

## Coop Training – Now the Fun Begins!

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The best time of the year is upon us when we start to line the young birds up in the show pens. We look them over and get some idea what the show team may look like.

Once the show team is picked out, they should be housed separately from other birds as they will and should receive different treatment from the others. Coop training will come first and continue until show time. One hour per week is a plenty. Handle them several times during this hour and give them a yeast pill down the throat at this time as it will increase their appetite and make their feathers shine.

Breeders that do not coop train their birds and show flighty, untamed birds should not expect to win. If you are lucky, you will raise or obtain a Giant Homer that is docile plus has the ability to show-put on the "Hollywood" if you will. This ability to show is a trait. Very few have it, most don't. Birds with this ability should most certainly be kept as breeders as this trait is hereditary. While out for the one hour per week, you must train them to be able to show on the top show coops as well as the bottom show coops where they will become accustomed to a roof over their heads. You always hope the judge will put them back on top where they show best but you never know. The judging stick is still used by a few judges, so you must be prepared. Using the training stick during the coop training hour is a must to get the young birds use to it. Preparing the young birds for a left-handed judge is important. Also, if a breeder is left-handed, he surely must prepare his birds for right-handed judges. If you have the facilities, it is good to train your birds in a building with artificial lighting preparing them for the show halls.

A breeder can go through all the training and preparations you can think of to get his young birds ready for show and "wham" he crams them into a carrying box that is totally alien to the young show birds. What if one of them is claustrophobic? Stress sets in and all preparations were for nothing so carry box training is in order. Box training can be done after the one-hour training period by placing them in the box for maybe 5 minutes on the way back to their grow pens.

The ultimate goal of all the coop and box training is to lessen, as much as you can, the stress on your birds. STRESS is the #1 enemy of your show birds on the show circuit and all the birds in your lofts.

Good luck at the show and hope you raise a Champion.

Next Quarter- "Fitting for Show" -Getting your birds ready for the Show Season.