

## PHYSICAL EXAM FOR CHICKENS

| <b>Body Part</b>   | <b>Healthy / normal</b>  | <b>Sick / infested / injured symptoms</b>  |
|--|--|--|
| Eyes   | clear, clean, wide open, alert   | dull, discharge, closed, swelling, wound, frothy, inflamed   |
| Face / comb / wattle   | clean, soft, blemish free, healthy deep red indicating good blood supply, (some faces are not red)               | scaly, hard, dark, bluish or pale, scabs, wounds, bugs, swelling, shrunken, black or white bumps   |
| Posture  | head erect, good balance, stand or perch on both feet on extended legs, good grip on perch, facing activity      | head tucked into neck or drooping, fluffed feathers, lying on keel, stand on one foot, reclusive, depressed, weak, uncoordinated, wing droop |
| Odor   | none or slightly fermented hay   | strong, foul, sour or cheesy odor  |
| Beak / nostrils  | clean, uniform, shiny and solid  | wet with mucus, crusted with food or dirt debris, cracked or chipped   |
| Legs / feet  | clean, shiny, uniform scales and nails, foot bottom soft and blemish free, legs and toes straight and functional | thick and crusty scales, broken toes, sores, unable to grip, swollen or hot joints   |
| Feathers   | clean, bright, shiny, smooth or fluffy   | dull, dirty, broken or missing feathers, ragged, holes, blanched, clumps of dirt or parasite eggs, moving parasites                          |
| Wings  | held close to body, symmetrical, smooth movement in joints when flexed, flight feathers intact                   | wings droop or held out from body, asymmetrical  |
| Skin   | clean, soft, pale pink and translucent (some breeds have bare red patches at shoulders and keel)                 | dirty, sores, cysts, bruising, gangrene, look for moving parasites   |
| Droppings  | 70% odorless green/ white firm, 30% stinky brown pasty (cecal), watery if stressed                               | poorly formed, consistently pasty or watery, strong smelling, black, blood, foamy  |
| Keel (sternum)   | Straight, good muscle on either side (rounded shape to chest), lump free   | crooked or protruding keel with little or no muscle, sharp "V" shape to chest, masses  |
| Crop (on bird's right side of lower neck)                            | full, contents of consumed food easily palpated  | consistently empty, hard or mushy feel, grossly enlarged   |
| Vent   | petite, clean, moist, soft, pliant   | enlarged, soiled, hard, cracked, sore, lumps of feces or parasite eggs on feathers, moving parasites   |
| Respiration (stethoscope at dorsal midline of back at scapula level) | 12-37 per min., inspiration louder and shorter than expiration, minimal chest movement, closed beak              | cracks, pops, wheezing, whistling, coughing, sneezing, louder expiration, open beak breathing, head shaking                                  |
| Heart rate   | 220-360 per min.   |  |