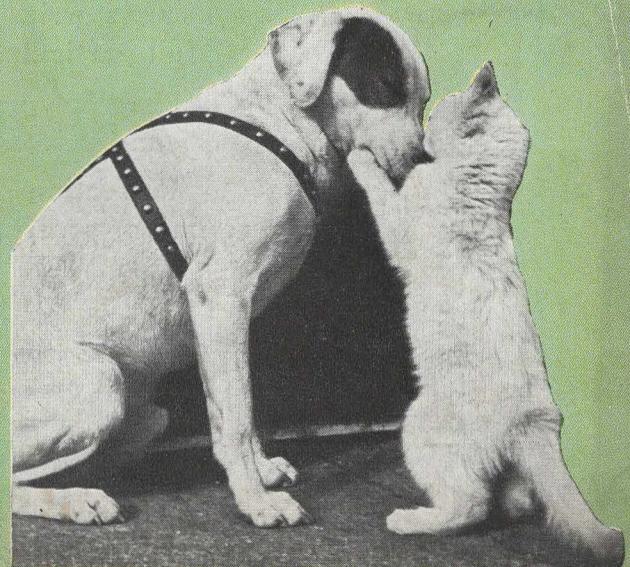
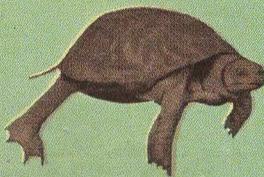
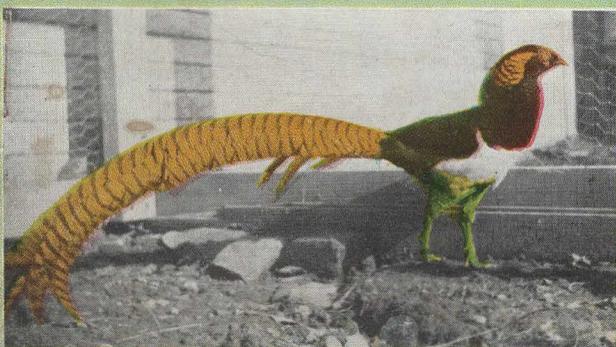
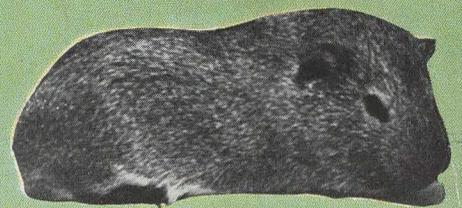
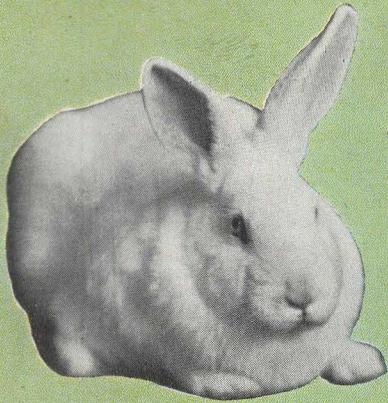


ALL-PETS MAGAZINE

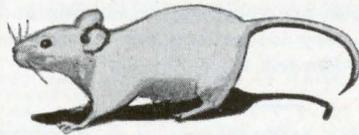
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FANCY MICE



ERRORS IN MOUSE BREEDING

SCIENCE is a word we use too readily to-day, so that for many people it has acquired an almost magic sound with a new and in some cases a bogus connotation. It is well to remember that word science just means knowledge. A great deal which passes for science in only hypothesis.

In mouse breeding this is particularly true. A hundred different theories are propounded and followed by some breeders though they know it is yet to be shown that the theory is sound. Take the question of mating for type:

Some fanciers say: Mate an old doe to a young buck; others say the young doe to the old buck, and this is considered an all-important thing. But on reflection it must be obvious to anyone that it is not all-important. Obviously it is not enough to put a doe to the best looking buck you can find—even though he may be perfect himself and perhaps the sire of perfect youngsters—unless he is suitable as a mate for your particular doe. That is the main consideration. You must study his make-up. Unless you know that, you are lost to start with. If you do know, compare it with that of the doe before you come to any sound decision. Even then you may be wrong, but at least you have a guide.

You should know the strain from which come the good points of your buck as you should know the strain from which the weak points of your doe. Thus you will be able to conjecture reasonably whether one will correct the other in the progeny.

In this respect a common mistake of the breeder is to expect too much from the buck. It is not sufficiently realized that the doe plays as great if not a greater part than the male, and that a doe of bad breeding will invariably have more bad than good youngsters no matter to how perfect a buck she is mated. It takes two to make the litter, and the dam is certainly not to be ignored.

Then comes line breeding, which I should define as selective in-breeding. You keep to the same strain but do

not necessarily go so close as in normal in-breeding. Line breeding is productive of good results; close in-breeding, to which most breeders resort, is, in my opinion, to be strongly deprecated. Good results in type and form will never compensate for loss of stamina. This loss persistent in-breeding too often renders irrevocable.

Health and virility are obvious points yet often overlooked. No doe should be mated unless in first class condition. Moreover the buck must be vigorous. A too popular stud buck is apt to be over-used, and any decline in virility will be manifest in the young.

There is the theory that to secure a higher proportion of does in a litter young does should be mated to old bucks, but few proofs of this (if any) have been established. Practical experience remains the best guide.—*J. Partington.*

CAGES FOR MICE

The types of cage in which the animals are kept are varied, some being excellent; others the reverse. In the past no other method was ever thought of except that of the wooden box with some holes in the lid, and one in either end, covered with perforated zinc, "quite a useful type" no doubt some of the older breeders will say. But it is one which often causes the animals to become sweated through lack of ventilation, and this is where the racks come in useful, since abundant air may pass between the cages. Another drawback to a cage on which the lid must be removed for feeding is that of having to take the cages off the shelf. Where there is no shelving it is worse still, as the cages are then stacked one on top of the other, all having to be moved before feeding can be done.

A much better type of cage in use to-day is one which might be termed self contained, i.e., the animals may be fed from the front by means of a hinged door or a wire frame. This expedites matters very much in feeding and also allows the little occupants to be seen. This in itself is

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worth while if only for the pleasure that may be obtained by the owner being able to watch the mice in their interesting habits.

Some breeders use a box with a sleeping compartment that has a hinged door on the front and the run covered on the front by a glass panel. Access is through a small door in the top. These cages have the distinct advantage of allowing the occupants to be seen so that their growth and qualities may be easily followed. Quite a suitable size in this type is a cage of about 15 in. long, 8 in. high and 7 in. from back to front.

A very convenient size of cage for those with the wire front which is hinged and opens is 18 in. x 7 in. x 6 in. high, with the greater part of the lid of perforated zinc which, by the way, is removable for cleaning purposes. Cages of this size are very convenient in which to run a doe and litter or even two young litters, whilst if one so desires they can be made double the width.

PET MICE

Domestic Mice available at present in America and Europe fall into two distinct groups and belong to two distinct species. The common, large types of Fancy Mice are all derived from the House Mouse, *Mus musculus*. These, at present exceptionally popular, have reached a high degree of selection of type form and color, mainly through the efforts of English fanciers. The best of these are large in size, elegant in form and of a wide variety of very attractive colors. They represent a very wide departure, indeed, from their humble little ancestor.

The other, rarer type of Domestic Mouse is the so-called Dancing or Waltzing Mouse, *Mus wagneri*. The tiny black and white spotted Japanese Waltzing Mice are the best known of this group of pet Mice. All of these are very small in size—less than half the size of good specimens of House Mice. In addition to being small in size, the *wagneri* are graceful in form and extremely active. Their activity is largely a very swift dancing or waltzing in circles. This they continue through their waking hours—a dizzy whirl; and barely take time to eat and drink. The Waltzing Mouse should be bred very small and active so that their special entertaining feature, the dance, may be well developed. They are the bantams of the Domestic Mouse tribe. At present the Waltzing Mice are also bred in a variety of attractive colors.

They do not climb or gnaw their cages so are very easy to confine and make very interesting and attractive pets.—*Horace W. Feldman*.

CAVY WEIGHTS AT BIRTH

At birth cavies vary considerably in weight. Baby self reds, for example, in a litter of two will weigh approximately four ounces each, while in a litter of four their average weight will be round about two ounces.

The correct way to view the position is not that one young pig at birth is two ounces heavier than the other, but that it is twice its weight. There is just the same difference between them as there is between an infant ten lbs. at birth and another of five lbs. and it takes months before the two ounce cavy can hope to catch up to the four ounce cavy and very much longer still in the case of the lesser weight infant.

CAVY CHARACTERISTICS

Cavies have super-sensitive noses, not tough snouts like our rooting farmyard hogs. A smart blow with a ruler just above the nose puts a sufferer quickly out of his misery.

Cavies are inclined to be loose coated. To rub them up the wrong way makes them squeal and should be avoided.

They have short legs and should not be bumped onto the floor or onto the table. Rabbit judges, please note!

They should not be grasped in such a manner as to push their ribs into their lungs. They have enough lung trouble in our climate without inviting perforation.

Two hands are required properly to catch and lift up a large Cavy. Once secured it may be held on the palm of one hand, facing the holder, while its hind legs dangle astride the outstretched fingers. The other hand is then available for stroking or grooming.

Old fanciers lightly push in their Cavies noses and depress their ears to emphasize show points.

CAVIES AND FOODS

Good hay is perfectly dry and smells lightly of tobacco.

Bad hay feels cold and smells musty, giving off a sort of dust of mildew.

Hay out of which the seed falls easily has been cut late and has lost

much food value.

Hay that is much tangled has been long in the making and is poor.

Bleached hay has lain out long and lost value.

Green hay has been made quickly and well.

Carrot tops are not usually eaten but are a good feed.

Tops of mangolds and beet are eaten in moderation without relish.

Cavies refuse hedge parsley which rabbits like so well. They also refuse foliage of daffodils and crocuses which may accidentally be in a grass feed.

Round beet is more juicy and less tough than long beet.

Nettles, accidentally fed, are not injurious and only make a slight stir. Thistles are eaten regardless of the pricks.

Cavies do not relish clover, even when they are penned on lawns. It seems too greasy, or oily for them.

Lawn daisies, foliage and bloom alike, are eaten.

All sorts of dry leaves, even rose petals, are eaten up, but ivy always is left over.

Cavies usually chew up, instead of economically eating, swedes. But as these are of high feeding value they may be pulped and fed disguised by any other food.

If greens are to fail altogether, lime-juice or orange-juice in the mash might take their place during the emergency.

Cavies greatly enjoy water-cress; sometimes a useful feed in very early spring.

The importance of the water supply is made evident by cavies who first load up a mouthful of dry mash and then take to the water-pot to mix it up in the mouth into porridge.

MOUSERY ODORS

To K.—Much of the smell we get in some mouseries comes from the cages. If you use the cheap home-made and unpainted kind, scrap the whole lot from time to time and replace with new ones. If they are painted inside and out with two coats of paint they will last indefinitely, but the un-painted ones absorb the moisture and require renewing.

When cleaning the cages do not forget the shelves and the floor. Give both a thorough sweep and once more get busy with your bottle of disinfectant. Give a good sprinkle all around, and when you have done you will be well repaid by the clean and pleasing atmosphere.