

Barrels of Apples Exposed in the Orchard

During a recent visit to the Brighton-Colborne District I noted a very large number of apple barrels remaining in the various orchards, packed and piled, usually directly on the ground, occasionally resting on a few boards or rails. The heavy rains of the previous day thoroughly saturated thousands of these barrels, unprotected in the orchards. Many of them will remain there until they are dried out by the sun and wind. This, of course, is not so harmful as the old practice of piling the fruit itself upon the ground, exposed to the inclemencies of the weather. Nevertheless, it is a bad practice, and accounts for many of the slack and wet barrels that afterwards appear in the foreign markets. The quality of the barrels now used is greatly improved. It does seem, therefore, somewhat of a folly to expend so large a sum upon a package, and then allow it to deteriorate so seriously in the rain and sunshine.

Even supposing, however, there was no rain, the exposure to the heat of the sun for a few days in the orchard will do more to ripen the fruit than many weeks in a properly-constructed storehouse. Apples put in box cars warm are almost certain to heat before they are placed on board ship, and then no accommodation, no matter how good, can save them. This has been the history of far too much fruit this fall. The weather has been warmer than usual, and the Fruit Inspectors report a much larger percentage of heated barrels than usual. In no case has there been a report of serious loss in cargoes that were reported as being of low temperature when they were shipped. A. McNEILL.

Packages Should be Stencilled, Not Tagged.

A correspondent writes to the Fruit Division, asking whether a tag, containing the brand, required by the Fruit Marks Act, tacked to a box or barrel, will fulfill the requirements of section 4 of the Fruit Marks Act. This question is answered as follows:

Section 4 of the Fruit Marks Act requires that the name and address of the packer, the kind of fruit and its grade shall be marked in a "plain and indelible manner" upon every closed package. A tag is so easily detached that it could not be accepted as marking the package in an "indelible" manner. The marks must be placed upon the package itself with a stencil, or in some way so as to make them permanent.

Rates on Apples to Bristol.

W. A. McKinnon, Canadian Commercial Agent in Bristol, England, sends the following item on the charges on apples, per barrel, consigned from Montreal to Birmingham, via Avonmouth:

Ocean freight, 2s. 6d.; dock dues, 1½d.; quay rate, 1½d.; railway rate, 10½d.; total charges, 3s. 7½d. Mr. McKinnon adds that he is credibly informed the total charges for the same service on fruit shipped via Liverpool amount to 4s. 1½d., a difference of over 4d. (8 cents) per barrel in favor of the Avonmouth route. This difference is chiefly due to the cheaper railway rate from Bristol to Birmingham, 10½d. (21 cents), as compared with 1s. 3d. (30 cents) from Liverpool.

POULTRY.

Preparing Chickens for Market.

Starving.—The chickens should be starved 24 hours before killing, to prevent food in the crop and intestines decomposing and spoiling the flavor of the birds. Several hours after the last feed allow the chickens what water they wish to drink. They should then have a complete fast until they are killed.

Killing.—(a) For chickens going into immediate consumption on the local market it will be most convenient to dislocate the neck. With the left hand hold the chicken's legs and wings in one firm grasp. Place the first finger of the right hand on the right side of the neck, and the remaining fingers on the left side. Grasp the head in the hollow of the hand with the fork of the fingers behind the head where it joins the neck. The back of the chicken being upwards, hold the legs against the left hip, and the head near the right thigh or knee. Bend the head backwards as far as possible and at the same time stretch the neck, when it is dislocated immediately; pull the head about 1½ inches from the neck. Hold the wings firmly after killing and allow the chicken's head to hang down, so that the blood can collect in the neck; the head is attached to the body simply by the skin of the neck.

(b) Chicks that are to be exported or put into cold storage must be killed by sticking in the mouth. Cut the large arteries at the sides of the neck, just below the ears. This can be done by introducing the knife into the throat and giving a couple of quick turns up and down. When bleeding freely, drive the blade at an angle with

the bird's bill into the back part of the roof of the mouth. Be sure the blade is through the bony structure and has entered the brain, then give a quick half turn to the knife. This causes paralysis, which loosens the feathers, making them much easier to pluck. Allow the bird to hang by its feet until plucked.

Plucking.—When killing by dislocation, commence dry plucking as soon as the neck is dislocated.

Directions.—While still holding the chicken in the left hand, extract the tail feathers and the quill feathers of the wing. Allow the chicken's head to hang down, and commence plucking the feathers on the back and wings; then pluck the breast and lower part of the neck, work back on again, finish the back and wings. Leave the feathers on the neck for three inches from the head, a ring of feathers round the legs at the hock joints, and the small feathers on the outside joint of each wing. Clean-pluck the rest of the chicken. Remove all pin-feathers and make the bird as attractive as possible. Be careful not to tear the skin. If a tear is made, have the flesh brought together with white thread.

Plucking the chick that is bled.—As the bird is hanging on a level with the operator's chest, grasp the wing between the thumb and first two fingers of the left hand, holding the neck between the third and little finger. This gives the operator control of the bird.

Remove the large wing feathers and the stiff feathers at the shoulder joints with the right hand. Remove tail feathers with one quick twisting motion. Pass the right hand rapidly down the back, from rump to neck, removing the feathers with thumb and forefinger. Shift the bird then to the right hand, and use the left hand in picking the soft feathers from the breast. If the sticking has been properly done the feathers will all come out easily and without tearing. The bird is again held in the left hand while the feathers are quickly stripped; the neck, wing and hock feathers are left, as mentioned above.

Shaping.—Chickens fattened for market should be properly shaped. This gives them a compact, plump appearance, and the returns are greater than when the chickens are shipped in a rough, unprepared condition. The "shaper" is made by nailing two ¾-inch planed boards together at right angles, so as to form a six-inch trough, inside measurement. This trough can be made six feet long and nailed in a frame, or twelve feet long with ends on it, and placed on top of two barrels. The trough should lean slightly backwards.

As soon as the chicken is plucked, place its legs alongside its breast; then with its breast downward, force the chicken into the angle of the shaper. Cover the chicken with paper, and place a brick on top to shape it, and one against it to hold it in position. Continue the same process as the other chickens are plucked, placing each chicken in the shaper close to the last, and moving the lower brick along to hold the row in position. Leave the chickens in the shaper at least six hours.

Packing.—After being thoroughly cooled the chickens should be packed into shipping cases. The chickens must be cooled and dry on the skins before packing. Unless they are artificially cooled, they should not be packed for twenty hours after killing. The shipping cases used by the Department of Agriculture are graded according to the size of birds. Each case holds twelve. Full description is contained in bulletin No. 7. For those having only a limited number of chickens the ordinary small packing cases, to be obtained at the grocery store, will be found fairly satisfactory.

To ascertain the price per pound at which chickens may be sold by drawn, plucked, or live weight, to realize the same amount of money, the following table of equivalent values for the different selling prices has been calculated:

Equal prices per pound (in cents) for fattened chickens sold by live weight, plucked weight or drawn weight:

	c.	c.	c.	c.	c.	c.	c.	c.
Live weight.....	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Plucked weight.....	7.4	8.6	9.9	11	12.4	13.6	14.8	16
Drawn weight.....	11	12.8	14.7	16.5	18.4	20	22	23.8

This table gives the seller a fair idea as to which pays the best. No account has been taken of the cost of killing, plucking or drawing.

F. C. ELFORD.

POULTRY-RAISING BECOMES MORE POPULAR WITH THE FARMERS ALL THE TIME. IF YOU HAVE ANY GOOD STOCK FOR SALE THERE ARE LOTS OF PEOPLE READY TO BUY IT. PUT AN ADVERTISEMENT IN OUR "POULTRY AND EGGS" COLUMN AND YOU WILL SOON FIND OUT WHO THEY ARE. THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE AND HOME MAGAZINE LONDON, ONT.

APIARY.

More About Wintering.

The beginner in beekeeping is probably wondering just about now how he is going to get his bees successfully through the winter that he sees ahead of him, and would give almost anything for a few pointers on things in general, and other things in particular. He has probably read sundry articles on the subject, some of which advocate one method of wintering and some another, and has his head so full of a jumble of information that he does not know just where he is at. Of course it is supposed that he has his bees ready for winter as far as supplies are concerned, but it might not be out of place to once more "holler in his ear," good and loud, that there are probably more bees lost through starvation than he has any idea of. An 8-frame Langstroth hive, for cellar wintering, should weigh from 55 to 60 pounds complete, and for outdoors about 10 pounds more. It took the writer some time so get this through his skull, but it is there now to stay.

Regarding the best way to winter bees here in Ontario, the aforementioned writer, after an experience of some ten years with all kinds of winters, all kinds of systems, and all kinds of success, has come to the conclusion that, in any locality where the bees are likely to be confined to their hives for from four to five months without an opportunity for flying, as is generally the case in this latitude, the best place for them is in a good cellar. A good cellar for bees is one that is comparatively dry and holds a temperature of 45 degrees regardless of outside conditions. If the cellar be damp, the temperature should be a couple of degrees higher, and if it be good and dry, it will be all right if the temperature rules as low as 40, but in any case it should be uniform—the more so the better. A cellar completely under ground is much more likely to hold a uniform temperature than one partly above ground. If such a cellar be available, use it. If too large, partition off with boards enough of one end to hold the bees; build stands to hold the bottom row of hives 18 or 24 inches from the floor, and run a stovepipe from near the floor up to connect with the pipe of a stove that is to have a fire in it. This is for a ventilator, and should have a damper to regulate the draft if necessary. If there are only a few hives, this work will not be necessary, for they can be placed on a shelf almost anywhere in the cellar that they will not be disturbed, and will be all right. The proper time for setting them in is governed by the weather; generally toward the end of November. This work will be spoken of a little later on.

If a good cellar is not to be had, very satisfactory results may be obtained by the outdoor method; in fact, some very successful apiarists prefer this way of wintering, and it has its advantages, when they are not overruled by its disadvantages. The hives are set on stands large enough to hold an outer case eight inches bigger each way than the hive proper, leaving a four-inch space all around the hive. This space is filled with dry leaves, planer shavings, sawdust, chaff, or some other good non-conducting material. Good dry leaves are about the best and most convenient material for this purpose. The hive should be raised from its bottom-board about two inches. Just take two inch-by-two strips the length of the hive, and two more the width of it, nail them together, and place the rim thus formed between the hive and bottom-board. If the entrance is in the bottom-board, one of the end pieces should be "set down" sufficiently to close it up, and make the entrance in the upper side of the rim, so that it may not become clogged with dead bees in the winter. An entrance must be made in the front of the case to correspond with the entrance of the hive, and a wooden "bridge" put between the hive and case to prevent the packing from closing the entrance, for the bees must always have an entrance to admit air and allow the old bees which may want to get out and die an opportunity to do so. The entrance, however, should be partly closed, by placing a piece of cardboard between the bridge and the hive, so that it closes all but a couple of inches of the entrance. In the spring, when the bees need more room to get in and out, they will chew away the card as necessity demands. On top of the frames, and under the cloth that covers them, place some small slats, nailed together something after the fashion of a small farm gate, to hold the cloth up from the frames so that the bees may have a passage over the tops of them in the winter. This is important. Over the cloth put about a foot or so of packing. The cover of the hive should be removed before doing this, and left off all winter. The case must have a perfectly tight roof, as everything inside must be kept absolutely dry. Bore a couple of inch holes—or, perhaps, a little smaller—in the side of the case just under the highest part of the roof, to allow the escape of the moisture given off by the bees; otherwise it will form frost on the inside of the case, and will melt and make things wet on the first mild day. E. G. H.

The Canadian Bee Journal suggests that it might be well for beekeepers to send printed directions for liquefying and keeping honey with each package supplied to purchasers.

Morley Pettit, Nixon, Ont., has had a busy season, having extracted about 40,000 pounds of honey this year.