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# Preparing Poultry for Market

By M. C. Herner, Professor of Poultry Husbandry

Manitoba Agricultural College

PROFESSOR HERNER

All poultry intended for market should be properly starved before killing. Eighteen to twenty-four hours is generally long enough for all classes of poultry. When fine food has been used to fatten eighteen hours' starving will usually pretty well empty the alimentary canal. When poultry has been taken right out of the yards with the crops filled with whole grain, they must be

starved even longer than twenty-four hours. If the proper precautions in regard proper precautions in regard to starving are not followed, the carcass will start to de-compose. After being killed only a day or so gases will start to generate in the crop. In the intestines fermenta-tion is going on and greenish discoloration will take place discoloration will take place around the crop as well as at the posterior part of the

at the posterior part of the body, and the entire carcass will quickly spoil. So much of the dressed poultry offered for sale in the retail stores of our cities shows lack of sufficient starving before killing. As an aid to proper starving I find that giving water to drink after starving about eighteen hours will have the effect of cleaning out the crop and entrails to better advantage.

Having starved the poultry the right length of time, the next step is to kill properly. It must be admitted that while instructions on paper as to how to go about to kill a chicken are all



Piercing the brain or sticking a chicken. This follows the bleeding. Notice back of knife touching the point of the upper bill.

right in their place, still you simply must get it by experience. The instructions are only to guide you; practice alone makes perfect. In giving these instructions on killing we are telling you just what we know will give you the best results all round and by taking them for your guide, you will not go far wrong. Simple contrivances 1 find the best

in all poultry work, usually the simpler the better. Any place in the corner of a building will do for killing. Get a stout cord, about a foot long, and attach it firmly to a brace or any overhead projection. To the free end of the cord projection. To the free end of the cord attach a block of wood one and a half inches square, first boring a hole thru the middle and passing the cord thru. The a knot in end of cord to prevent the little block from slipping off. The photograph will give a pretty good idea as to this part of the work. The cord should to this part of the work. The cord should be long enough so that the block of wood will come down a little lower than your shoulder. By having it too long the bird is inclined to swing away from you while plucking it. Take the bird and suspend it by this cord by making a half hitch right below the spurs on the legs. Draw down tight. The block of wood prevents the cord from slipping of wood prevents the cord from slipping off the feet and once the half hitch is drawn tight, the bird's own weight will keep it tight. Lock the wings of bird firmly on its back by simply folding With some of the heavier breeds and with turkeys this may not always be done, as they are likely to break their wings while trying to flap. Crate fattened chickens are also more likely to break their wings than others. In such cases it is far better to allow them to flap as

they like.

In killing only one incision or cut is required. I prefers to kill by bleeding

and sticking because the carcass will pluck much easier, bleed better, look better, and keep better than where it is killed by dislocating the neck. The latter method is quicker, but the feathers do not come out readily at all. The carcass will look very unsightly where the blood settles in the dislocated portion of the neck. The head turns blue, the neck discolors, and the car-

t. The head turns blue, the neck discolors, and the carcass will not keep. The bleeding and sticking can be easily done with a jackknife. The large blade is the best for the amateur to use. An old file cut down to the shape of a knife will make an excellent killing make an excellent killing knife. Having suspended the fowl properly, grasp the neck with the left hand, placing the thumb along the left side of the neck and the forefinger along the right side. The chicken should be with the breast towards you

so that your right side is the chicken's right also. Do not clutch the neck, for in so doing your thumb and forefinger will press on both arteries and the chicken instead of on both arteries and the chicken instead of bleeding freely will retain the blood in its system. Do the bleeding first in every case. If you pierce the brain first the bird will not bleed freely either. By placing the knife with the sharp edge towards the roof of the throat and passing it well back towards the left ear with it well back towards the left ear with the point touching inside next to it, thus placing it in line with the angle of the right jaws, and cutting there, the best bleeding will be done. Allow the bird to bleed a few seconds then place the point of the knife in the cleft in the roof of the mouth and have the back of the blade touching the point of the upper bill, then push straight back until the brain or nerve centre is touched. Then give half a turn each way and withdraw. For the operation the back of Then give half a turn each way and withdraw. For the operation the back of the blade is turned towards the roof of the mouth. By piercing the brain the entire nervous system is deranged and the fowl is rendered unconscious. Then the feathers come out quite easily. A little practice is required to do this part of the killing right. The placking detection of the killing right. of the killing right. The plucking depends almost entirely on whether the piercing has been done properly. If the carcass tears easily it is usually due to the "sticking" not being done right.

Plucking should commence right after the sticking so as to finish the carcass before it cools off and the feathers set. The best plan is to start plucking on the sides and breast, next taking the back, tail, legs, wings and neck in regular order. Keep the hands full of feathers so as not to touch the skin with your bare hand. Keep working towards the feathers as much as possible. By using a little care and acquiring a little skill a carcass can be picked quite clean in a few minutes. By grasning both wings with the left By grasping both wings with the left hand and taking all the main wing



Trussing a Roaster-Front View

feathers in the right hand, you should be able to remove them all with one jerk. By wetting the hands in water occasion-

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