

Domestic Duck Production Science and Practice

Edited by Peter Cherry and Trevor Morris

Ducks are kept for profit in a great diversity of circumstances in both temperate and tropical climates. Outlining the biology of the domestic duck, this book also combines the authors' considerable practical and scientific experience to provide quantitative descriptions of nutritional and environmental effects on growing and breeding ducks, as well as practical advice on husbandry, housing and management. It is an essential resource for duck industry practitioners, researchers and students.

Peter Cherry worked as Development Manager for a major duck producer before assuming a world-wide role as a consultant. Trevor Morris is a world-renowned poultry scientist who has also worked as a duck consultant. Their combined knowledge of the duck and the duck industry is thus unparalleled.

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Morris

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Peter Cherry and Trevor Morris



DOMESTIC DUCK PRODUCTION

Science and Practice

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Preface

This book is intended as a practical guide for technical and advisory staff involved in both commercial and subsistence-level duck production, as a reference text for commercial producers and their professional staff and as a resource for undergraduate and postgraduate students.

The text describes research conducted and experience gained in differing climates and economic conditions between 1975 and 2005. Genetic selection and technical innovation have dramatically improved duck performance during those 30 years, but that has not substantially altered the concepts and relationships reviewed and described in this book. The science remains the same, although practice evolves.

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Finally, I would like to thank my father W.J. Cherry who taught me from an early age the craft of poultry husbandry and Professor Trevor Morris whose help, advice and encouragement over many years made this book possible.

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Selection within an existing dam line may be based initially on individual selection of males and females for weight and conformation at market age, retaining at least twice as many birds at this stage as are needed to reproduce the line. Females can then be penned in sire groups with their pen performance recorded, allowing selection of retained males on the basis of their sisters' egg production and hatchability.

Precisely what selection is practised in dam lines will depend upon an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the particular line. It is not unusual to find that no selection is being practised, because the cost of pedigree hatching and recording is not justified by the small gains to be expected from selecting simultaneously for meat and reproductive characteristics.

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