

POULTRY YARD

Increase Poultry Products

There is an inherent tendency in mankind to go out after the things that come up big in the mind's eye. It is doing this the more that the things which are as important in the long run are often passed by. We farmers show it too in the conduct of our farms. The bigger things in agriculture, such as horse raising, cattle raising, etc., receive our attention in preference to what are usually considered small side lines such as poultry. A loss of 50 hens by some disaster is not looked upon as of very great importance, while a sick cow will claim our first attention, and we will not forth upon the very best efforts to secure her recovery.

Yet 50 hens, well cared for, will yield a larger profit than one cow. We farmers, somehow, do not seem to think so, and the result is a large falling off in the supply of poultry and eggs. Indeed, the situation in business has become acute. Not only has Canada given up exporting eggs, but does not produce enough to supply the home market. This should not be. It is possible to treble the products of eggs and poultry without in any way lessening the output from the other branches of the farm. Every farmer keeps poultry of some kind, and if the same attention were given to housing, feeding and caring for the poultry as is given to other branches of farming there would be a different story to tell.

Summer Egg Production

Prof. C. E. Brown, University of Minnesota

Ordinarily hens lay from 50 to 75 per cent. of eggs in the spring season as the warm weather begins to come—the latter part of May and into June—egg production begins to drop off until it is not an uncommon thing for birds to be laying not more than 35 to 40 per cent. through the month of July and gradually falling off from that through August. With care we could hold that production up to as high as 50 per cent. at least. The man who secured the greatest egg production last year, to my knowledge, was a man who kept his hens in the basement of a barn. I am not saying anything to recommend the keeping of hens in the basement of barns, but it was the conditions that existed in this particular basement that had such a potent influence on the high production that was secured. This particular barn was built on the southern slope of a rather steep, sandy hill. The north wall was set deep in the face of the hill and well drained with farm drainage tile; the south face of the basement was well lighted by a number of large windows. There was a large door on the north end through which the birds could run out freely, and the 300 of them in the barn had access to this run.

CONGENERS THE FACTOR
The peculiar thing about those hens was that they did not seem to make much use of the run. They preferred the cool shade and fresh air of the basement to the sunshine outdoors. If one went into the well lighted basement on a hot summer day they would find it quite cool and practically all the birds there busily engaged in scratching the litter; similar to what one would find in a laying house in the winter time.

The most peculiar thing of it all was that these birds began to molt in July, they molted gradually, and when the writer last saw those birds in September, they were practically in new feathers and were laying at least 40 per cent. at the time when the majority of hens had ceased.

All poultrymen cannot have conditions such as these, but they can keep their poultry houses well cleaned out and ventilated, and can provide ample shade for their birds in the yards by the use of shade trees, preferably fruit trees, or by growing corn, fodder, or berry bushes. These are the conditions that will assist materially in keeping up the egg production throughout the summer.

To Prevent White Diarrhoea

The large mortality among young chickens due to the ravages of white diarrhoea can be decreased if proper precautions are taken. The following preventative measures are recommended in a recent United States bulletin.

From the time the chicks begin to hatch until they are removed to the brooder, the incubator should be kept dark. This will largely prevent the chicks from picking at the droppings.

Since infected droppings make unsatisfactory development for the first few weeks, and may later again regrow and make fair growth, it is advisable to select at an early age those intended for breeding purposes. The selection may be made when the chicks are from eight to 10 weeks of age, reserving only those which show greatest vigor and development.

Incubators, brooders and all other appliances used in the hatching and rearing of the chicks should be cleaned and disinfected frequently.

Food and water should be supplied in such a manner as to prevent contamination with infected droppings. The use of fine absorbent litter in the brooder, especially for the first few days, is also advisable.

SOUR MILK A PREVENTIVE

The feeding of sour milk may prove very effective as a preventive measure. The milk must be fed early, or during the infection stage. After the white diarrhoea organism has once entered the general circulation, such treatment is of little or no value. Hence, sour milk should not be looked upon as a cure, but merely as a possible preventive agent.

Since perfect physical condition is, as a rule, a barrier to disease, it is important that the health and vigor of the breeding stock and chicks be raised and constantly maintained. Proper methods of housing, feeding, incubation, brooding and management should therefore be employed.

Poultry Pointers

It is too late to be setting eggs. For this reason it is well to take the male birds out into a pen by themselves.

Throw open the windows every night, but tack some wide-meshed cloth or screen of some kind over them to keep out things that have no business in the house.

Sort the young growing stock as to size, it will give them all an equal chance and you will find they will grow better and less trouble will be experienced.

When there are two pens of fowls in the same house, separated by a partition, the drink dish may be set in the partition so that fowls may drink from both sides. It should rest on a shelf so that it may be easily removed for cleaning and disinfecting.

Mr. John McKee Makes Reply

(Concluded from page 2)

Ayrshires. I would consider that a 2-year-old heifer yielding upwards of 10,000 lbs. of milk and 437 lbs. of butter-fat was a pretty creditable record. I notice in report No. 2 of the Canadian Record of Performance that at that time 29 Holstein 2-year-old heifers had qualified in the Record, and only one of them had surpassed the Ayrshire record. Most people, I think, would consider 521 lbs. of butter-fat a very fair record for a 3-year-old heifer. In this same report I see that only one Holstein had beaten it. I only mention these figures to show that if Ayrshires are making "tiny tests" then a great many Holsteins make still tinier ones.

ABOUT "KNOCKERS"

It is rather amusing to see the Messrs. Platt calling down your humble servant and a few others for "knocking" the Holsteins as they call it, and then proceed themselves to knock the Ayrshires. My letter of June 29th was not intended for publication when written, but I had merely replied to a question from an editor of Farm and Dairy. In my observation of ratings fed to different breeds in the Winter Fair Dairy Tests.

In conclusion, Mr. Editor, the gratuitous advice contained in the poetry was altogether unnecessary. For Ayrshire men the whole country over are wearing the smile that won't come off those days. I believe no class of breeders are so little given to blowing about their own breed and to knocking rival breeds as are Ayrshire breeders. The Record of Performance Yearly Tests are demonstrating to the world that we have in our "Ayrshire basis" not only one of the most beautiful breeds in existence, but also one of the most useful.—John McKee, Oxford Co., Ont.

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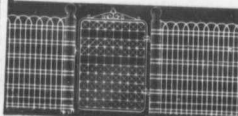
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