

In the Poultry Yard

The Origin of the Turkey

Americans claim that the turkey should be their national bird rather than the eagle. The domestic turkey is so similar to the wild turkey of the United States and Mexico that its origin is conceded to the new world. How it came to be introduced into Europe is somewhat of a mystery. The ancient Mexicans were the first to domesticate these birds. When Cortez conquered that country in 1520 he found several thousand turkeys kept in the courts of Montezuma's palace. Spain was the first European country to receive turkeys (1520), which were first called Indian peacocks. A few years later they were introduced into England.

As to the origin of the term turkey, there is some doubt. It was doubtless thought that the fowls came from Turkey, for probably they had been brought to England by merchants who dealt chiefly with Turkey and the Levant.

Before the end of the 16th century turkeys had largely increased in numbers in England.

For a long time the two countries of Norfolk and Suffolk were rivals in the raising of turkeys. In autumn on the roads that led to the capital could be met flocks of hundreds of the fowls, driven by a lad armed with a long pole having a piece of red cloth at the end, for the sight of red cloth always excites turkeys, as is well known. Nearly a century ago the city of Norwich sent to London, in the space of three days, more than 4,000 turkeys.

Method in Shipping Eggs

Gather the eggs fresh every day and keep in a cool place. Do not allow a hen to sit on them over one night. Place chalk or dry oat hay on the bottom of the crate, over that lay a paper, and then put in a clean filler. Do not use fillers that are musty or daubed with broken eggs. Cleanliness and attractiveness go a long way toward obtaining the top price in city markets.

Wash and wipe dry all dirty eggs. Stains can be removed by rubbing them with a cloth wet with vinegar. After placing the eggs in the filler, take clean paper, tear into small pieces and firmly pack the spaces between the filler and crate on all sides. This prevents the eggs being jarred in shipping, and losses from breakage are less liable to occur. For several years we have shipped eggs packed this way, and it is very seldom that any are reported cracked or broken.

After the crate is filled, lay some pasteboard and papers over the top, and securely fasten down the lid. Have your address written very plainly on the shipping cards, and neatly tack one on each end of the crate. Do not ship small or inferior looking eggs with the large, fine looking ones, but ship them separately. To command a fancy price, eggs should be strictly fresh and all of one color. Never ship a suspicious looking egg, whose shell looks and feels sleek and glossy.—A. C.

Shade

Trees make the best shade, of course, but if there are no trees shade of some kind must be provided for young and old chicks. Fowls like a jungle-like denseness of shrubs and bushes where they can hide from the summer sun and dust in the cool earth—while the currant and gooseberry bushes are growing and the trees reaching a size where

they afford some protection, resting on the ground on the south side and propped up on the north. Sunflowers, hops, and corn also make a good shade. Chickens love the mellow earth of a well cared for corn field, and no better place can be found for a late hatched brood.

A Poultry Record

Mr. A. W. Sarty, a prominent poultry farmer of Missouri, gives the following account of his poultry operations during the past seven years:

	Pounds Poultry	Dozen Eggs	Cash Return
1898.....	339½	120	\$8.59
1899.....	424	249	64.36
1900.....	190	436	59.49
1901.....	100	240	56.00
1902.....	387	498½	75.11
1903.....	987	1039½	141.85
1904.....	490	711	150.11

Total for seven years.....\$595.18

Deducting cost of building, \$20, we have \$575.18 left for our labor and feed, not counting what was used by the family. Some may beat these figures, but, considering the distance from market, etc., we are well satisfied with them, or until we can do better. Three years of the time we had only fifty hens, the balance of the time one hundred.

The building is ten by twenty feet, nine feet front, six feet at the back. It is built facing the south and has three windows and two doors in that side. The windows are made to slide back, so as to give an abundance of fresh air in warm weather. It is divided into two apartments, roosting and laying rooms. The roosts are suspended from the ceiling with smooth wire and are all on a level, two feet above the floor and are not allowed to touch the sides of the building. The nests, roosts, etc., are all movable, so that they may be taken out and the building given a thorough cleaning up whenever necessary and whitewashed inside and out at least twice a year. We find that it pays not only to clean up the building but the yards as well if we would have healthy chickens, and even when we do our very best we lose some, especially the young chicks, with the gapes. We find that a few drops of turpentine mixed with the feed helps greatly in checking this disease.

We have never tried an incubator for hatching, but believe it may pay, because we have had considerable experience and good success raising the chicks by hand and after they are once started they are but little more trouble to raise that way than with the hen.

With a hundred hens and a few good cows on the farm we feel independent and don't care a rap if the business of the country is on a cash basis, because we can pay as we go. Let me ask those who say their hens don't pay if they have ever kept account with them? That's the only way to find out.

Hen Profits

A farmer in the Berkshire hills calculated on a profit of three dollars a year on every hen. He hatches the chickens in April, which is the best month in the year in which to hatch medium-sized breeds. He makes production of cost for market the foundation of profit and strives to have eggs to sell in November and December. He carries but few

old hens over winter, relying on the pullets for winter laying. This friend of mine claims to have averaged 170 eggs each hen yearly, producing eggs at a cost not far from ten cents a dozen.—Prairie Farmer.

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