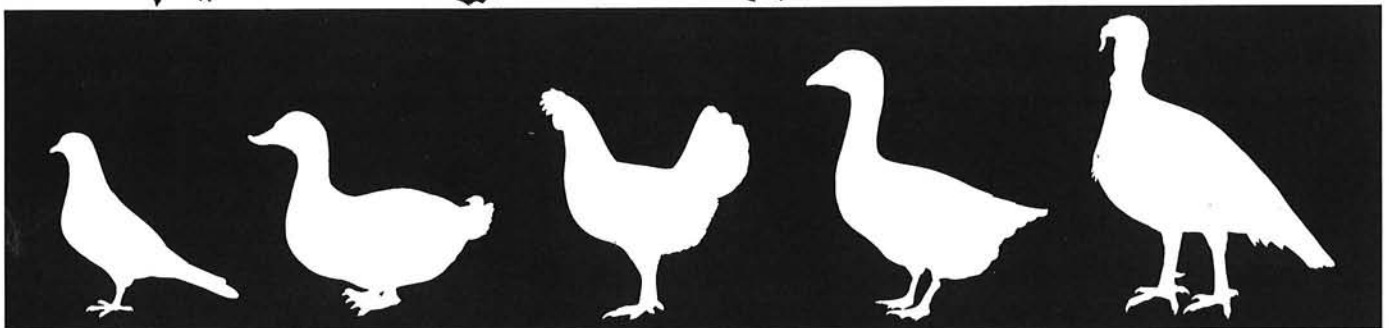
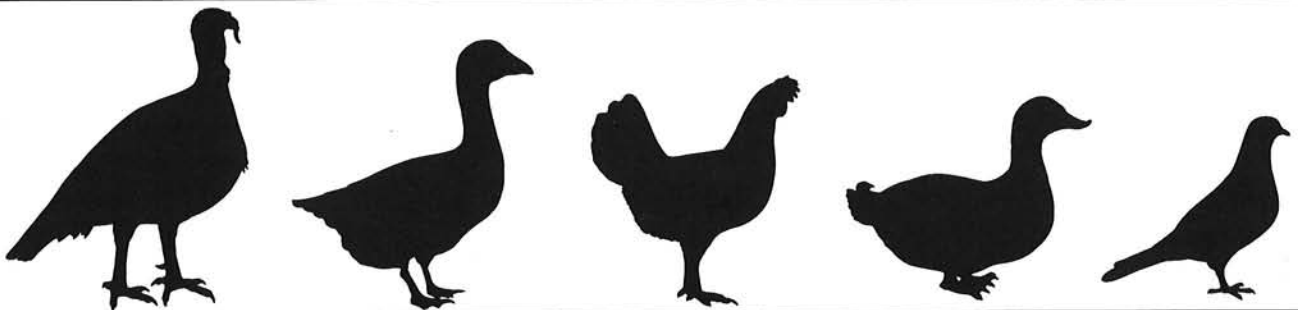
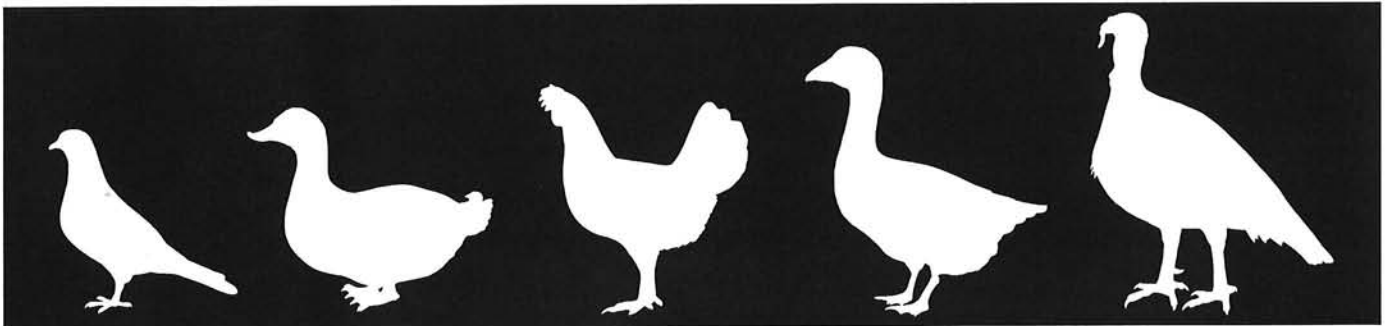




4-H Poultry Fitting & Showmanship

Leader's Guide



WELCOME TO POULTRY FITTING AND SHOWMANSHIP!

Congratulations on deciding to become involved in 4-H as the leader of a poultry project. 4-H poultry projects have a rich history of providing young people and their volunteer leaders with a wide variety of experiences. The success of these experiences depends largely on two key elements that you, as a leader, bring to the club: the desire to work with young people and an interest in poultry. "Interest" is the key word! Remember that you don't need to be a poultry expert to work with youth in this project area.

Keep in mind that all 4-H activities are designed to positively influence the development of the young people involved. As the leader working with youth of different ages, it's important that you understand the physical, thinking, social and emotional changes that young people go through as they grow from childhood to young adults and how these changes may affect how you design your club activities. Check with your county

4-H office for resources to enhance your understanding of these changes.

The Development of Life Skills

Like all 4-H project areas, involvement in the 4-H poultry project is designed to provide two major outcomes for young people: They learn more about the project area—poultry, and they develop key life skills such as problem-solving and communications.

As a 4-H leader, it's important that you recognize these key life skills and how projects can be developed to build these skills in young people. Following are some of the key life skills for you to keep in mind as you work with young people:

◆ **Positive self-awareness and self-esteem**—4-H clubs and activities provide settings in which young people can have experiences that make them feel good about themselves. By becoming aware of their

own abilities and potentials, 4-H'ers develop positive attitudes about themselves, attitudes crucial to their success. In a 4-H poultry fitting and showmanship project, members develop an appreciation of their own knowledge and skills and their ability to share their knowledge and skills with others.

◆ **Problem-solving and decision making skills**—The ability to make good decisions and solve problems is very important in the world we live in—a world in which we are overwhelmed with information. The hands-on, learn-by-doing atmosphere of 4-H activities provides many opportunities for 4-H members to enhance their creative abilities to solve problems and make decisions. The 4-H poultry fitting and showmanship project is designed to provide opportunities for young people to develop these skills while they learn about different species of poultry and how to care for, train and show them.

◆ **Communications skills**—4-H activities help young people develop and enhance both their interpersonal communications skills and their formal communications skills. By becoming involved in group activities, 4-H'ers have many opportunities to develop interpersonal communications skills such as good listening habits. By being encouraged to share what they learn in their 4-H activities, 4-H'ers develop formal presentation skills like giving talks or demonstrations or creating posters or videotapes. Many 4-H poultry fitting and showmanship contests include quizzes where 4-H members have the opportunity to exhibit their communication abilities.

◆ **An awareness of science and technology**—There's no way around it! Science and technology play a large role in our everyday

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lives, and it's important to help young people recognize their impacts. Poultry projects can spark young people's interests in areas such as biology, biotechnology, crop science or engineering related to meat processing. Encourage them to learn more about these topics of interest.

◆ **Leadership skills**—4-H activities provide wonderful opportunities for young people to develop their leadership abilities. Whenever possible, encourage the youth in your club to take on leadership roles. For example, one or two members could design meetings around topics such as selecting a bird for showmanship or the poultry quiz. (For more information on these and other topics, see page 4.) A member could also take the

leadership for coordinating a field trip or arranging for a special resource person to attend a meeting.

The Roles You Play

As the leader of a 4-H poultry fitting and showmanship project, you may play one or several roles. You may be the **organizer** of your club's meetings with responsibility for arranging things like setting up the meeting, contacting members, arranging for resource people, etc. (As stated previously, many of these jobs can be the responsibility of 4-H members and serve to develop their leadership skills.) You may also play the role of **teacher**, in that you might be the person who teaches members about the knowledge and

skills they need for poultry fitting and showmanship. Or you might do some teaching but act as a **resource-finder**—that is, you find “experts” who can come to your club meetings and demonstrate these skills. Whatever roles you play, keep in mind that you are a **youth developer** interested in helping young people develop to their potentials!

Note: The final section in the 4-H Poultry Fitting and Showmanship Member's Guide (4-H 1520) is designed to help members evaluate their poultry fitting and showmanship experience and to encourage them to share what they learn. Be sure to encourage your members to complete this section of the guide.

STARTING A POULTRY FITTING AND SHOWMANSHIP PROJECT

Fitting and showmanship is an exciting aspect of working with poultry. This project provides opportunities for your members to show some of the skills that aren't highlighted in other poultry contests that focus more on the birds. **In fitting and showmanship, equal emphasis is given to both the bird and the person showing the bird.**

Your members may have many reasons for wanting to participate in fitting and showmanship contests. Perhaps they have an interest in all aspects of raising poultry. Maybe they like the opportunity to compete in contests where sportsmanship is valued. Maybe they want to use their involvement to help educate those in the audience about different breeds and species of poultry. Whatever their reasons, keep in mind that their main reason should be to have fun while learning!

Fitting and showmanship focuses on the member's ability to select and care for a bird and to demon-

strate various skills such as handling, posing and examining the bird, and, in some contests, walking the bird. Throughout a fitting and showmanship contest, a judge evaluates a member's knowledge, attitude, appearance and speaking abilities. Fitting and showmanship contests may also include a quiz as part of the competition.

What You Need to Know

As the leader of a 4-H poultry project, you need to do several things before introducing fitting and showmanship to your club:

1. Get to know the basics of fitting and showmanship.

◆ Review the material in the **4-H Poultry Fitting and Showmanship Member's Guide** (4-H 1520). This will give you a good background in what members need to consider for the fitting part of the contest (selection, care and training of the bird,

and member's appearance) and the showmanship part of the contest (member's attitude and behavior; handling, posing and examining the bird; and, in some contests, walking the bird).

◆ If possible, attend a workshop on poultry fitting and showmanship. Check with your 4-H staff to see where and when these types of leader workshops are offered. Also check to see if similar workshops are available for 4-H members to attend.

◆ Check with your 4-H staff to see what other kinds of resource materials are available (for example, videotapes or slide programs) on poultry fitting and showmanship.

2. Check with your 4-H members to see what kinds of poultry species they are interested in using in a fitting and showmanship project. Once you have that information, you can begin to determine how to help them select birds for fitting and showmanship.



3. Get to know the specifics of poultry fitting and showmanship contests in your county and state. (If fitting and showmanship is new to your county, talk with your county 4-H staff and other leaders about the level of interest in your county.) Fitting and showmanship contest divisions can vary. Some contests will divide contestants according to their age. These contests may include divisions such as the following, which are based on the member's age as of December 31 of the current year:

- ◆ **Juniors**—9- to 11-year-olds
- ◆ **Intermediates**—12- to 14-year-olds
- ◆ **Seniors**—15- to 19-year-olds

Be sure to share this information with your members so they know what to expect.

Helping Members Select Birds

4-H poultry fitting and showmanship contests can focus on different species. In fact, the **4-H Poultry Fitting and Showmanship Member's Guide** (4-H 1520) provides information on working with chickens, turkeys, ducks, geese and pigeons. Perhaps you and your members are interested in only one of these species. By reading about fitting and showing the other species, you might decide to get involved in helping 4-H'ers show those birds too.

The most important thing to keep in mind when helping members

choose a bird for fitting and showmanship is that they choose birds that will help them demonstrate their knowledge about birds and their ability to handle them. Several things related to a bird's breed, age and sex for members to keep in mind when selecting chickens, turkeys, ducks, geese or pigeons are listed on pages 2 to 3 of the member's guide. Be sure to consider members' ages, size and experience when helping them select birds.

Topics for Your Club Meetings

There are many topics for club meetings that can help your members prepare for a fitting and showmanship contest. Ask your group which topics they would like to explore and encourage them to help lead sessions around these topics. Following are several examples:

◆ **Selecting a bird for fitting and showmanship**—Stress the importance of a bird's breed, size, age and sex to your members as they choose a bird to use in the fitting and showmanship project. To help your members learn about a breed's defects and disqualifications, provide information from the **Standard of Perfection**. This book is the American Poultry Breeders Association's guide for judging the recognized breeds and varieties of chickens, turkeys, ducks and geese. Check with your county 4-H office

or Extension poultry specialist on how to get a copy. If a member has only one bird, help that member do the best he or she can with that bird.

◆ **Caring for the bird**—Use the information in the member's guide to review the fitting part of the contest. Help your members understand that they need to prepare for this contest well ahead of time—at least 8 to 12 weeks. If they need additional information on ways to properly care for their bird, help them find good resources. Check with your county 4-H staff for more information.

◆ **Steps in showmanship**—Demonstrate all the steps involved in handling, posing and examining a bird. If walking the bird is included in your state's contests, demonstrate this as well. Discuss how to design and use a training schedule so that both the bird and the member are comfortable during the contest.

◆ **The appearance, attitude and behavior of the fitting and showmanship participant**—Focus on what the members need to know, how they should act, and how they should appear in order to convey a confident and courteous manner during the contest.

◆ **The poultry quiz**—Poultry fitting and showmanship contests may include a poultry quiz that focuses on the participants' knowledge about the particular species of poultry being shown and on their general knowledge of poultry. See page 6 for more information about the quiz. Be sure to provide your members with the background materials they need to do well in this part of the contest. (Contact your 4-H staff or Extension poultry specialist for information on publications pertaining to chickens, turkeys, ducks, geese and pigeons.) Encourage them to create their own quiz ahead of time as practice for the real one.

THE POULTRY FITTING AND SHOWMANSHIP CONTEST

If the poultry fitting and showmanship contest already exists as part of your county fair, contact your county 4-H staff or fair board officials to find out details such as when it's held, age divisions and how the contest is scored. If the idea of a contest is new to your county, you have the opportunity to become involved in making it happen for your poultry members!

If there currently is not a fitting and showmanship contest, the first thing you should do is contact other 4-H poultry leaders to see if they are interested in having this event. If so, present your idea to your county 4-H staff and your local fair board officials. Do this several months to a year in advance so they have time to incorporate the contest into the fair. Keep in mind that the fair board may have certain limitations such as space and availability of materials. If so, don't be discouraged. By working together and showing that there is an interest by members and leaders in having this contest, you may help convince the board to include the contest. Suggest that the contest be included in the fair book in the Poultry Division, Fitting and Showmanship Contest(s) Section.

Some county fairs will require that specific poultry fitting and showmanship categories be included

in the fair book. The following is a sample excerpt from one fair book:

Categories (species):

A. Poultry—In this category, "poultry" denotes any fowl such as a chicken, turkey, duck, goose, pigeon or any other miscellaneous species such as quail, pheasant, etc.

B. Chicken—Pure breed or mixed breed 6 months or older (except meat-type birds ages 1 to 2 months and over depending on what class they belong to [Cornish game hen, broilers, roasters, etc.])

C. Turkey—8 weeks to 1 year

D. Duck—8 weeks or older

E. Goose—8 weeks or older

F. Pigeon—8 weeks or older

G. Miscellaneous:

Coturnix (Japanese Quail)—5 weeks or older

Bobwhite Quail—16 weeks or older

Pheasant—8 weeks or older

Many county fairs will also require that poultry fitting and showmanship contest participants be active 4-H members and that they be enrolled in a poultry project (involving any species) during the current year.

Keep in mind that you can create other contest opportunities for members in addition to the fair. Talk with your county 4-H staff for ideas.

sponsors to continue their support in the future.

If your club has a club reporter, encourage that member to notify newspapers, radio stations and television stations of the event well in advance.

Contest Materials

Make sure the following materials are available for the poultry fitting and showmanship contest:

- ◆ Microphone
- ◆ Tables
- ◆ Cages
- ◆ Identification numbers for contestants
- ◆ A judging stick
- ◆ Judging scoresheets, scorecards, calculator, pencils
- ◆ Awards

The people needed will include one or more judges (see the next section), one or two clerks, and someone to coordinate traffic control. The clerks should be responsible for registering participants, giving out identification numbers, coordinating the sequence of the contest, tabulating total scores and ranking contestants. The traffic controller should make sure the general public is not allowed to disturb the contestants or their birds.

Sponsorship and Publicity

You may want to contact local businesses and other support groups to see if they are interested in sponsoring poultry fitting and showmanship events (that is, helping to cover some of the costs of running the events). If they are interested in sponsoring a fair event, they could be listed as sponsors in the fair book and with any publicity information. This kind of coverage may motivate the

Judges

In many counties, finding an appropriate judge for a 4-H poultry fitting and showmanship contest is a difficult task. Poultry judges in general may be well qualified to judge the different classes of poultry, but they may not be familiar with what's involved in fitting and showmanship. Therefore, you need to plan ahead to find people who are interested in being judges so you can provide them with the background information they need on



fitting and showmanship. In general, judges evaluate poultry according to the **Standard of Perfection**. In 4-H fitting and showmanship contests, they should judge according to the “standard” as provided in the **4-H Poultry Fitting and Showmanship Member's Guide** (4-H 1520). A judges’ workshop or annual clinic would be helpful for introducing judges to fitting and showmanship guidelines.

Keep these other things in mind when working with judges:

1. Provide the judges with all of the standards (that is, the member’s guide), terms, classes to be judged, etc., in writing. Also send the judges a copy of the appropriate pages from the fair book and a copy of this leader’s guide.

2. Inform the judges they need to arrive at the site at least 30 minutes before the contest so they can report to the poultry superintendent and check to see that everything is ready. Judges should also be prepared to spend a couple of minutes telling the audience and the participants what they expect, their philosophy of judging a 4-H fair, and in which order the divisions will be judged. Judges should be sure to check to see if any of the participants have conflicts with other contests so they can reschedule if necessary.

3. Ideally, fitting and showmanship events should be judged on an individual basis. In this case, a judge may want to ask each participant why he or she is doing a particular step (especially during the examination portion of the contest). However, if time is limited, judges may want to judge on a group basis. Because it is hard to adequately judge too large a group, it is recommended that judges not evaluate more than five participants at one time.

4. If the contest includes a poultry quiz at the end, the number and type



of questions should depend on things like contestants’ age division and the amount of time available. About 80 percent of the questions should focus on the particular species being shown, and 20 percent should involve poultry in general. The judge should adjust the difficulty of the questions to each division. If there are only a few contestants in a division, the judge may decide to call each one to an area to answer a set of questions on a one-to-one basis. The judge should select an area to quiz participants near the audience so the audience can hear the questions and answers. During the questioning, the other contestants should be kept in an area where they cannot hear the questions and answers. All the contestants should be asked the same questions. If a contestant answers a question incorrectly, the judge should provide the correct answer for the participant.

5. If more than one species is involved in the poultry fitting and showmanship contest, recruit one judge for each and make sure the judge is knowledgeable about the species.

6. A scorecard for each species is included on pages 7 to 11. The scorecard worksheets included on

page 12 should be provided for judges to use during the actual contest. Ties should be broken first on the contestants’ scores for examination of the bird, second on their posing scores, and third on the poultry quiz. As a last resort, the judge should use the contestants’ attitude, appearance and behavior as the final tiebreaker.

Awards

The top winners in each division should be awarded trophies. Second-place through fifth-place winners can be awarded rosettes, and sixth-place through tenth-place can be awarded placing ribbons. If the classes are smaller than this, you may want to reduce the number of rosettes. Another way to distribute the awards is to give a trophy, and blue, red and white ribbons to the participants according to their total score. All contestants should receive participation ribbons.

No matter what awards system you use in a poultry fitting and showmanship contest, remember that the main reason for members to participate is to have fun while learning. Make sure your contest reflects this philosophy.

SUGGESTED CHICKEN SCORECARD

CHICKEN FITTING & SHOWMANSHIP SCORECARD (Not including walking)

	<i>Points allowed</i>
Handling and posing the bird	30
• Holding prior to entry (3)	
• Entering bird in cage (3)	
• Posing bird in cage (15)	
• Removing bird from cage (6)	
• Final pose (3)	
Posing bird on table	20
Examination of bird	20
Condition of bird	10
Poultry quiz	10
Appearance, attitude and behavior of participant	10
• Appearance (5)	
• Attitude (2)	
• Behavior (3)	
Total points	100

CHICKEN FITTING & SHOWMANSHIP SCORECARD (Including walking)

	<i>Points allowed</i>
Handling and posing the bird	25
• Holding prior to entry (3)	
• Entering bird in cage (3)	
• Posing bird in cage (10)	
• Removing bird from cage (6)	
• Final pose (3)	
Posing bird on table	15
Examination of bird	20
Walking the bird	10
Condition of bird	10
Poultry quiz	10
Appearance, attitude and behavior of participant	10
• Appearance (5)	
• Attitude (2)	
• Behavior (3)	
Total points	100

SUGGESTED TURKEY SCORECARD

TURKEY FITTING & SHOWMANSHIP SCORECARD (Not including walking)

	<i>Points allowed</i>
Handling the bird*	10
Posing bird on table	20
Examination of bird	30
Condition of bird	20
Poultry quiz	10
Appearance, attitude and behavior of participant	10
• Appearance (5)	
• Attitude (2)	
• Behavior (3)	
Total points	100

TURKEY FITTING & SHOWMANSHIP SCORECARD (Including walking)

	<i>Points allowed</i>
Handling the bird*	10
Posing bird on table	20
Examination of bird	20
Walking the bird	10
Condition of bird	20
Poultry quiz	10
Appearance, attitude and behavior of participant	10
• Appearance (5)	
• Attitude (2)	
• Behavior (3)	
Total points	100

*Fewer points are awarded for handling turkeys than chickens because of possible problems with high body weights.

SUGGESTED DUCK SCORECARD

DUCK FITTING & SHOWMANSHIP SCORECARD (Not including walking)

	<i>Points allowed</i>
Handling and posing the bird	30
• Holding prior to entry (5)	
• Entering bird in cage (2)	
• Posing bird in cage (15)	
• Removing bird from cage (5)	
• Final pose (3)	
Posing bird on table	20
Examination of bird	20
Condition of bird	10
Poultry quiz	10
Appearance, attitude and behavior of participant	10
• Appearance (5)	
• Attitude (2)	
• Behavior (3)	
Total points	100

DUCK FITTING & SHOWMANSHIP SCORECARD (Including walking)

	<i>Points allowed</i>
Handling and posing the bird	25
• Holding prior to entry (5)	
• Entering bird in cage (2)	
• Posing bird in cage (10)	
• Removing bird from cage (5)	
• Final pose (3)	
Posing bird on table	15
Examination of bird	20
Walking the bird	10
Condition of bird	10
Poultry quiz	10
Appearance, attitude and behavior of participant	10
• Appearance (5)	
• Attitude (2)	
• Behavior (3)	
Total points	100

SUGGESTED GOOSE SCORECARD

GOOSE FITTING & SHOWMANSHIP SCORECARD (Not including walking)

	<i>Points allowed</i>
Handling the bird*	10
Posing bird on table	25
Examination of bird	25
Condition of bird	20
Poultry quiz	10
Appearance, attitude and behavior of participant	10
• Appearance (5)	
• Attitude (2)	
• Behavior (3)	
Total points	100

GOOSE FITTING & SHOWMANSHIP SCORECARD (Including walking)

	<i>Points allowed</i>
Handling the bird*	10
Posing bird on table	20
Examination of bird	20
Walking the bird	10
Condition of bird	20
Poultry quiz	10
Appearance, attitude and behavior of participant	10
• Appearance (5)	
• Attitude (2)	
• Behavior (3)	
Total points	100

**Fewer points are awarded for handling geese than ducks because of possible problems with high body weights.*

SUGGESTED PIGEON SCORECARD

PIGEON FITTING & SHOWMANSHIP SCORECARD (Not including walking)

	<i>Points allowed</i>
Handling the bird	10
Posing bird in cage	25
Examination of bird	25
Condition of bird	20
Poultry quiz	10
Appearance, attitude and behavior of participant	10
• Appearance (5)	
• Attitude (2)	
• Behavior (3)	
Total points	100

PIGEON FITTING & SHOWMANSHIP SCORECARD (Including walking)

	<i>Points allowed</i>
Handling the bird	10
Posing bird in cage	15
Examination of bird	25
Walking the bird	10
Condition of bird	20
Poultry quiz	10
Appearance, attitude and behavior of participant	10
• Appearance (5)	
• Attitude (2)	
• Behavior (3)	
Total points	100

POULTRY FITTING AND SHOWMANSHIP SCORECARD WORKSHEET (without walking)

	Points Allowed*	Contestant's Number				
		1	2	3	4	5
Handling the bird (holding the bird prior to entry, entering the bird in the cage)	_____					
Posing the bird	_____					
Examining the bird	_____					
Condition of the bird	_____					
Poultry quiz	_____					
Attitude, appearance and behavior of participant	_____					

* The points allowed can vary among species. Refer to the scorecard for each species to determine the number of points to be inserted for each area.

POULTRY FITTING AND SHOWMANSHIP SCORECARD WORKSHEET (with walking)

	Points Allowed*	Contestant's Number				
		1	2	3	4	5
Handling the bird (holding the bird prior to entry, entering the bird in the cage)	_____					
Posing the bird	_____					
Examining the bird	_____					
Walking the bird	_____					
Condition of the bird	_____					
Poultry quiz	_____					
Attitude, appearance and behavior of participant	_____					

* The points allowed can vary among species. Refer to the scorecard for each species to determine the number of points to be inserted for each area.

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