

Thoughts on Outcrossing

How many of us truly understand the meaning of the term “Outcross”? For the record let’s look at its true meaning, and that is “to breed animals or plants of the same Breed but different Strains “. Let’s choke the neck on that statement just a bit and look at this, “Breed to Strain”. In earlier times, when animals were first being domesticated, mostly farm animals, they would be allowed to move around freely and mate with whatever came by, you know the flavour of the day sort to speak. As due to this openly viewed way of obtaining more creatures to ones count, it could be seen within their offspring that they were lacking a sense of commonality in terms of their looks and characteristic’s.

At some point in early evolution, human intervention by stockmen with more of a vision began to start to show up in the stock, they began to take on the same look, produce themselves in their own likeness and hey “A Breed” was born! From this understanding there were many other Breeds of animals, under human control that were created and continue on today.

The term “Breed” now reads like this, “a breed is a group of animals that is made up of a large pool of common genes that are both dominant and recessive.” Men, and their desire to further create even better stock began looking at ways to improve their animals, whether it was for their own satisfaction or to increase food production, or to support their desire to have very high quality specimen’s be shown and put on display for all to see and to be judged against a “Breed Standard” that would be their legacy.

They started to understand the ways to get to what they envisioned in one’s stock. They broke free of old ways of breeding and began mating animals that were more desirable in similar feature’s together, and to do so found themselves going against the big Taboo, and mating very close relatives.

Earlier we broke down and revealed the true meaning of the term “Breed”, but now we will attempt to ravel the true meaning of the term “Strain”. A “Strain,” is a more distinct group of genes within the breed characteristics,

genetically separated by a more “Pure” pool of gene pairs, weather they are dominant or recessive that is responsible for their “Traits and Characteristics”. The only way to achieve this is to practice inbreeding and line-breeding.

OK, I have provided a rather long but informative understanding of the terms Breed and Strain as for not having this understanding; one could never grasp the concept of Outcrossing.

In the case of the pigeon fancier, he is faced at some point that he feels his loft is in a regressive state for whatever reason. Others may call this a drag on the race. Whatever one call it is has to do with the fact that over time, and with poor selection practices, his stock has, and is leaning from excellence to now mediocre, or back to the average of the “Breed.”

The informed breeder will now set his sights on acquiring a pre-potent, highly inbred sire or two that would be used to invigorate his loft. He understands that when two distinct “Strains” are crossed, their offspring are “genetic mongrels” in terms of their “Genetic Purity”. He is not confused or disillusioned, as many are by the term “Hybrid”, as he knows this does not apply to the method of “Grading Up “or the cross mating within a “Breed”. The term “Hybrid” is describing the progeny of the mating of two different “Species”, this is not what we are speaking of in this article. He also understands that when using a “Outcross” like this, that he must not utilize their progeny (other than top daughters) as a result to improve their excellence as he understands that they are “Impure” for gene pairs, predictability, and that further generations will continue to have “Drift” to a lesser and more mediocre class of stock. Through inbreeding and selection, will be his road to success.

His work will be to assist the makeover within his stock. The first generation progeny will be largely heterozygous or impure, but they should have some resemblance to the sire as he has greater breeding purity. He has taken the first steps, or “grading up” as spoken in some circles. The importance of these steps is the fact that the designated Sire be of great excellence and Purity.

As time goes by and breeding continues within the same family and maintaining the mating of successive generations to his top daughters, (inbreeding) his/your stock will come to resemble that of the sire in appearance and performance.

The importance of a highly inbred top “Sire” cannot be understated. His “Genetic Purity” will be the driving sources of excellence through-out your loft over time.

Proper Outcrossing can be a road to excellence.

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Oct/26/2020