@bellsouth.net

www.morrisinc.com/morris_hatchery/
Cackle Hatchery
(Family owned and operated for three generations.)

P.O. Box 529
Lebanon, MO 65536
417-532-4581 Fax: 417-588-1918
www.cacklehatchery.com  cacklehatc
hery@cacklehatchery.com
Strombergs' Chicks
P.O. Box 400
Pine River, MN 56474

Phone Orders: 1-800-720-1134
Information: 218-587-2222
Fax: 218-587-4230
www.strombergschickens.com
IDEAL POULTRY
Breeding Farms, Inc.

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215 West Main Cameron, TX 76520
254-697-6677
Fax: 254-697-2393

www.ideal-poultry.com
Welp, Inc., PO BOX 77, Bancroft, Iowa 50517 USA
www.welphatchery.com
1-800-458-4473
FAX:515-885-2346
Address: Freedom Ranger Hatchery
190 N. Blainsport Road
Reinholds PA 17569
Phone: 717-336-4878
Fax: 717-336-3711
Cell: 717-471-5640
Email:
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• S & G Poultry
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• P 205.280.0005 | 770.532.7734
• E sales@sandgpoultry.com
www.meyerhatchery.com
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Fax: 559-264-2095

www.belthatchery.com
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www.privetthatchery.com