

SINGLE vs. DOUBLE MATING

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WHAT IS SINGLE MATING?

In certain breeds the standard decrees that the characteristics of the male and female should be different, which necessitates double-mating, explained below. Where the standard for the two sexes is practically the same, then single mating is sufficient. By single mating I mean the breeding of both sexes as exhibition specimens from one mating or single pen of birds.

WHAT IS DOUBLE MATING?

Double-mating means the mating of two pens, one to produce exhibition cockerels and the other exhibition pullets. This process of breeding has done much to spoil many good old breeds, for few little men have accommodation sufficient to keep two pens. Many poultry fanciers give this double-mating question some hard knocks, but we have only the Club Standards to blame. When a new breed comes into being, the first desire of the faddists is to draw up a standard that is hard to breed to. They contend that it is better to have a breed that is difficult to obtain high-class specimens of, than where we can easily breed winners. As things are at present, double-mating is necessary in many breeds, and I leave it at that.

In the case of laced varieties, such as the beautiful Gold and Silver Laced Wyandottes, we have perforce to adopt the double mating principles. If we mated the Palace winning Cock to the Palace winning Pullet we should breed birds that were of very inferior quality. By fitting up a cockerel-breeding pen and a pullet breeding pen our chances are excellent. In the cockerel-breeding pen of any variety the male will be a tip-top show specimen and his mates females that are not show birds, but merely breeders likely to throw high-class cockerels when mated to the exhibition male. The pullets from this mating will, of course, be "duds" and not fit for show purposes. The females in the pullet-breeding pen will all be first-class exhibition birds and the male not a show bird, but a breeder most likely to breed tip-top exhibition pullets. The cockerels from this mating will be "duds" and unfit for the show bench. The whole modus operandi can be thinned down to this: The cockerel-breeding male must possess all the necessary characteristics to breed exhibition cockerels, whilst the pullet breeding male must boast of those characteristics that will go to breed exhibition pullets. The system is not so complicated as it would appear at first sight and is interesting to follow out, but there must, of course, be many "wasters" in the progeny whether male or female respectively. In many cases fanciers are satisfied with breeding one sex only and winning honors with same. They specialize in pullets or cockerels, keeping the pullet-breeders or cockerel-breeders only as the case may be. This naturally does not entail so much work as would be necessary if the two sorts were bred.