



# CONSTITUTION OF COCHINS INTERNATIONAL



*Effective September 1, 2023, as amended by the General Membership Referendum held June, 2023.*

## **ARTICLE I. NAME**

The name of this organization shall be Cochins International, a non-profit organization.

## **ARTICLE II. PURPOSE**

The purpose of the organization shall be to promote, encourage and foster the development of the Cochin breed of poultry to include large fowl, bantams and Pekins (International).

## **ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP**

Any person or group interested in the objectives of this organization is eligible for membership.

## **ARTICLE IV. OFFICERS**

The Executive Board of the organization shall consist of the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Immediate Past President and will make up the budget committee. The Board of Directors shall consist of the Executive Board and the District Directors. These officers shall have full discretion and decision in any and all non-constitutional questions that may arise, except as limited in the By-Laws and vote of the membership. They shall be elected in the manner and for the terms hereinafter specified in the By-Laws.

## **ARTICLE V. MEETINGS**

The President, as deemed necessary, shall call the regular meetings and/or special meetings of this organization.

## **ARTICLE VI. SHOWS**

There will be two NATIONAL SHOWS a year, one Eastern and one Western. Show regions will be separated primarily by the Mississippi River and will allow for Eastern and Western Regions and Canada. An attempt will be made to place National Shows on a rotational basis by regions.

National Meets are established to promote & advance exhibition of the Cochin breed and, as National Meets, should reflect the best interests of the entire Club membership. All aspects & criteria of bids received are given consideration, including, but not limited to: premiums offered, quality of venue & facilities, location, date of show, past show attendance & performance, and expected show attendance & performance.

DISTRICT SHOWS and SPECIAL MEETS will be placed by the respective District Directors with District Shows placed on a rotational basis. All clubs that request a meet will be issued a Special Meet if not awarded a District or National Show.

## ARTICLE VII. MASTER BREEDER AND MERIT AWARD

Members earn Master Breeder points based on the number of Cochins exhibited at shows which host Cochins International meets. There are currently three Master Breeder point total recognition levels:

Gold: 500 Points Earned in One Variety / Master Breeder Status and Plaque  
Silver: 250 Points Earned in One Variety / Merit Certificate of Achievement  
Bronze: 100 Points Earned in One Variety / Merit Certificate of Achievement

>Master Breeder points will be allowed for all recognized and non-recognized color Varieties of Cochins, and points can only be gained within the breed.

>The program is based on one point for every five birds shown.

>The ultimate goal is 500 points in not less than five years in any one variety.

>Membership must be current to qualify for Master Breeder points. If an individual has lapsed membership for one year or more, the points will be removed from the records unless all absent years of outstanding membership dues are paid back in full.

>NOTE: For historical purposes, former members achieving 100 or more points in a variety will be recorded and maintained indefinitely (See ARTICLE IV, By-Laws).

Points are accumulated as follows:

Master Breeder upon achieving 500 points in no less than five (5) years.

The points are awarded for the highest win an individual bird earns in its class.

1. One point is earned for every five Cochins exhibited for Best and Reserve of Variety.
2. One point is earned for every five Cochins of Recognized Varieties exhibited for Best and Reserve AOV\* at all meets.
3. One point is earned for every five Cochins exhibited for Best and Reserve of Breed.
4. One point is earned for every five Cochins exhibited for Overall Champion (LF and Bantams). There must be at least five Large Fowl and five Bantam Cochins in competition.

\*In October of 2016, the General Membership of Cochins International voted to adopt the following as our Official Club Definition for AOV Placements & Awards: *“AOV awards should not include birds from the following varieties: Black, White, or the Varieties from which the Best of Breed or the Reserve of Breed have been determined.”*

## ARTICLE VIII. JUNIOR PROGRAMS

The Cochins International Junior Programs are created to provide guidance, assistance and support under the direction of the Junior Chair and other adult members serving as mentors. The goal is to promote Junior interest, educate and reward their progress in raising and exhibiting cochins.

## ARTICLE IX. AMENDMENTS

The Constitution and/or the By-Laws may be amended at any annual meeting by two-thirds (2/3) of the members present at the time votes are taken, provided that written notice of the proposed amendment(s) was sent to the entire membership at least 30 days in advance of the meeting. The entire membership shall then be notified within 30 days of ratification.

In the event of any natural or man-made disaster beyond the control of the Club, the Board of Directors shall have the authority to temporarily suspend and/or override any relevant portion of the Club Constitution and/or By-Laws, and shall act in good faith to exercise any necessary and/or corrective action that is in the best interest of the Breed, Club and Membership.

# BY-LAWS

## ARTICLE I. MEMBERSHIP AND DUES

SECTION 1. Membership is open to any Cochins or Pekin enthusiast who is willing to abide by the Constitution and By-laws of Cochins International.

SECTION 2. Active membership options in the organization include:

- a. Individual membership
- b. Family membership
- c. Junior membership (17 years old and younger)

SECTION 3. Members in good standing have the voting privileges of one vote (1) per membership (including individual, family or junior membership).

SECTION 4. Dues required for each class of membership shall be set by the Board of Directors. Payment of annual dues ensures organization membership in good standing from January 1st to December 31st of each year; dues are payable in advance. Dues are considered delinquent on February 1st.

SECTION 5. The business and fiscal year of the organization shall be the normal calendar year, January 1st to December 31st.

## ARTICLE II. OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

SECTION 1. The officers of this organization shall be elected by mail-in vote on or before November 1st of even numbered years, and the officers will take office on January 1st of the following year. Officers shall hold office for a period of two years and shall be eligible for re-election.

SECTION 2. The Executive Board of the organization shall consist of the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Immediate Past President. The Board of Directors (BOD) of the organization shall be composed of the Executive Board (5) and the District Directors (9).

SECTION 3. A majority of the Officers and Directors present at any regular meeting shall constitute a quorum.

SECTION 4. In the event of the death, resignation or removal of any Officer or Director, the vacancy shall be immediately filled by a majority vote of the remaining members of the Board of Directors to finish out the unexpired term.

SECTION 5. Qualifications and Eligibility:

All Officers and District Directors must execute Duties as stated in By-Laws Article III; must be at least 18 years of age at commencement of term; AND

District Directors: Must have been a Cochins International member for at least one full year immediately prior to commencement of term.

Officers: Must have served as a District Director for at least one full 2-year term prior to commencement of term; OR must have been a Cochins International member for at least three (3) full years immediately prior to commencement of term.

## ARTICLE III. DUTIES OF OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

SECTION 1. The President shall be the chief executive officer of the organization and shall preside at all meetings of the organization, and during this term of office shall be charged with the general supervision of the affairs of the organization. The President will also write an article for each newsletter and keep webmaster up-to-date with items of club interest to post. The President shall acquire nominations for Officers and Directors from the general membership for the following term and disseminate biographies/letters of intent to the general membership for vote.

SECTION 2. The Vice President shall assist the President as needed and in the absence of the President shall take on the duties of that Officer. The Vice President will also write an article for each newsletter.

SECTION 3. The Secretary shall keep the regular written records of the Organization. He/She shall be responsible for issuing notices of all meetings via the newsletter or the internet. He/She shall write an article for each newsletter.

SECTION 4. The Treasurer shall receive, safeguard and account for all financial resources of the Organization. He/She shall disburse payments at the direction of the President. He/She is responsible for writing an article for the newsletter stating the balance and activity of the Organizational account(s). The Treasurer shall also maintain and keep track of any on-line payment account(s). In the event of the dissolution of the Organization, the Treasurer shall initiate the following process: The Treasurer shall call a meeting of the Board of Directors to determine the distribution of the assets. Any number remaining on the Board of Directors will constitute a quorum. In the event no Board of Directors' members are located, the Treasurer will dispose of the assets by donating assets to both the APA/ABA on an equal basis.

SECTION 5. The District Directors are elected representatives of the Club. Currently, Cochins International operates with eight (8) North American districts plus one (1) International district. The eight North American Districts include:

NORTHEAST 1	(CT, ME, MA, NH, NY, RI, and VT)
NORTHEAST 2	(DE, MD, NJ, PA, VA, and WV)
NORTH CENTRAL	(IL, IN, KY, MI, OH, and WI)
SOUTH EAST	(AL, GA, FL, MS, NC, SC, and TN)
SOUTHWEST	(AR, CO, KS, LA, MO, NM, OK, and TX)
WEST CENTRAL	(IA, MN, MT, NE, ND, SD, and WY)
PACIFIC	(AK, AZ, CA, HI, ID, NV, OR, UT, and WA)
CANADA	

District Directors:

- Serve as a conduit for information and take back items of concern and questions to the executive board from their districts and to bring information from the Board of Directors back to the membership.
- Participate in quarterly Board of Director meetings as called by the President.
- Place one district meet within their district each year and place special meets of the club at other shows within their district as needed.
- Sends Club information, show report forms and membership forms to any show hosting a meet.
- When possible, solicits awards for cochin classes (both open and junior) especially for the national and district show.
- Solicit bids for National meets from shows within their districts when the National rotates into their district. Brings bids back to the Executive Board for vote on the National meet placement.
- Writes an article for each newsletter of the club (Newsletters are published 3 times per year).
- Keeps the webmaster apprised of items of interest to members including special meets, district meets and other items of interest to Cochin breeders.
- Encourages non-member Cochin exhibitors to join the club.
- Provide assistance to members seeking quality birds and to be willing to talk "Cochin" to anyone interested in the breed.

The International District Director of Cochins International does not operate like the above-mentioned district directors. The International District Director is a good will ambassador to Cochin breeders in other parts of the world and functions to share information, photos, show results, breeding and other information about Cochins with our international members and friends when possible. There are other standards in other countries to which Cochins are bred and recognizing this fact and sharing information with our fellow Cochin breeders around the world (in both directions) makes us a truly international group.

## **ARTICLE IV. COMMITTEES AND CHAIRS**

SECTION 1. Committees and chairs may be appointed as needed by the President. Current Chair assignments and duties include:

Membership Chair: Keeps records of active members. Acquires membership applications and forwards fees to Treasurer. Forwards copy of current members to Officers, Directors, and Chairs on a yearly basis.

Junior Member Chair: Acts as a resource for our junior members and parents focusing on activities, competition and education. Arranges for Junior awards, oversees and keeps track of points for Junior Exhibitor Awards. Also implements and encourages new programs as appropriate (i.e., Youth Breeder Development Program, the pin award program, points award system to award juniors on an annual basis, and the A.C. E. Program in conjunction with the APA/ABA Youth Poultry Club). Writes an article for each newsletter.

Master Breeder Points Chair: Receives completed show reports and calculates points for Master Breeder Program. Provides Newsletter Editor with point totals for newsletters. The names of deceased or otherwise inactive members and their respective point totals will be maintained by variety on the Master Breeder Program Listing indefinitely for historical purposes provided they have attained a minimum of 100 points in a variety. They may be identified with an asterisk at the discretion of the Master Breeder Points Chair.

Newsletter Editor: Acquires articles and items of interest to generate three (3) newsletters per calendar year. Prints and mails (both email and U.S. mail) in a timely manner.

Breed Directory Chair: Acquires member information, articles and items of interest to generate a Breed Directory every two years. Prints and mails in a timely manner.

Social Media Chair: Acquires items of interest to maintain the Club's website and updates information. Also acts as the administrator for Facebook and other forms of social media. May solicit two volunteers to aid as assistant administrators. Keeps BOD informed of any major issues that need to be addressed.

Historian Chair: Maintains historical club records and items of interest (i.e., names of prominent past members, master breeder points (100 pts in a variety minimum), significant achievements of former members, historical documents, photos, news clippings of major wins, etc., involving the cochin breed, i.e., large fowl, bantams and Pekins.

SECTION 2. The Budget Committee will be a standing committee and include the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Immediate Past President.

## **ARTICLE V. NATIONAL MEETS**

There will be two NATIONAL SHOWS a year, one Eastern and one Western. The President of Cochins International must receive national bids by July 30th for consideration for the following year. The host District Director will provide recommendations for host show and judges to the President to review and present to the Board of Directors for vote. In the event a Board Member holds two offices he/she will be allowed only one vote.

## ARTICLE VI: CODE OF CONDUCT

In order to promote values such as integrity, service and friendship, education in promoting purebred poultry and to maintain consistency throughout the poultry fancy, Cochins International will adopt the American Bantam Association (ABA) Code of Conduct as follows:

Purpose:

1. Provides a democratic and orderly process to address activities that may have a negative impact to the integrity, operation and long-term health of Cochins International.
2. Promotes values that maintain the strength and longevity of Cochins International.

Grounds for Disciplinary Actions:

1. Theft or any other actions that impact or compromise the financial integrity of Cochins International.
2. Organized or individual attempts to purposely slander or discredit the integrity or stature of Cochins International, its Officers, Regional Directors and/or the general membership.
3. Misrepresentation of Cochins International credentials, logo, property, etc., for the purpose of personal gain.
4. Discrimination and harassment based on race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, or any other class.
5. Violence or threats of violence.
6. Any additional actions that result in significant negative impact to Cochins International.

Procedures for Addressing Code of Conduct Violations:

1. The Board of Directors will conduct an appropriate hearing to validate or disprove any of the above violations.
2. The discussion/hearing shall be held at the next scheduled meeting of the Board of Directors. (If there is an immediate need to discuss or address an urgent issue, other forms of communication/discussion may be used including e-mail, phone, conference, etc.)
3. Recommended disciplinary actions must be passed by a majority vote of the Board of Directors of Cochins International.
4. Disciplinary steps as agreed upon by majority vote will be communicated by the President of Cochins International.

Disciplinary Actions:

Any member who fails to maintain adherence to the Cochins International Code of Conduct is subject to disciplinary action, including but not limited to the following in any order or combination:

1. Verbal warning issued by any member of the Executive Board of Cochins International.
2. Written warning issued by Cochins International.
3. Membership suspension for six months or greater.
4. Permanent membership suspension.

All final disciplinary actions and decisions are up to the complete discretion of the Board of Directors of Cochins International.