

Poultry Breeds

Poultry Breeds – Study Notes

1. Overview

- **Poultry** refers to domesticated birds kept for meat, eggs, or feathers.
- Over 2,000 recognized breeds exist worldwide, each with distinct characteristics.
- Breeds are grouped by primary purpose: **egg-laying (layers)**, **meat production (broilers)**, **dual-purpose**, ornamental, and specialty (e.g., game birds).

2. Classification by Purpose

Category	Primary Goal	Typical Traits	Common Breeds
Layers	High egg output (250-300+ eggs/yr)	Light body, efficient feed conversion, strong reproductive system	Leghorn, White Egg
			Leghorn, Rhode Island White, ISA Brown
Broilers	Rapid growth, heavy carcass	Fast weight gain, broad breast, high feed intake	Cornish-Cross, Ross-308, Cobb-500
Dual-Purpose	Balanced egg and meat production	Moderate size, decent egg size, good for small farms	Rhode Island Red, Plymouth Rock, Sussex, New Hampshire
Ornamental/Show	Appearance, feather pattern, exhibition	Unique plumage, calm temperament, often poor production	Silkie, Polish, Polish Bantam, Frizzle
Specialty/Game	Specific traits (e.g., fighting, foraging)	Aggressive, hardy, often flighty	Old English Game, Malay, Asil

3. Major Egg-Layer Breeds

Breed	Egg Color	Average Annual Production	Notable Features
Leghorn	White	280-320	Very efficient, active, heat tolerant

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ISA Brown	Brown	300?320	Hybrid vigor, good for commercial farms
Rhode Island White	White	250?280	Friendly, good winter layers
Ancona	White with speckles	250?280	Excellent for free?range systems
Araucana	Blue/green	180?200	Lays blue eggs, also a good forager

4. Major Broiler Breeds (Commercial)

Breed	Target Live Weight (45?d)	Growth Rate	Typical Use
Cornish?Cross	2.5?kg	0.07?kg/day	Standard meat bird
Ross?308	2.4?kg	0.07?kg/day	High feed efficiency
Cobb?500	2.4?kg	0.07?kg/day	Good meat quality
Freedom Ranger (heritage)	2.0?kg	0.05?kg/day	Outdoor/organic markets

5. Dual?Purpose Breeds

Breed	Egg Color	Average Egg Weight	Mature Weight (male/female)	Remarks
Rhode Island Red	Brown	55?g	3.4?kg / 2.5?kg	Hardy, good for small farms
Plymouth Rock	Brown	55?g	3.6?kg / 2.7?kg	Calm, easy to handle
Sussex	Brown/white	55?g	3.5?kg / 2.6?kg	Excellent