

your cloth, makes a good rule for poultry building. Build your poultry house according to your material. It is not necessary to follow any set style or plan, except always the plan of simplicity. So long as the requirements of a good poultry house as herein recorded are obtained, the house may be built out of old lumber on hand, pick-up boards, any old thing—so long as the same is not infected with disease germs or vermin—and in the size and shape to suit the material. In buying new lumber for this purpose, however, it is not the best economy to get the cheapest grade. This is pretty sure to be full of knot-holes, uneven, twisted, and split, and works up to the poorest advantage. But build as cheaply as possible to secure the desired ends, and only as you need the buildings. Not till one is on the ground and operating the plant can one tell just what is needed or is not needed!

Pen and Yard.

The shed roof house is the simplest and cheapest and therefore the best for general purposes. This fact is being recognized even in the East where larger and deeper poultry houses are necessary. A depth of from six to ten feet or at most twelve feet; an elevation above the floor of some seven feet front and five feet back, and the length to suit, are good proportions. In wider houses the length should be a foot or so higher while in a house eight foot or less in width, six feet front and four feet back is a fair height. The colony house is most satisfactory where there is yard room. These houses may be quite close together without dividing fences, yet the fowls keep to their respective quarters. The majority of the largest and most profitable poultry plants in California are arranged on this plan. On smaller space the continuous house is considered cheaper and more convenient. This is usually divided into eight foot or ten foot pens, each pen opening into a separate yard. Always in continuous houses there must be a solid board division between the pens and high enough above the perches to prevent a draught on the fowls when roosting. The upper part of the partition may be of woven wire two inch mesh. This increases the air space and the light for the whole house. The best arrangement for a continuous house is to have it occupy the centre of a plot of ground, allowing two yards for each pen. In this arrangement the yards can be alternately spaded and planted to barley. This furnishes more or less green food for the fowls, utilizes the ground from becoming foul and droppings and, best of all, prevents the ground from becoming foul and unwholesome, which is sure to be the case where fowls are kept continuously upon a small area.

Many poultrymen will have nothing but an entire open front. For myself I prefer the lower part to be boarded up some three feet from the floor, and all the space above this to be filled in with two inch mesh wire tacked securely on all sides and the edges faced with a strip of lath. The trap door for the fowls should be on the open side. The nests are much better on the outside of the house as they are much easier to keep free from dust and vermin in this position. A twelve or fourteen inch board may be put onto this side like a shelf with another above to protect them from rain and the nest boxes slipped in or out as required. This arrangement would not answer in the winter time.

Dropping boards in our poultry houses are not only unnecessary but they are a nuisance. They clutter the quarters, increase the difficulty with vermin and bring the steam and fumes of the droppings too near the fowls at night, while they greatly add to the expense of the building. Where the house is used for a scratching shed as well as roosting quarters the floor space under the perches may be fenced off from the remainder by a strip of four or six-inch board set edgewise and made removable.




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