



## SETTING GOALS IN YOUR BREEDING PROGRAM

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### THE "IMPORTANCE" OF GOALS

Thought of the day is: "Goals"

Without setting goals I have no idea if I am making progress in my breeding. I can be losing at shows but still meeting my goals for progress. I can only control the breeding and culling decisions I make. I cannot deny I dislike losing but losing forces me to look at my stock with a critical eye.

Why do I set goals? Because without them how do I know I am making progress. I do sort/cull based on goals. Sometimes I come up short and have to rethink how deep do I cull and what will I do differently next breeding.

My goals are tempered by the limitations of facilities and my physical abilities. I have found I cannot have over 300 young running here at a time and keep on top of all cleaning and health need of the birds. Being honest with myself has forced me to cut back on the number of varieties I work with. Painful but liberating at the same time. We can try to do too much.

I breed and exhibit Bantam Cochins. I have different goals for each variety I have. I am breeding towards the SOP and there are some things that I must overlook in my patterned birds that I would not consider keeping in my Blacks. Black Bantam Cochins were perfected long before I even knew exhibition poultry existed. The rarer varieties I work with don't win at shows but are more enjoyable for me to work with every day.

WINNING. I will not deny I enjoy placing well at shows. I can only control what I take and the condition they are in. I cannot control what others do or bring. I am in awe of a Mark Peterson who consistently brings quality birds to shows. He has made me get better because he was regularly bringing superior birds to mine to the shows which we both attend. I may never compete equally with him regularly but I am usually bringing better birds than I did 5-10 years ago or even a year ago.

Goals require culling. "Hardest part for so many people". For me I find I cannot go through a pen and remove more than 5 birds before they all start looking the same. Watching that pen for a few days lets me easily pick out the lessor birds again."