

During the summer months the birds will not require so much as during the winter, neither will they require a wet mash, but should be given an abundance of green food and plenty of clean, fresh water.

Poultry kept in fresh-air houses and allowed the run of orchard, field or uncleared land should not require much house-feeding, but should pick up a great deal from the land the year round. The birds will be more healthy and thrifty than if confined. Where birds are kept in close confinement the percentage of hatchable eggs from them is apt to be low. In other words, you will not get as many strong, vigorous chickens from a number of eggs laid by hens kept in close confinement as from the same number of eggs laid by hens which are allowed more freedom, nor will the egg production from hens in confinement be nearly as great as from hens on free range. This is an important matter, since the production of eggs is the most profitable business in the industry.

EGG PRODUCTION.



FIG. 10.—Egg type conformation.

At present the average number of eggs per hen is not over eighty; but the average hen in every flock should produce at least one hundred and fifty eggs per year. Two hundred-egg hens should be the rule and not the exception, but these will come only through careful and vigorous selection.

A poor layer is a poor payer. The unprofitable hens should be weeded out, thus saving loss in the amount of feed consumed, and at the same time giving the good layer a better show. Different methods of selection may be employed. Up to the present, trap nesting cannot be recommended for commercial plants.