

FATTENING CHICKENS.

A well fattened chicken, when properly cooked, is a delicious morsel. Abroad the art of fattening is well understood; in this country too little attention is paid to the subject. If the chickens have been well fed, and have run at large during the whole time, nothing more is deemed essential. I think that poultrymen make a grave mistake by not paying more attention to this art. When the appliances absolutely necessary can be had for very little expense, and when the cost of fattening need not be very much, there is little excuse for not employing the means for so doing.

The return to the producer for fattening his stock comes in two forms—first, by an increase in the weight of the chickens, and second, by an increase in the price per pound. Suppose, for example, the poultryman has two hundred chickens to sell which, unfattened, would average four pounds each and bring 15 cents per pound—that is, he would receive for \$600 pounds, at 15 cents per pound, \$120. Now, suppose by fattening them he makes them weigh but one pound more each—a small gain—and he gets two cents per pound increase in price (a sum frequently greatly exceeded), his chickens will bring him, 1,000 pounds at 17 cents, \$170, an advance of \$50—a very convenient little sum. Should he add two pounds per chicken, and get five cents additional per pound—by no means an extravagant hypothesis—he will raise his \$120 to \$240, exactly double what he would have received in the unfattened condition. That it does pay to fatten the chickens follows very naturally from the fact, without the illustrations we have used, that in England there are men who make it their business to purchase unfattened chickens, fatten and then sell them.

Without adopting the more or less elaborate appliances used abroad, a great gain can be made by preparing a number of coops capable of holding, without undue crowding, from ten to twenty birds. The coops should be so constructed as to be quite dark, except in front, and after feeding, the fronts should be closed by hanging burlaps over them. I have seen used mere boxes with laths nailed across the front. In these coops chickens of the same sex and as nearly of an age and size as possible should be confined. Opposite sexes should not be confined together, for they will be more uneasy and fatten less rapidly if they are. They should be of about the same age and size to prevent the overbearing conduct that large chickens show toward smaller ones.

The coops should be cleaned out daily to prevent the unpleasant odor that arises from droppings and which is inimical to health, as well as to prevent vermin from multiplying. The chickens should be carefully treated for vermin, before they are put into the coops, by dusting them thoroughly with insect powder of some kind.

The fattening should be done as rapidly as possible. Too long close confinement is apt to injure the health of the chickens, and as soon as health begins to fail perceptibly they will lose flesh. The more rapid the fattening, too, the tenderer will be the chickens. Every farmer knows that an old cow,

if rapidly fattened, makes good, tender beef, but if the fattening process is slow, the quality of the meat deteriorates. The soft, swollen muscles of a rapidly fattening chicken make much better poultry than when the flesh is, so to speak, worked on and the muscles kept hard by vigorous exercise.

In this country, as the popular taste demands as yellow a chicken as can be had, the food should be chosen accordingly. For grain, I think nothing is better than sound, yellow corn, either whole, cracked or ground. For rapid fattening I prefer it ground and made into dough by being slightly moistened with milk. If to the corn meal is added 10 to 15 per cent. of ground beef scraps, the fattening will proceed more rapidly. For drink, nothing is better than sweet milk, except sweet milk sweetened with sugar, about a heaping tablespoonful to each gill of milk. If the droppings show a tendency toward diarrhoea, the milk should be boiled.

I have insisted on the rapidity in operation. It should be well done in three weeks, and, in many cases, even less time is necessary. I have added two pounds to the weight of a Plymouth Rock cockerel in two weeks without keeping him as closely confined as I deem best for fattening chickens. This bird was alone in a coop about eight feet long by two and a half feet wide, had abundance of light and took considerable exercise. Quite a number of chickens for fattening could be confined in a coop of that size.

A lady who reared chickens for us several seasons used to confine the cull birds in small coops for fattening. She gave them water to drink and fed them wholly on yellow corn; and the results she obtained were extremely satisfactory, for her chickens were fat, yellow, and commanded the best market prices. And yet she took but little more care of these fattening chickens than most poultrymen take of their growing flocks. They were fed and watered regularly and their coops cleaned occasionally, that was all. Her success in fattening chickens led me to take more interest in the operation, and to employ methods almost as simple as hers, that gave us even better results, because quicker than she obtained. —*Country Gentleman*.

SUMMERING CATTLE ON GRASS.

I don't know of any subject more timely than how cattle of all kinds should be treated while living on grass. The common method with most farmers is to let them all run together—calves that are fed by hand excepted—many or few, large or small, just one pasture and generally too small for the number that must get a good living or be half starved. Then close grazing and often long dry spells and a good number of cattle following each other day after day reaching through fences and in the hot weather the field looking so bare that the grass roots are often killed out entirely. This is no overdrawn picture. Now, how can a cow give a good yield of milk or young cattle take on much growth or flesh under such conditions? Unless they get a satisfactory feed and in reasonable time they cannot spare the time needed for rest and to chew their

cud. Every farmer should have two or more pastures. Milch cows do better alone, but if that cannot be had, there should be at least two pastures so that one of them could be rested a while; and if suitable weather, two or three weeks will start the grass so that when you turn them on it again just watch the difference in the growth and yield and see the grass start up in the one vacated. This is a better way than if the number of acres were all in one lot. I hope those interested will try it.

Where cattle are compelled to eat off the blades of grass scarcely an inch high and probably destroy others just peeping out, ten days, if left to grow, would furnish twenty times as much feed and no injury occur to the roots. People tell of leaks and losses on the farm, but too close grazing is the biggest one I know of. Then there is a big talk about calves dying from scours, etc., but it is generally those that feed their cows such a big lot of stimulating nostrums of different kinds that makes the milk rank poison to their offspring. Calves from such pampered matrons are as good as sick at birth. Cows should be fed almost entirely on what you can raise on your own farm and then like common farmers, losses would disappear. It is risky to buy cows of some men.

If calves get the scours, we stir flour in their warm milk and an egg too, until it is checked. We teach them to eat oats and ground feed and keep hay before them all the time until turned on to grass. When cows scour badly on tame hay and mill-feed, make a real hard boiled dumpling of flour and water only, boil it until hard and when cool cut into pieces and feed it to them. It will quickly stop the scours. This receipt is worth dollars if it works for others as it has for us. I may tell you what pastures are like in England and how they keep them good all the time. They have a more moist climate than we have, but we could greatly improve ours by following their methods.

WM. ONLEY.

Hancock Co., Iowa

—*The Ploughman*.

SCOURS IN CALVES.

With the advent of the spring calving season scours become prevalent, as usual, and precautions against the trouble, as well as preparations for its cure if it develops, should be made, because it requires a long time for a calf to recover from a really serious attack of scours, if indeed it ever recovers. Preventive treatment depends on a knowledge of causes, and the causes of scours are many. Speaking generally, anything that will produce diarrhoea in the babe will cause scours in the calf. The most usual causes are colds, which "settle on the stomach," and bad feed, whether direct or through the dam. We have no doubt that a great many cases of scours in the first few days of a calf's life are owing to the improper feeding of the mother during the period of gestation. The youngster comes into the world with a tendency to have an easily disturbed digestion. There are also barnyards and calf lots that cause a contagious species of scours.

Those cases that arise from colds are prevented by keeping the calf pro-

TECTED FROM exposure; those that come from bad feed suggest their own cure. Those that depend on inherited diathesis require very easily digested food, the milk, if necessary, being corrected with lime water; and those that depend on contagion demand a thorough cleaning up of the premises, with disinfection. As to remedies they are very abundant; nearly everybody has one, and there are scarcely any of them that do not fail sometimes. Raw eggs in the milk often prove effective, charcoal is given, and sometimes laudanum is administered, which is about as bad a remedy as can be used, although it sometimes seems that nothing else will help. Perhaps as good a remedy as can be used in the general run of cases is fifteen or twenty gram doses of subnitrate of bismuth, given three hours apart, until relief is obtained. Scours, however, is one of the instances in which an ounce of prevention is better than the proverbial pound of cure, for even a successful cure does not prevent the stunting which generally follows an attack of scours. — *The Homestead*.

GRAIN MIXTURES TO BE FED DAILY WITH COARSE FEEDS.

Prof. Lindsey in Bulletin No. 53 of the Hatch Experiment Station recommends the following grain mixtures to be fed with coarse feed:

1. One hundred pounds corn or hominy meal. One hundred pounds bran, mixed or chop feed. Seventy-five pounds cotton, gluten or linseed meal. Mix and feed eight to nine quarts daily.
2. Two hundred pounds chop or cerealine feed. Seventy-five pounds cotton, gluten or linseed meal. Mix and feed seven to eight quarts daily.
3. One hundred pounds oat feed. One hundred pounds Buffalo or gluten feed. Mix and feed eight quarts daily.
4. H. O. dairy feed. Feed six to eight quarts daily.
5. Gluten feeds. Feed five to six quarts daily.
6. One hundred pounds fine middlings. One hundred pounds brewers' grains or malt sprouts. Mix and feed seven to eight quarts daily.
7. Fifty pounds linseed meal. Fifty pounds cotton-seed meal. One hundred pounds oat feed or chop feed. Mix and feed seven to eight quarts daily.
8. One hundred pounds cornmeal. Fifty pounds bran. Fifty pounds cotton-seed meal. Mix and feed seven quarts daily.

THE ADVANTAGES OF COW PEAS.

Dr. Stabbs, of Louisiana station, in summing up the advantages of cow peas, gives these points:

1. It is a nitrogen gatherer.
2. It shades the soil in summer, keeping it in condition most suitable to rapid nitrification, and leaves the soil friable and loose, in the best condition for a future crop.
3. It has a large root development, and hence jumps up from great depths and large areas the water, and with it the mineral matter needed by the plant.
4. Its adaptability to all kinds of soils, stiffest clays to most porous sands, fertile alluvial bottoms to barren uplands.