

neighborhood. Where they in filth? Did he use self-feeding devices for them? No, indeed, he knew well that such treatment would soon ruin his fine stock. Of course his hens don't lay. What should he do?

First the perches? A great deal more depends upon them than most farmers suppose. In this case they were not high up being about three feet from the floor, so the fowls ran no great risk of breaking their necks when descending every morning. Look at that hot-bed of filth and disease through which the fowls are constantly walking underneath the perches. Just think of the countless millions of lice such a place would breed in warm weather, and all the scaly-legs and like filth that would go with them. While speaking of perches, allow me to use several other examples I saw in one place perches at least ten feet high. The owner was complaining of lice, and well he might. Just think of the millions of them day after day sitting up there smiling at him in security, awaiting the return of the birds at night for the feast they never earned. Then there is the perch with the high seat, and the low seat, and the seats between, on which all the birds quarrel for the high seat. The simplest and in every way the handiest way to build perches, is first build a tight platform about three feet high, and about a foot above this place your perches, which should be moveable. Coal oil, when used regularly on and about the perches, is the simplest way to keep down lice. You can easily get at perches arranged in this way. It will be quite easy to clean off the drop board twice a week. You clean your horse and cow stables at least once a day, and consider it a necessity. You must attend to your poultry in the same regular manner if they are to pay. Do not forget that filth causes lice, and that you cannot raise lice and eggs together. That self-feeder should be taken out and destroyed. The floor should be littered six inches deep with straw, and grain, just enough at a time, should be thrown amongst it. The hens will scratch for it, and plenty of exercise means more eggs. Lazy hens rarely lay. Hens need a variety of food. Wheat is the best grain, but corn, buckwheat, and barley are good. Oats are best crushed, as otherwise they will leave the light grain. Pulped turnips, cabbage and apples are necessary, as well as meat occasionally. But clover hay, or better, second crop clover, cut fine, mixed with crushed grain, and steamed by placing in a wooden pail and pouring boiling water over it, and then covering with a cloth for a time, makes a most excellent and cheap egg food. It should be fed in the morning. Give your fowls warm water to drink at least twice a day during cold winter weather. It will more than repay you in increased egg production.

The last mistake is one that is far too common amongst our farmers, and one for which they pay dearly, namely, the rearing of chicks as late as July, and keeping the pullets amongst the larger fowls during winter where they cannot thrive, besides, it takes far more food to bring them to maturity during cold weather. Now, chickens of no variety should be hatched after June 1st. It will do very well to hatch the small breeds during the last of May, but the large and medium sized breeds should be hatched not later than the middle of May, so that the pullets may be ready to begin laying before the cold weather sets in, when, with proper care, they will lay throughout the whole winter, while eggs bring the highest price. You cannot expect success with birds of all sizes and ages. Twenty pullets hatched in April are worth more than double the number hatched in June. On the other hand, no hen should be kept the third winter unless she is an extra good one.

Another great mistake is keeping too large flocks together. There is no profit in keeping 100 hens in a place hardly large enough for 50. In fact, I doubt very much if 100 hens should ever be kept in one flock. I consider 50 an outside number. They will lay more eggs during winter in the same place than 100. To illustrate. For several winters I kept from 25 to 30 birds in a pen 14 x 10 feet, and got very few eggs. Of late winters I keep only half the number, and get more than twice as many eggs. If you are keeping 50 hens, you should raise 25 early pullets each year to replace the 25 two year-old hens which should be killed in the fall, as soon as they begin to moult. They will be in good condition then. In this way you will always have birds that, with proper care, must prove profitable. Remember that besides small flocks, your birds must have plenty of room. They cannot have too much.

Another very costly and very general mistake is the keeping of half a dozen male birds. The 175,000 farmers of Ontario are feeding at least 700,000 male birds, and to what purpose? I have reason to believe that a vast majority of our farmers would answer, "For the purpose of increasing the egg production," for I have had farmers tell me that they always thought that, without males, the hens would not lay, whereas the truth is that they will lay just as many eggs, but with this difference. The eggs will keep far better and longer when the male is removed. Remember that if you feed a hen the proper material to make eggs, and put her in the proper place to make them, she must lay, for she is nothing but a machine to manufacture eggs. One male bird, then, is sufficient for each farmer. We find, then, that the farmers of Ontario are feeding at least 500,000 male birds that are unnecessary, and that annually cost