

Skim Milk.—Skim milk (preferably well soured) and buttermilk have high feeding values. Skim milk should be supplied to laying hens whenever it can be obtained at reasonable prices. Fig. 64 shows a protected trough suitable for feeding milk in winter quarters.

Water.—Plenty of pure, fresh water is indispensable for perfect health. Laying hens especially require an abundant supply on account of the great percentage of it in eggs,—from 64 to 65 per cent. The drinking vessels should be placed on a shelf where they will not become contaminated with litter.

Grains.—The local cost of the different varieties of grain should determine what is to be fed. The animal food given should supply the greater part of the protein or nitrogenous portion of the ration whether the fowls are at liberty or confined. Other foods therefore are required more for maintaining the heat of the fowl's body and it would not be profitable on this account to purchase expensive grains. It is preferable to feed a number of grains rather than to limit the selection to one or two kinds, as poultry like change and will thrive best on a variety of food stuffs. Mash is not recommended except in limited quantities, and for this ground buckwheat, ground corn and ground oats are the grains that are most preferred.

(NOTE.—The wise poultry keeper will study the wants of his flock constantly, noting their general condition. He will keep the birds in a contented condition by supplying them with comfortable quarters at all times).

Give them plenty of pure fresh air.

Change the food if they are not eating with their accustomed heartiness.

Never allow them to become too poor or too fat.

Keep them free from vermin, and the drop boards and the roosts clean.

Remove a bird out of condition to quiet quarters where it will not be worried, and treat it as required for its special case.

At once detect in the flock any defect and immediately take steps to remedy it.

MARKETING EGGS.—Keeping hens for summer egg production is antiquated. According to present advanced methods in poultry raising chickens are hatched in the spring, the hens are fattened and killed in June or July and the spring hatched pullets lay throughout the autumn, winter and spring months. In this way the eggs are produced at a time when they command the highest price owing to the limited supply at that season of the year, and the advanced poultryman has no surplus supply of eggs in summer when an over supply would trouble him and when they are cheapest.

As well as endeavoring to supply the eggs at a time when they are in greatest demand the poultryman must get into touch with the best market. The price depends very much upon the way the eggs are pre-