

## POULTRY YARD

## Feeding Laying Hens

The colony house used at Macdonald College and described two weeks ago, has given very good results in that it seems to fill the bill both summer and winter.

In this country where we have two extremes of climate, varying as it does from 100 degrees in summer to 40 degrees below in winter, the house that will accommodate birds during the 22 months in the year must have several characteristics. That is, it must provide suitable shelter in winter time, and keep them sufficiently cool in the summer time.

Although this house is only single boarded—except the end where the roosts are placed—out of 600 laying hens kept in these houses last winter I do not think there was one frosted comb, though several of the cockerels were slightly touched, and the reason is that though this house is cold, it is dry. Dryness is ensured by a loose board ceiling over which straw is put, a gable window which may be opened and the straw left, and abundance of fresh air.

During last winter, though it was an exceptionally cold season, the window was opened up, or partly so, almost every day. The hens have plenty of fresh air; their feed consisted of dry bran in the hopper (shown in the cut recently) which was before them at all times. In the small hopper is grit, oyster shell and beef scrap which they could eat at will. They had one grain feed a day fed in a heavy litter, and one to them between two and three o'clock in the afternoon. This seems to be an unusual time to feed poultry, but I think it one of the most satisfactory, especially when only one feed is given during the day. During the coldest weather I would try and give a little corn in the grain feed, so that when the mixture was thrown on the litter the hens very readily filled their crops, and as the largest grains were the easiest to find it consisted of corn. While they were taking this meal they were mixing the smaller grains into the litter, and as they would go to roost about three-thirty or four o'clock, they would go to bed with a full crop. In the morning they would get up hungry and would have sufficient small grain in the litter to keep them seeming all day, or until the regular afternoon feed.

The quantity of feed fed would depend upon the hens themselves. I like to see a hen hungry enough to hunt for feed, but not so hungry that she suffers. So when the feed was fed in the afternoon the quantity would depend on how much grain was left. If practically nothing was left in the litter there was not enough being fed. If there was so much in the litter that the hens did not have to scratch for it there was too much being fed, and the quantity would be governed accordingly. I like to have enough food in the litter so that a hen is encouraged to scratch; not so much that it would not require to scratch, and not so little that she will get discouraged because she cannot find it.

The dry bran in the hopper gives them a change, and also ensures that no hen suffers for want of food.

The question of wintering hens in houses so cold (last winter the tem-

perature went as low as 20 degrees in the houses) was a serious question for awhile. We could not keep cold water on account of the frost. Warm water could be kept a little longer, but would eventually freeze, and warm water makes considerable trouble, so that our only way out of it was to let the hens eat snow, which they have done for two winters, and the results have been such that I expect they will eat snow this winter.

This system of winter feeding is very economical of labor, the hens do well, the fresh air and exercise keep them healthy, and the percentage of fertile eggs in the spring is high, as is also the egg yield in winter. Next week I want to deal with the advantages of this house for summer.

## Animals That Prey Upon Poultry

S. Short, Carlton Co., Ont.

While there are but two bird enemies of the chicken in this country, viz: the hawk and the crow, the animal predators are more numerous. In the country and suburban districts there are many enemies such as the racoon, fox, skunk, mink and weasel and also what may be termed the domestic enemies, the dog and the rat. In cities only the domestic enemies have to be contended with.

The first on the list is the "coon," a wary chap. He works at night always, preferably between one and three in the morning. He rarely visits the same yard twice in succession, nor does he discriminate. Every poultry yard in his neighborhood is visited. He climbs the fence posts with ease and will enter any yard except those wired overhead. He likes to kill, but seldom takes away his quarry. He kills by biting off the necks of young chickens, and by cutting the throats of mature fowl. He will upset a coop and kill all the chickens unless disturbed. His presence is known by the fern shakes of the mother hen, or by the outcry of the male bird. It is wise to have the skunk gun at hand when a coon is shot to be in the district. Throw on a dark light, and go out softly without a light and you may be in time to get a shot at him. When disturbed he usually runs up to the nearest tree and is good for nothing. Handle the trees, if time should be any in the yard before going in. Last summer a racoon visited eight or nine different yards in the vicinity of Rockville, Ottawa, and killed numbers of young fowl, escaping traps and dogs, until the writer had the honor of shooting him one night in the early part of August.

The fox is also wary and will not enter wired enclosures. He is dangerous only in the country districts and catches his prey early in the morning and towards evening when the fowl wanders too far from the yards. Scattered fashers at the edge of the bush or near a log fence tell the tale and soon the number of fowl rapidly diminishes unless the fox is shot or frightened off.

The skunk is a night prowler. He is very deliberate being safe from attack from dogs. He first visits the nests in the hen house looking for eggs and then turns his attention to the chickens. If the place is to his liking, he will probably scratch a hole under the hen house and stay right there. His meal time is about twelve o'clock mid-night. He is not easily disturbed and can be easily shot, for he goes on with his business, leaving chickens whether the owner is there or not.

The mink and the weasel both work at night and in the same manner. They destroy from eight to a dozen chicks nightly by cutting their throats but don't take away the bodies. The mink lives near a creek or beaver meadow, and must either be trapped or shot. The weasel likes a stone pile or trash heap, and may be seen sun-

ning himself on sunny mornings on the bottom rail of the fence near his nest or den. It is worth while spending an hour to get a shot at him for he is hard to trap. Space forbids a description of the city enemies of poultry, the dog cat and rat. It may be given another time.

In conclusion, it may be repeated that the animals that prey upon poultry are attracted by scent and the smell from a dirty yard will travel further than that from clean quarters.

## Get Sick Birds Examined

The bacteriological department at Macdonald College is willing to examine any sick birds that the readers of this paper may have if the specimen is sent express charges prepaid and sent in good state of preservation, preferably alive. Address: Bacteriological Dept., Macdonald College, Ste. Anne de Bellevue (Dominion or Canadian Express).

## October Poultry Hints

Quite a few of those old hens had better be killed off before cold weather.

If there are sufficient well matured pullets to make up the flock, keep very few of the hens. The pullets will lay much better than the hens.

It is time to be putting up the sparse coops. Save the best only for breeding and feed the others, also the cull pullets and hens.

Get the house cleaned up for the pullets, and put in only those pullets that are a good shape, well matured, and a good specimen of the breed.

Feed them well, have the pullets started to lay in the middle of November or first of December, and make arrangements to know which are laying this winter and use their eggs for setting next spring. Keep only the good layers of this winter for the year following.

Fresh lawn beef fed to sick fowls or chickens will affect a cure when all medicine fails, and in there is weakness in the fowls or the newly hatched chickens are afflicted with bowel trouble the fresh lawn meat fed the hens will add strength to the first chickens hatched from the eggs after the beef has been fed. When chickens hatched from improperly fed hens have bowel trouble it is almost a hopeless case. Dry oat flakes and sweet skimmed milk will save them if anything can.

It should never be forgotten that poultry needs some green food at all seasons of the year. In winter they can be given cabbage, onions, turnips etc. Economy in preparing and in other distribution of the food is a matter that deserves the most earnest consideration of the poultryman.

A white clover lawn clipped twice each week with a lawn mower and the clippings fed to the laying fowls and growing chickens will save nearly half the cost of feed, increase the egg yield and develop the chickens quickly. It will improve the lawn by mowing twice weekly, and a little finely sifted fertilizer from the hen house will make the lawn very productive. Spread the clippings about three inches deep on the cellar floor and you will have fresh clippings to feed daily.

A Good Word for Zenoleum.—The great trouble with chickens raised by means of incubators is that a large percentage of them are carried off by white diarrhoea. Professor Graham of the Ontario Agricultural College hit upon an effective remedy when he used zenoleum to disinfect the incubator. By disinfecting the incubator with zenoleum before setting he invariably saves at least 75 per cent. of the chicks that would otherwise contract this great plague common to incubator chicks.



## Repairing?

If you are, remember dry, healthy cattle and poultry eat less and produce more. Buildings covered with PAROID ROOFING insure warm, healthy cattle and productive poultry.

Let us write you a personal letter and tell you why

## PAROID

is the best roofing and siding for you.

PAROID is not an experiment; it has been used for years; it is time tested; it is the easiest roofing to lay. Comes in handy rolls with rust-proof caps and nails, and complete directions for laying inside.

Used on Government buildings throughout America, by the leading railroads and successful farmers everywhere. Sold by all dealers.

## Our Free Book

"PRACTICAL FARM BUILDINGS"

is a book you should always have on hand. You'll find it an invaluable building book. Every practical farmer should have this practical farmer's book.

Send for it. It's yours for 2c. to pay the postage.

Write us and let our special building expert write you a personal letter and give name of nearest dealer.

F. W. BIRD & SON,  
MAY 1917  
Dept. 9 Hamilton, Ont.

## CASH PRIZES

Read our Cash Prize Offer on the back page of this Number of The Canadian Dairyman and Farming World. It will interest you. Full particulars given on application to—

THE CIRCULATION DEPARTMENT  
The Canadian Dairyman  
and Farming World  
PETERBORO - CANADA

## \$15 for 25 New Subscriptions

We will give you a cash prize of \$15 for securing a list of 25 new subscriptions to The Canadian Dairyman and Farming World at \$1.00 each. Sample copies free.