

Breeder Selection A High Priority

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Why is a good breeder selection program important?

- Performance/productivity of the breeder flock itself.
 - Livability of the flock
 - Number of eggs produced
 - Fertility/hatchability of eggs
 - Chick quality
- The final product – the mature pheasant
 - Health/vigor = livability
 - Free of genetic defects
 - Outward appearance
 - Performance

How to Achieve These Goals

- General Rules
 - Select breeders from good hatches
 - Select from groups of chicks that did well
 - Target your groups ahead of time
 - Select breeders at appropriate age (we use 18 weeks for hens; 22 weeks for cocks)

General Selection Criteria

- Health/vigor
 - Body confirmation
 - Bright clear eyes
 - No respiratory problems
 - Fully feathered out
 - Tail length and firmness of set

General Selection Criteria

- Free of Defects
 - Crooked toes
 - Blindness
 - Bad legs
 - Crooked neck
 - Hunchback
 - Spurs or wattle on females
 - No spurs or small spurs on males
 - Injuries



Crooked Neck

Specific Breed Criteria

- Weight at desired age of shipping
- Coloration – mostly male emphasis
- Tails – length and retention
 - These three characteristics are the most easily noticed by the mature bird customer and are therefore the foundation of a good selection program.

MacFarlane Ringneck

- Weight
 - Female 1.75-2.05 lbs.
 - Male 2.7-3.0 lbs
- Coloration
 - Green down middle of back
 - Sides dark orange
 - Fully ringed and colored out
- Tails
 - Firmly set
 - 20-23 inches



MacFarlane Ringneck

Kansas (K-Thunder) Ringneck

- Weight
 - Female 1.6-1.9 lbs.
 - Male 2.25-2.55 lbs
- Coloration
 - More blue than green on back
 - Sides yellow to light orange with large dark spots
- Tails
 - Carries its tail more erectly
 - 21-24 inches
 - Tails tend not to be quite set at 22 wks (24-25)



K-Thunder

LT-X (Longtail Male X Mac Female)

- Weight
 - Female 1.75-2.05 lbs
 - Male 2.7-3.0 lbs
- Coloration
 - Highly variable at present
 - Trying to achieve Mac ringneck coloration
- Tail
 - Emphasis is placed on males tail length (24+ inches)
 - LT males take longer for tail feathers to set (25+ weeks?)
 - Need to go back at later time to better assess this quality



Longtail Ringneck

Manchurian Cross (Pure Manchurian Male x Mac Female)

- Weight
 - Not a high priority as the hybrid offspring vary greatly in size due to the cross
- Coloration
 - Green back and dark sides desired
 - Spot on cheek desired
- Tails
 - These birds have slow growing tails and set up late
 - The wildness, strong flight and ability survive after release are the most important characteristics of this breed.



Melanistic Mutant

- Weight
 - Female 1.75-2.05 lbs
 - Male 2.7-3.0 lbs
 - Attempting to get to ringneck size
- Coloration
 - Males dark iridescent blue/green
 - Females solid black
 - No ringneck type patterns
- Tails
 - 20-22 inches at this time
 - They are not set at 22 weeks and continue to grow to 24 inches



Melanistic Mutant

Poor coloration



Melanistic Mutant

Good color.

Preparation for placement is also important in the performance of the breeder flock

- Clip wings to prevent injury
 - Primaries and secondaries on males
 - Primaries only on females
- Peepers on all birds
- Hood males if pre-lighting separate from hens
- Replace hoods with peepers when males are added to females



Clipping wings

Preparation for placement is also important in the performance of the breeder flock (cont'd)

- Vaccinate with autogenous bacterin for Mycoplasma at time of selection and again at time of stimulation
- Dust for mites and lice
 - We use a .25 permethrin dust on all birds before placement at breeder farm
 - There are some new products that can be used in feed or in houses if infestation occurs



Vaccination

Preparation for placement is also important in the performance of the breeder flock (cont'd)

- Burn spurs and toenails on males to reduce damage to hens
 - Do this to indoor birds, large breeds and recycled males
 - Do not do first year small breed males
- Blood test for Salmonella (NPIP)



Burning spurs and toenails

Conclusion

- Selection within breeds is an ongoing process
- There are always areas to improve, whether it be color, tail length, weight, etc.
- In the end, the main goal is a consistent quality game bird