

BULGARIAN POULTRY BREEDS

Part 2



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THE BREEDS - part 2

2. STARA ZAGORA/ STAROZAGORSKA RED CHICKEN



Standard characteristics:

Cock weight: 3,0-3,5 kg

Hen weight: 2,3-2,5 kg

Laying capacity: 200-220 eggs

average egg weight : 58-60 grams

Egg colour: brown

Plumage colour: red with black tail

Ring size: 20/18



The Stara Zagora/ Starozagorska red chicken has a medium weight, combined for meat and eggs, selected in the second half of the 20th Century in the Hybrid center for poultry breeding in Stara Zagora. The chickens are vital, calm, early-matures (first egg is around the 160th day), have good laying capacity (when conditions are good and food abundant they can lay more than 220 eggs), brood

instinct is not developed. They are suitable for natural domestic breeding and can cover the needs of meat and eggs of a family.

History

The Stara Zagora/Starozagorska red chicken was created in the beginning of the second half of the 20th Century, after a complex cross-breeding of local red hens from the Stara Zagora region and Rhode Island red cocks. The target was to create high productive birds with important weight and laying capacity for extensive and semi-intensive poultry breeding for the private sector. It is recognized as official breed in 1970. Same as for Black Shumen/Shumenska chicken, from 1989 started a decline and they were replaced



by actual hybrids and common birds in the private sector, which is due to the lack of interest about its good reproduction capacity. There is a risk for the breed to disappear, as in 2010 there were only 250-400 birds (the only herd in Bulgaria is in the Hybrid Center for Poultry Breeding in Stara Zagora and others are in private farms).



Exterior

Cock:

The body of the cock is wide, modestly deep, robust, orthogonal, horizontally positioned. The neck is averagely long, well feathered with a light, elegant curve. Shoulders are wide, rounded, partially covered with hackle feathers. The back is long, straight, wide, horizontal or slightly inclined over the tail. The saddle is wide, averagely long, well feathered with a sharp passage to the tail. The breasts is wide, moderate deep, rounded, held averagely high. The abdomen is well developed. The wings are averagely long, kept

close to the body. The tail is wide, averagely long, standing at 45°, with well curved, averagely big, with crescent-shaped sickles. The head is averagely big size and rounded. The face is red, smooth and featherless. The comb is single, medium size and straight. The ear lobes are red, small and elongated. The wattles are averagely big and rounded. The eyes are orange-red coloured. The yellow-brown beak is averagely big, strong, robust, slightly curved. The yellow shanks have four toes, are medium long, strong and featherless. Brown-yellow scales are possible in the front. The plumage is held close to the body.

Hen:

The body of the hen is compact, deep and wide. The back is long and wide, horizontal. The comb is small and straight. The tail is averagely long, wide, standing at a small angle above the horizontal line. The abdomen is very well developed and wide. The beak is yellow-brown coloured.

The Plumage is red-brown, the cock's shoulders are rusty-red, the tail is black with green nuance. The Hen's plumage is opaque, red-brown, the tail is dark.

Right: Eggs of the Stara Zagora/ Starozagorska red chicken.

Major faults: small, short body; very low/high body position; strongly upright position of the body; bones which are very robust/delicate; too small/big or squirrel tail; big head; too developed, malformed comb; white colour in the ear lobes.

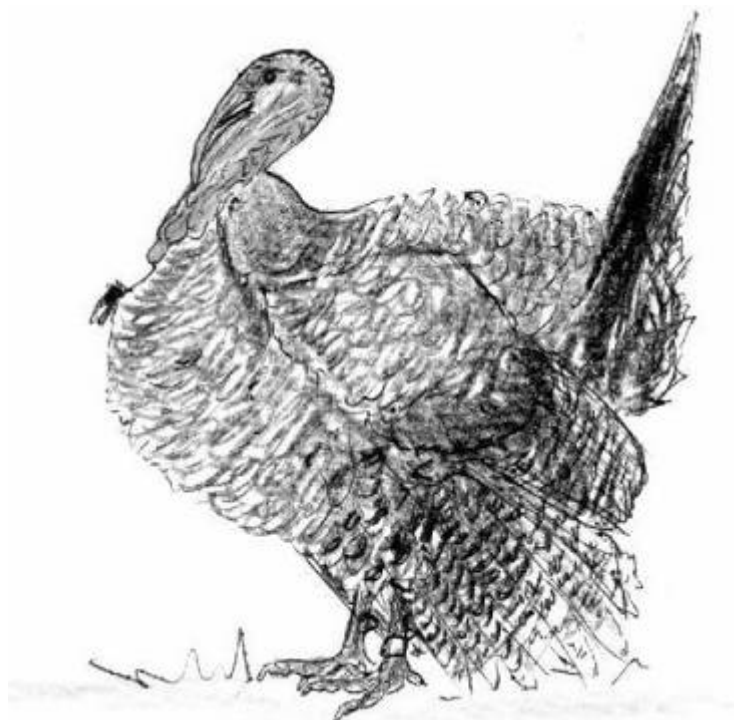


Above: Chick of the Stara Zagora/ Starozagorska red chicken (in the middle)

3. NOVA ZAGORA/NOVOZAGORSKA BRONZE TURKEY

**Male weight: 7-8 kg. Female weight: 3-5 kg.
Laying capacity: 30-50 eggs. Eggs weight: 80 grams.**

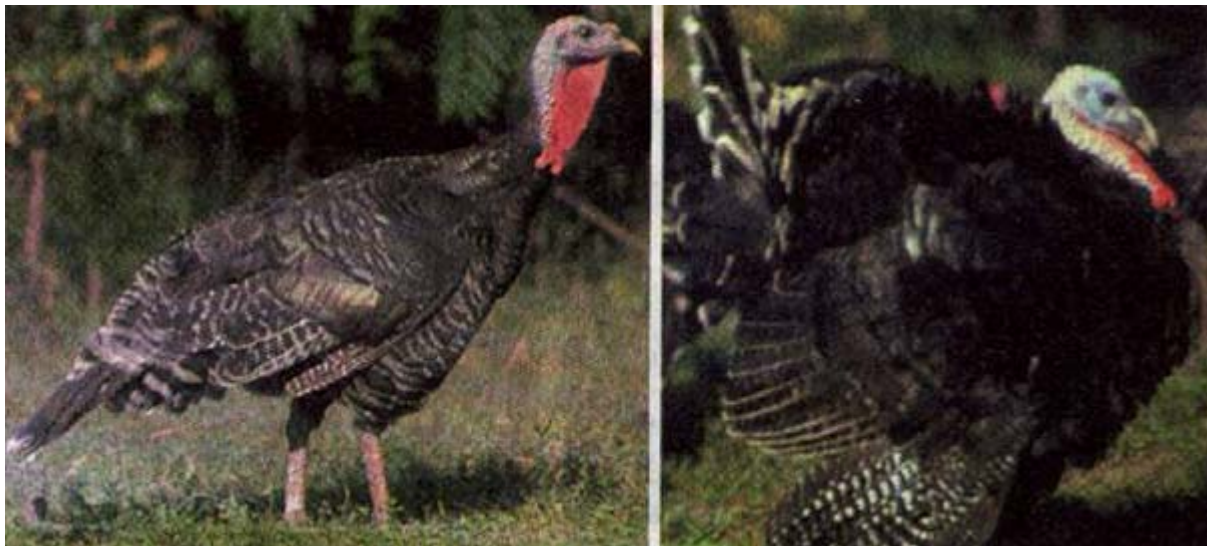
Bulgarian primitive breed, spread in the regions of Nova Zagora, Stara Zagora, Yambol, Pazardjik, Pavlikeni, Gorna Oriahovitza. Can be found in different colours as bronze predominates. During the second half of the 20th Century many culture breeds were imported: North-Kavkaz bronze turkey, White Emperor turkey, Beltsville small white turkey, White Moscow turkey, Holland white turkey, and there was a sporadically cross-breeding with local birds. During this period the Ministry of Agriculture approves local bronze turkeys from Nova Zagora region as a breed called Cherna (Bronze) Novozagorska/ Nova Zagora turkey.



It has low body mass, very good reproduction ability, low laying capacity, very strong brood instinct and is very well adaptable to extensive breeding. It matures late and the birds brooded in spring are matured in end of March next year.

Plumage is bronze coloured but there are also white, blue, bourbon, etc.

Turkeys have a strong brooding instinct. Local people use them to brood chicken eggs. Turkeys do not have economic value but are an important genetic bank. Nova Zagora/Novozagorska bronze turkey use pastures very well and are easy to breed, but due to their low productive capacity are not convenient for industrial production of meat. The birds can be used for bio products in terms of free range.



Above: Cherna (Bronze) Novozagorska/ Nova Zagora turkey.

4. BULGARIAN GOOSE

Male goose: 6-7 kg
Female goose: 5-6 kg
Laying capacity: 20-22 eggs
Egg weight: 180 grams

Local geese are part of average-heavy breeds. They are coloured in white or gray. In the North of Bulgaria on the Danube river valley and its feeders are discovered species with curly mutations (same as Sebastopol goose).



It is characterize with quick maturity, meat productivity is satisfactory, has good adaptive capabilities and endurance. The productivity is poor. The white geese from the Plovdiv region are an exception. During the second half of the 20th Century there was conducted breeding for improvement (bigger liver) and the new birds were called White Benkovska goose. In its development are used Emdenska goose, Toulouse goose and Hungary goose. This group of geese

achieves a mass of 4.2-5 kg at 70 days old and 9-11 kg for fatten mature birds. The liver reaches 450-500 grams when fattened (a maximum of 1100 grams was achieved).



Above and left: White Benkovska geese.

In conclusion

As a conclusion we can say that in Bulgaria - as in many countries of the Soviet Economic Environment - was a will to create productive breeds which can adapted extensive farms and in private ones, where they will cover the personal needs for eggs and meat.

Today we turn more attention to one aspect – satisfy the spiritual needs of breeders by the beauty of this creatures. I sincerely hope that in the future the number of breeders, who enjoy having productive birds for decoration, will increase! I believe that breeding variety and breeds quality of birds will improve in our country.

Danube between Belene and Belene island at sunset. Photo Preslav, Wikipedia, licensed under the [GNU Free Documentation License](https://www.gnu.org/licenses/old-licenses/fdl.html)