



National Agriculture Youth show

Waterfowl Manual (Duck)



RULES

1. Age of participant:

1.1. Junior-Junior - 7 - 11 years

1.2. Junior - 12 - 15 years

1.3. Senior - 16 - 19 years

2. Clothing, as prescribed for washing, preparation and for showmanship, must be worn.

3. It must be the participant's own show duck, which is not younger than 9 months.

4. An official judge of the South African Show Poultry Organisation (SASPO) must act as judge. A junior judge who is trained in judging poultry by youth may assist the senior judge.

5. A theoretical, practical and oral examination will be conducted.

6. Theoretical examination (20%)

Multiple choice paper on sections 6 and 7, as well as on aspects contained in the manual in its entirety.

See Manual, sections 6 and 7.

7. Practical washing and preparation (30%)

7.1. Preparation and washing of show duck (15)

7.2. Handling of duck during washing and preparation (15) See Manual, sections 2.1 and 3

8. Showmanship (50%)

Judge the show duck by comparing the duck with the laid down Standard of Perfection (Breed Standards) of the South African Show Poultry Organisation (SASPO) for that specific breed. Available on www.saspo.org.za The correct dress code must be worn in this section.

See Manual, section 2.2

8.1. Correct handling of show duck (15)

8.2. Check for errors - disqualifications (10)

8.3. Mention strong and weak points of the entry (10)

8.4. Participant's attitude towards judges, cleanliness of candidate and attitude towards Youth Show (5)

8.5. Questions about own entry (10)

9. General

9.1. Each participant brings only one show duck

9.2. The duck must be transported in a neat and sturdy crate

9.3. No identification of participant's name may be placed on crates or containers

9.4. Booths may not be decorated with Province's colors, name of duck or participant, rosettes or any other decorations

9.5. Participant must bring own food.

9.6. Participant must care for his/her own duck before, during and after the show

9.7. Participant must provide own cleaning equipment

1. Introduction

This manual has been compiled for participants in the Agricultural Youth Show. It covers a fairly wide spectrum around the preparation of a show duck, the judging of a show duck, care, general knowledge and showing poultry. Available on www.saspo.org.za or www.nays.co.za.

2. Practical

2.1. Washing and preparing a show duck:

2.1.1. Preparation for a show begins at least 2 months before the show

2.1.2. Choose a show duck that you would like to show

2.1.3. Pull out all broken feathers. A feather takes 8 weeks to fully grow out

2.1.4. Wash the duck at least 3 days before the show to allow the natural oils to spread over the duck again (see p 8)

2.1.5. File the beak neatly three days before the show

2.1.6. Trim the toenails neatly three days before the show

2.1.7. Tame the duck by regularly taking it out of the cage and putting it back in

2.1.8. The duck must be free of visible disease and lice and be tame

2.1.9. The duck must be at least nine months old and the property of the participant

2.1.10. Since only a dry wash forms part of the show, the duck must be brought washed (see p 8)

2.1.11. Dry washing of the duck:

2.1.11.1. Necessities:

- Baby powder (non-toxic and odourless)
- Soft brush (such as a toothbrush or makeup brush)
- Soft cloth or towel
- Fine comb
- Cotton swabs
- Hair dryer

2.1.11.2. Step 1: Hold the duck gently but firmly on⁴ your lap or on a table covered with a towel.

2.1.11.3. Step 2: Sprinkle a small amount of baby powder over dirty or oily areas. Focus on the belly, tail, and back of the neck—these are common dirt spots. Avoid the eyes, beak, and nostrils.

2.1.11.4. Step 3: Use your fingers or a soft brush to gently work the powder into the feathers. This loosens dirt, absorbs oil, and freshens the plumage.

2.1.11.5. Step 4: Gently brush the powder out with a soft brush. Use a hair dryer on a cool setting to blow away excess powder if necessary

—always keep it on a low or no heat setting.

2.1.11.6. Step 5: Use cotton swabs to gently clean around the eyes, beak, and nostrils. Wipe the feet with a damp cloth, or use a toothbrush if they are very dirty.

2.1.11.7. Step 6: Gently smooth the feathers in their natural direction. Let the duck shake itself out and preen if it wants to - this helps to distribute the oils properly.

2.1.12. Important

2.1.12.1. When using a hair dryer, make sure it is always used in the direction of the feathers and never against the feathers.

2.1.12.2. Double check that all powder residue has been removed.

2.1.12.3. Practice regularly with your duck so that it is comfortable with handling.

2.2. Showmanship – 50 points

2.2.1. The assessment of your show duck counts 50 points and is awarded as follows:

2.2.1.1. Handling of duck from removal from cage, during assessment and return to cage (15)

2.2.1.2. Investigation for gross faults and disqualifications (10)

2.2.1.3. Mention strong and weak points of duck (10)

2.2.1.4. Participant's attitude, cleanliness and attitude towards judge and Youth Show (5)

2.2.1.5. Oral questions by judge (10)

2.2.2. Clothing (National) and aids for assessment

2.2.2.1. The shirt provided by National, a blue denim, belt and neat brown shoes

2.2.2.2. Judge's stick

2.2.3. Holding the duck

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2.2.3.1. Remove the duck from the cage correctly by placing one hand under the belly and holding both its legs firmly with your fingers (see figure 2)

2.2.3.2. Place your other hand on its back to hold the wings in position and pick it up

2.2.3.3. Carefully remove the duck head first



Figure 2

2.2.4. Examination for gross faults and disqualifications

2.2.4.1. Compare your duck with the established standard for your breed as contained in the Standard of Perfection of the South African Show Poultry Organisation (SASPO), available at www.saspo.org.za

2.2.4.2. Hold the duck away from your body and start at the head and look at the shape, eye colour and beak.

2.2.4.3. Examine the type of the duck by feeling all the constituent parts with the hand, width of back, length of neck etc.

2.2.4.4. Examine wing by opening the wing, hold the duck as

shown in figure 2. The wing is held with the other hand around the base of the wing and pressed to spread it naturally (see figure 3)

2.2.4.5. Examine the duck's tail

2.2.4.6. Examine the feet and legs properly

2.2.4.7. Compare the total plumage with the laid down standard.

2.2.4.8. Place duck back in cage with the head first

2.2.4.9. Use judge's stick to show off duck so that the external type can be properly judged

2.2.5. State strengths and weaknesses of duck

During judging, the contestant is expected to give his/her opinion of the duck orally to the examiner. The contestant must follow the process as described in 2.2.4 above and express himself/herself on each body part of the duck that he/she examines. All strengths and weaknesses must be highlighted.



Figure 3

2.2.6. Oral questions on own entry (10%)

2.2.6.1. Questions will be asked during showmanship in which the contestant must answer oral questions about the show duck that he/she entered for the Youth Show Championships prior to judging.

2.2.6.2. Candidates will be expected to know the laid down Standard of Perfection of the South African Show Poultry Organisation (SASPO) insofar as it relates to their own entry. Available at www.saspo.org.za.

2.2.6.3. Candidates should be able to answer, among others, the following questions about their own entry.

- Name of breed
- Country of origin of breed
- Classification of breed
- Egg colour
- Prescribed mass of breed
- General characteristics of your breed, in other words the type of the breed including all its constituent parts.

- The colour of your breed including the following: colour of total plumage, eye colour, colour of beak, nails, legs and toenails, colour of comb, bells and wattles
- Disqualifications of your breed
- The scoring scale

3. Washing a show duck

3.1. Bathing the duck (2–3 days before the show)

Bathing a duck is not just about cleaning—it promotes the natural oils in the feathers and improves their shine and condition. Bathing too close to show day can remove those oils, so timing is important. However, the feathers are very delicate, so care must be taken with washing.

3.2. Step 1 – Use lukewarm water

Fill a bowl with clean, lukewarm water that is deep enough for the duck to float and paddle comfortably.

3.3. Step 2 – Mild soap/shampoo

Use unscented dish soap (such as Dawn) or mild poultry shampoo. Avoid anything with perfumes or harsh chemicals.

Gently massage the soap into the feathers, especially around the anus, under the wings, and on the feet.

3.4. Step 3 – Rinse well

Rinse several times until all soap is completely washed out. Soap residue will ruin the shine of the feathers.

3.5. Step 4 – Clean head and beak

Use a damp cloth or sponge (no soap near the eyes) to wipe the head and around the beak.

3.6. Step 5 – Dry

Let the duck air dry in a warm, draft-free area or pat it dry gently with a towel.

Do not use a hair dryer unless it is on low heat and the duck is comfortable with it.

3.7. Step 6 – Return to a clean cage

After the bath, keep them in a dry, clean cage with fresh straw to avoid dirt.

Nail, Beak and Foot Care

4.1. Nails:

4.1.1. Use small nail clippers.

4.1.2. Only trim the tip of the nail—do not cut too close to the living part (the blood vessel inside).

4.1.3. If you cut too short and it starts to bleed, use astringent powder or cornstarch to stop it.

4.2. Beak:

4.2.1. Gently wipe the beak with a damp cloth to remove dirt.

4.2.2. Overgrown or jagged beaks can be lightly filed with a file.

4.2.3. Never trim or drastically change the beak.

4.3. Feet:

4.3.1. Gently wash feet with a soft brush and warm water to remove dirt or dander.

4.3.2. Watch for signs of bumblefoot or injuries—treat before the show.

4.3.3. Rub a little Vaseline or coconut oil on the feet for softness and shine

5. Feather care and maintenance

5.1. Feather preparation:

5.1.1. Do not clip feathers—judges are looking for full plumage.

5.1.2. Avoid keeping ducks with sharp objects or other birds that can pluck or break feathers.

5.1.3. Keep the bedding clean and dry to prevent stains or damage to feathers.

5.2. Activation of Oil Gland:

5.2.1. After bathing, ducks will re-groom themselves and spread their natural oils to keep their feathers waterproof and healthy.

5.2.2. Give them access to a small bowl of clean water for head dipping and grooming.

5.3. Final Finishes Before the Show:

5.3.1. On show day, gently wipe feathers with a soft, lint-free cloth.

5.3.2. Check for any dirt or droppings and carefully clean with a damp cloth.

5.4. For white ducks: if there are stains, dab gently with a paste of water and baking soda, rinse and dry.

Duck diseases:

6.1. 1. Duck viral enteritis (duck plague) Cause: A herpes virus Symptoms:

Sudden death

Bloody discharge from the cloaca

Lethargy, drooping wings, light-sensitive eyes

Treatment:

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No specific cure; affected birds are usually culled.

Prevention: Vaccination (if available), strict biosecurity, and quarantine of new birds.

6.2. Aspergillosis (Fungal infection)

Cause: Moldy feed, straw, or bedding

Symptoms:

Gasping, labored breathing Loss of appetite

Weight loss and weakness

Treatment:

Antifungal medication (e.g. Itraconazole or Amphotericin B) prescribed by a veterinarian

Remove moldy bedding/feed and disinfect cages

6.3. Botulism ("Sluggish Neck")

Cause: Toxin from Clostridium botulinum in rotten food or water

Symptoms:

Sluggish neck, paralysis

Inability to walk or raise head Death within 24–48 hours

Treatment:

Antitoxin if detected early (veterinarian required)

Rinse with activated charcoal or Epsom salt solution orally Remove source of toxin immediately

6.4. Bumblefoot (Foot Inflammation)

Cause: Bacteria entering through foot injuries

Symptoms:

Swelling on bottom of foot Lameness

Crust or abscess formation

Treatment:

Soak in warm Epsom salt water Apply antibiotic ointment

Severe cases: Veterinarian may drain abscess or prescribe antibiotics

6.5. Coccidiosis

Cause: Parasites in the intestines (protozoa)

Symptoms:

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Bloody or mucus-filled droppings Diarrhoea

Weakness, drooping wings

Treatment:

Amprolium (Corid) in water for 5–7 days Sanitize cage thoroughly

Avoid wet bedding

6.6. Pasteurellosis (Fowl Plague)

Cause: *Pasteurella multocida* bacteria

Symptoms:

Swollen wattles or joints Greenish diarrhoea Sudden death Treatment:

Antibiotics (e.g. penicillin, sulfadimethoxine) prescribed by a veterinarian

Biosecurity and rodent control help prevention

6.7. External Parasites (Mites/Lice)

Cause: Infestation of bedding or other birds

Symptoms:

Feather loss Excessive scrubbing or plucking Anemia (pale comb/skin) Treatment:

Dust with a bird-safe insecticide (e.g. permethrin) Clean bedding and replace it

Repeat treatment weekly until gone

6.8. Wet Feathers

Cause: Loss of waterproofing due to poor care or dirty environment

Symptoms:

Water-soaked, lumpy feathers Cold and poor buoyancy Treatment:

Keep duck dry and warm

Provide clean water for self-grooming Improve hygiene and nutrition

Sometimes a gentle bath with dish soap and rinse can help to re-invigorate self-grooming

7. Theoretical General

A written paper, worth 20 marks, will be written on section 7, as well as on the rest of the manual.

DUCK

(*Anas boschas*)

Ducks are swimming birds with webbed feet, short legs and broad bills from the Anatidae family. This family includes freshwater and wood ducks (Anatinae), sea and bay ducks (Fullgulinae), and the piscivorous duck species such as the Merginae (sawtooth ducks).

It is generally accepted that all duck breeds, with the exception of the Muscovy duck, are descended from the wild mallard. This is especially evident in breeds such as the Rouen. Some believe that the Black East Indian duck, the Cayuga and the original white ducks of the world arose as spontaneous mutations of the mallard. Some may have been bred for body size and meat characteristics through domestication and selection, which eventually led to the Aylesbury as we know it today. The Mallard also played a role in the development of the Khaki Campbell.

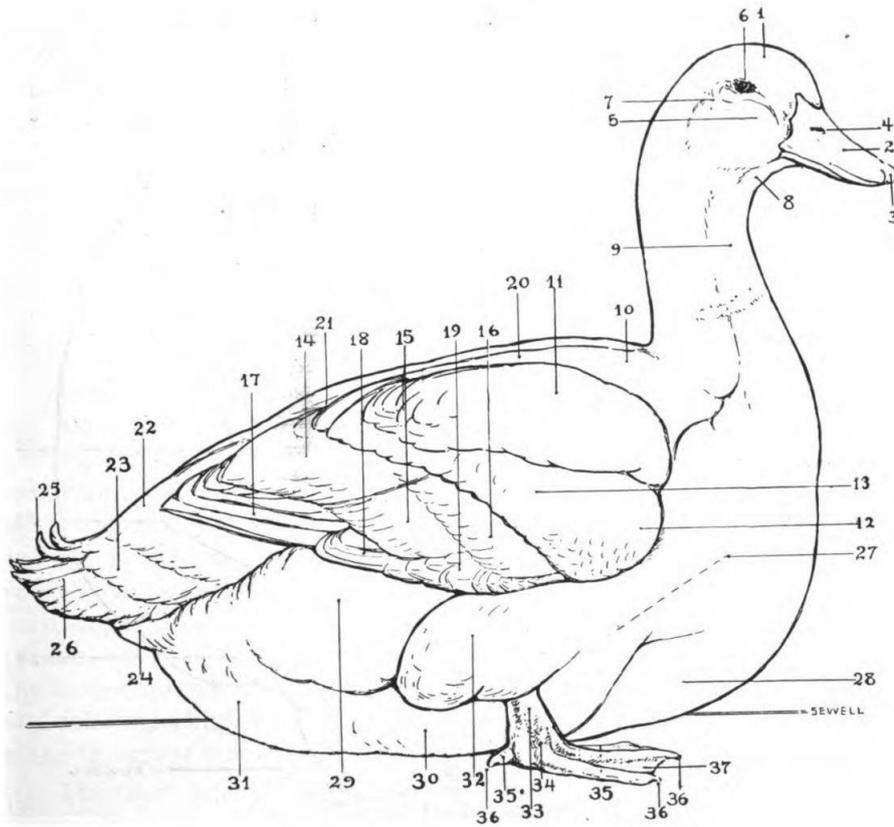
The wild Muscovy duck (*Cairina moschata*) is native to Central and South America, where it was domesticated long before Columbus arrived in 1492. It is a distinct breed, and when crossed with other duck breeds, the offspring are infertile.

Ducks are not only popular for display purposes, but are also useful and profitable for the production of meat and eggs. The wide variety in size, type and colour patterns gives breeders a wide choice to choose a breed that best suits their needs. From the large, meaty White Pekin, to the slender Runner, or from the large White Aylesbury or the impressive, beautiful Rouen to the small Call duck and East Indian duck, there is a plethora to choose from.

The S.A. Waterfowl Association classifies the Carolina, Mandarin duck and all other South African or foreign breeds of wild ducks as ornamental ducks.

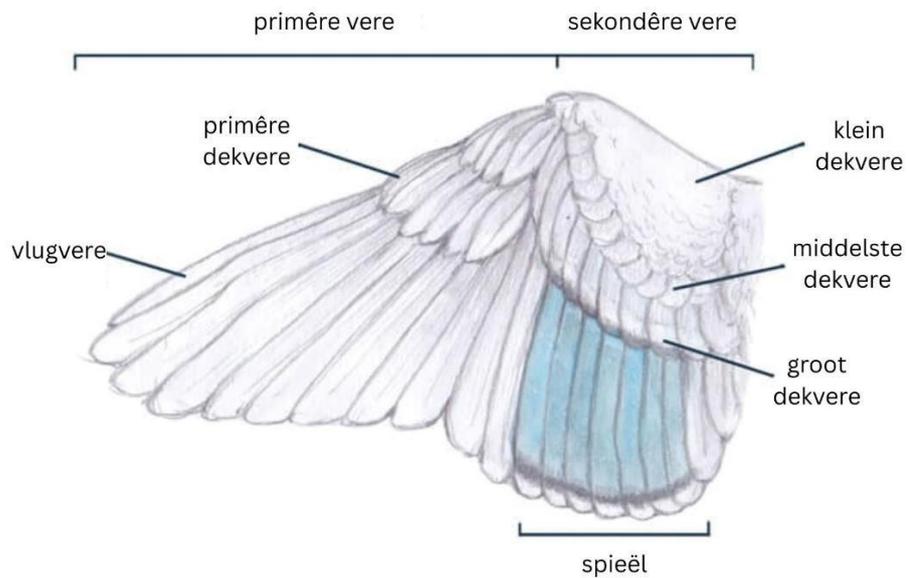
7.1. Composition of a Shoveler:

7.1.1. External anatomy of a Shoveler



1	Head	20	Back
2	Beak	21	Saddle
3	Bill	22	Croup
4	Nostril	23	Tail Coverts
5	Face	24	Undertail coverts
6	Eye	25	Curlet
7	Ear	26	Tail
8	Throat	27	Breast
9	Neck	28	Sternum
10	Mantle	29	Body
11	Shoulder	30	Abdomen or belly
12	Wing tip	31	Down feathers
13	Wing Arch	32	Thigh feathers
14	Secondary feathers	33	Legs
15	Coverts of the flight pin	34	Leg
16	Coverts or wing stripe	35	Toes
17	Primary feathers or flight feathers	36	Toenail
18	Flight Coverts	37	Webbed surface
19	Thumb feathers		

7.1.2. Wing



7.2. Classification of different show duck breeds:

7.2.1. Bantam

Appleyard Bantam

Black East Indian

Call Duck

High Flyer

7.2.2. Light

Campbell

Crested

Gimbsheimer

Indian Runnerv

Magpie

Orpington

Pomeranian

Welsh Harlequin

7.2.3. Heavy

Appleyard

Aylesbury

Cayuga

Muscovy

Rouen Clair

Pekin

Rouen

Saxony

Swedish

7.3. Common colours found in show ducks:

Grey, White, Brown, Apricot, Blue, Trout, Black, Snow, Saxony, Chestnut, Buff, Black and White, Blue and White.

7.4. Common defects disqualifications:

7.4.1. Eyes:

7.4.1.1. Unpaired

7.4.1.2. Colour of the iris that is foreign to the variety.

7.4.1.3. Blind in one or both eyes

7.4.1.4. Irregular pupil indicating leukosis.

7.4.2. Beak:

7.4.2.1. Hollow

7.4.2.2. Deformed

7.4.3. Feathering:

7.4.3.1. Any feather or feathers with a colour foreign to the breed or variety, visible on the outside of the plumage.

7.4.3.2. Any artificially coloured feather(s).

7.4.3.3. Any manipulated or fused feathers.

7.4.4. Legs and Feet:

7.4.4.1. Any colour foreign to the breed.

7.4.4.2. Deformed foot and foot joints.

7.4.4.3. Crooked toe or toes.

7.4.4.4. Absence of toes or toenails.

7.4.4.5. Extra toenails.

7.4.5. Health:

7.4.5.1. Any animal showing obvious symptoms of any disease, including "bumble foot".

7.4.5.2. Any sick animal.

7.4.6. Body:

7.4.6.1. Any deformity.

7.4.6.2. Crooked, arched or deformed back.

7.4.7. Wings:

7.4.7.1. Slippery wing

7.4.7.2. All breeds of waterfowl, except Muscovy, East India and Call ducks: Primary or secondary feathers clipped.

7.4.7.3. Angel wings (where the wing tip is inverted at the outer joint), one or both.

7.4.8. Type:

7.4.8.1. Not in accordance with the standard.

7.4.9. Constitution:

7.4.9.1. Any animal that shows a lack of ground health (constitutional strength).

7.5. Classification for show entries:

Code	Sex

8. Acknowledgement

Original manual written by Mr Jaco van Wyk, SASPO Youth Representative '25.

Acknowledgement is gratefully given to Mr Willie Hall and Mr John Faure for their input and review of the manual.

9. Adjustment of manual

Any revision, updating, addition or amendment of the manual will be done by a committee chaired by the SASPO Youth Representative. The

committee will consist of two members and each member must be a recognised judge of the Southern African Show Poultry Organisation (SASPO).

