



ESC-P NEWSLETTER

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Welcome

Another warm welcome to all interested poultry breeders. This is already the fourth edition of the ESC-P newsletter. Since we keep getting a lot of positive feedback from people from all over Europe, we will of course continue this initiative.

We'd like to ask our member poultry

federations again that they publish the letter on their own website or that they create a link to it on the EE-website so that many more breeders all over Europe will be able to reach this information. The breeders should however keep in mind that any decisions published here do not automatically apply in each country.

They have to be officially implemented by your organization first.

Questions of any kind should go to your own national standard commission. It is the contact point for breeders and not the ESC-P directly.

The ESC-P team.

Update on the 'Europe Standard' project

Last year on May 30th, the ESC-P proposal for establishing a common Europe Standard was unanimously approved off by the EE poultry section during its annual meeting in Sarajevo. It was decided that the countries could decide individually if and when they would join this ambitious project. Therefore a contract would be established between each country willing to participate and the ESC-P.

During our March meeting in Pohlheim a contract was drawn up and at the beginning of April it was sent to all member countries. During the annual meeting of the EE poultry section on May 15th in Metz, we learned that 80% of the countries already returned the signed contract or at least decided to sign it. Some countries had some questions that were answered and will probably follow soon.

A few countries had no delegation present and didn't inform us on the matter. In conclusion it seems that Europe is uniting and that over 90% of its breeders will be breeding to the same standards in a few years' time. This is a huge step forward and we can only hope that those countries who are still doubting or have others views will change their minds soon and join the majority of Europe.

Facts & Figures

At the moment there are almost 500 breeds of large & bantam chickens, turkeys, guinea fowl, ducks and geese and the EE-list. Some of them still need to be verified and others are still failing. Over the last decade a large number of new countries joined the EE and their national breeds

haven't yet met the requirements to be officially accepted. This is the case for the breeds of Bulgaria, Bosnia, Serbia, Hungary, Finland and also for a part of the breeds from Croatia, Poland and Spain. Therefore it is most likely the list will become even longer in the next few

years. Besides this large number of breeds there are also about 150 color varieties to describe so the ESC-P will know what to do in the near future. So far already 25 breeds standards have been officially approved of as EE-standard. That means only 475 more to go !

The EE-standard for Pavlov chickens

As announced in last year's newsletter, the ESC-P has approved the official EE-standard of the Pavlov. Meanwhile it became clear an important and very exclusive breed characteristic was not withheld in this standard because we didn't have any good pictures to evaluate it. As soon as became clear that this was not correct, this characteristic was added to the standard.

Typical in Pavlovs is that the feathers on the legs are also present on the inside of the leg and therefore the legs are almost completely covered with feathers on all sides.

This kind of feathered legs is unknown in any other breed. That also means that its absence in Pavlovs will be considered a serious defect.



Typical leg feathering in a Pavlov

Photo : Y. Dmitriev

The EE-list of breeds and colors

On the EE-website a new EE-list is finally published. The old one contained a lot of mistakes and was far from complete. While a new one was being made the old one on the website was not updated anymore.

The new version (May 2015) consists of three

separate lists, one for large chickens, one for bantams and one for turkeys, guinea fowl, geese and ducks. The two chicken lists are completely updated and now also contain the information from several new member countries. However still failing are Croatia, Bosnia, Slovenia

and Russia. Hopefully we will be able to add them soon. Of course the two new members Serbia and Finland couldn't be on it yet. Both of them will be invited to submit their data also. The list with the other species still needs to be corrected and updated and a lot of countries are still failing.

This new list is very important since only the breeds and the colors on it are accepted by the EE and only these can be judged on EE-shows. What is not on the list will only get 'not accepted' as a result. Therefore it is really important that the countries always announce any changes .

Talking about turkeys



Head of a female Gers-turkey

Classifying turkeys remains a serious problem so far. Some countries know several breeds, others only the animal 'turkey' and accept several colors and in the German standard there is only the 'German turkey' in many colors which are even divided in 3 different weight categories. A solution is therefore urgently needed to create some order in this chaos. This will not be an easy job since a lot of countries in Europe have their own breeds and between many of them there are almost no visible differences. The ESC-P kindly asks the countries not to accept any more turkey breeds until we've been able to study all that already exists. Accepting something that

is already known in another country but by a different name is to be avoided.

Meanwhile the decision has already been taken that in the future EE-standard only 'breeds' and not 'colors' will be accepted. Different weight classes within the same breeds doesn't fit into that system and we'll have to find another solution for that problem.

Several very rare and little known turkey breeds are still bred all over Europe. Hopefully the new EE-standard and the new classifying system will help the spreading of them to other countries.

The number of primaries in chickens

In last year's newsletter it was already announced there is a problem with the number of primaries in certain breeds and that the ESC-P would organize a survey to assess the magnitude of the problem.

Mostly in Belgium and Switzerland primaries were counted in over 300 birds. The results were shocking. Almost 20 breeds were checked, both large and bantams and both international and local breeds. In one third of these birds the number of primaries was divergent and very often the number of primaries was different on both sides, going from 9 till 13.

These numbers are alarming and call for action but do not allow a harsh approach since the problem is so widely spread. Therefore it was decided to take more gentle but probably very efficient measures to stop and reverse this evolution.

It was decided that from the season 2016-2017 in all birds which are candidate to obtain 96 or 97 the number of primaries will be counted. Those which have more than 10 on either side will only get 95. This should motivate the breeders to check and select birds with the correct number for breeding.



This buff blue columbian Brahma bantam rooster from Belgium clearly shows a few primaries too many.

Photo: S. Libens (B)



Quail color mutations



What about quail ?

Japanese quail (*Coturnix japonica*) have been bred by man for many centuries and have been slowly transformed into a domesticated bird which is bred in large numbers for meat and egg production. Where the original wild quail was a slender bird from 90-100 gram only, the domesticated form is plumper in its forms and can weigh up to 300 gram, thus three times the size of its wild ancestor.

Within the EE, quail are common birds on poultry shows in some countries like Holland, Belgium, France, Czech Republic and Slovakia. They are shown in numerous color mutations and in most countries they are considered as ornamental fowl. Recently breeders of several other countries started showing an interest in showing these birds. This matter was discussed within the ESC-P and it was concluded that these birds are in fact domestic birds and not just simple color mutations of the original

Japanese quail. Actually one can compare them with guinea fowl. So it was decided that the domestic quail should be treated within the EE on the same level.

It was decided that a Europe standard will be developed for the domestic quail and to begin with it was decided to go for the laying form from 200-250g and not the really heavy meat-type birds. Since quail are a specialty on its own, a working group of international specialist was created and instructed to draw up a standard including color varieties.

Especially for the color varieties it is very important to come up with a logical system of naming them which can be easily translated into other languages and will permit to easily name other mutations as they might appear in the future. Some of the names used at the moment are not suited for this.

To be continued...

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 for more information
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**Wyandotte & Araucana*****Original American breeds with European versions***

A problem that keeps coming up with the organization of every Europe show is that some breeds evolved enormously in some countries and didn't in others. In the end they still carry the same name but their appearance can be quite different. A classic example is the Wyandotte, which is still bred to the American standard in Holland and Belgium but changed dramatically in Germany. Not only the form and the structure of the tail but also the shape of the body and its position is completely different. These changes are so big that it would be impossible to unite both directions again. The same goes for the Araucana which has also undergone a metamorphosis in Germany from an elegant upright bird without a beard to a plumper horizontal bird with a beard.

Since Germany has a central position within Europe and serves as the main buying place for Eastern and Southern Europe almost all the birds in this region also belong to the newer German type. On Europe shows breeders from the West always stay at home with their birds because they would be 'crushed' by judges from other countries. Taking all this in account, the ESC-P decided that on the next Europe show in Metz this year both breeds will be split up in two classes and judged by different judges. This both for the large and bantam breeds. Breeders from Western Europe are encouraged not to stay at home this time and to show their birds to the rest of Europe. The only thing that remains to be decided is what the breeds will be called in the future.



Examples of birds that show the original (left) and the German (right) type.