

POULTRY YARD

Building a Poultry House

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On no other subject, perhaps, connected with poultry culture are the ideas of different people so greatly at variance as in the essentials or requisites of a house for poultry, when calculated for both winter and summer use, and for the benefit of any who may be contemplating the erection of a new building, I will submit a few pointers on what I consider essentials in their construction.

First, the location should be where it would be sheltered from the north and west winds, and it should face the southeast if possible, so as to get the sunlight possible in winter, and the window should then be in the front only. Do not make the mistake of using too much glass. It is not only expensive, but actually harmful in that it tends to radiate too much heat in summer, and too much cold in winter. One ordinary sized window is sufficient for a floor space of 150 sq. ft.

The situation should be naturally dry or have good drainage provided on all sides in order to avoid dampness, and the floor either made of boards tightly laid six inches above the ground, or concrete or pounded earth formed above a foot of small stones, which will prevent dampness. It is a good idea to paper the entire inside with tarred or rosin sized paper to retain warmth and dispel insects. The roosts should be low and level, and the droppings either frequently removed or covered with sifted dry coal ashes.

FLOOR SPACE REQUIRED

If the fowls are to be confined to the room not less than eight or ten feet of floor space should be allowed for each fowl. Ventilation without causing a draft of air is another important factor. This may be secured by placing a ventilator on top, or in the east gable, and then filling the loft over the fowls with straw, through which the bad air and dampness can pass without causing a draft of reversed air.

Another important consideration in winter is to have the roosting apartment either partitioned or curtained off, and of sufficient size only to admit the flock comfortably, and with an overhead ceiling but a short distance above them; so their bodily heat will not be lost, but retained in a way to keep them snug and warm during the coldest nights of winter. An ordinary flock of fowls will generate heat enough to keep them from freezing during the coldest nights, without a fire or artificial heat of any kind, if the

roost is built warm, and so arranged that their warmth will not be dissipated by two large bodies of cold air surrounding them.

For nests I prefer loose boxes placed on the floor and screened from observation by leaning something like an old door over them in a way to keep the fowls from attempting to roost on them. These may be easily removed, fumigated, burned out, or whitewashed, and made unfit for breeding lice, which should be avoided in every possible way.

The dry dust of sifted coal ashes is the cheapest and most effective preventive for lice I have ever discovered, and in addition to keeping a box for the fowls to wallow in, they should be frequently scattered on the floor of the building. Make your house of any size, shape or style that your fancy dictates, if you observe the above essentials, and feed so as to keep your fowls healthy and busy, you may expect to meet with a fair degree of success.

Curtain Front Houses

A Maine Experiment station gives a great deal of attention to the Poultry Department. Much benefit has been derived from its experiments of various kinds. Its latest report speaks of the curtain front house as follows:

Of all the improvements which have been made in poultry management at this Station undoubtedly the so-called "curtain-front" system of housing ranks first. Up to the time when Professor Gowell began the first tentative experiment in the way of making a house suitable for laying poultry it was practically universally believed by poultrymen that in order to get good winter egg production there was a necessity to institute in the poultry house so far as possible, summer conditions. The Experiment Station itself constructed its first poultry house on the plan of a tight house with a system of supplying artificial heat. It was very soon demonstrated after the "curtain-front" principle was tried in a small house the so-called "curtain-front" system. Station bulletins [that the old idea of the necessity of a warm house for winter egg production was essentially wrong. It clearly appeared that a low temperature and moist system had no influence on egg production during the winter months.

Further, it appeared that getting the birds into the open air every bright, sunny day during the winter was a great stimulus to egg production. This is practically what the "curtain-front" house does. During bright days the curtains are up and to all intents and purposes the birds are in the open air. The house, however, gives two conditions which could not be duplicated in the open air during the winter months. First, the birds are protected from drafts and second, they scratch in a dry litter. The general idea that the lowness of the temperature does not matter in egg production provided the birds have plenty of fresh air and the house is dry, has proved itself in the experience of the station a correct one.

The essential correctness of the underlying idea in this "curtain-front system" of housing is further indicated by the fact that it has been widely adopted by practical poultrymen all over the world. In fact, it may be said that this is the dominant plan of housing poultry for laying purposes at the present time.

Dry days and cold ones answer very well. Sufficient lice extirminator to be effective cannot well be incorporated in the dust bath. If the hens need treatment for lice the dust bath is to give them a thorough dusting with some of the advertised lice powder.

White Holland Turkeys

The origin of this variety is supposed to have been the selecting of extra light colored Narragansetts in years gone by. It is generally conceded that the name is not a correct index to the locality of their origin. There is no doubt that if selections of the lightest colored birds of the flock each season were mated together for a number of years, a race of fowl could be obtained to breed fairly pure white color. This variety has been obtained in this variety the past dozen years, and it is stated, was caused by careful introduction of Bronze blood, some say from a white "sport" of the Bronze.

It is a fact that the white turkeys are easily kept from running when not raised in large flocks, and many favor them on this account. When their plumage is kept clean they are also a handsome bird, but it is almost impossible to do this. Carefully mated and given proper attention when young, they will be found as hardy as any of the other varieties. The body of the White Holland is not so long as the Bronze nor yet so deep. The back also lacks the gradual curve of the latter, being flatter upon the shoulder. Plumage should be a pure white throughout except for the black beard in males. Beaks, legs and toes are white, or pinkish white in color. A common defect is a "tickling" of small black spots on the footers. Standard weight for adult male, 26 pounds; adult female, 16 pounds; young male, 18 pounds; young female 12 pounds.

The Feeding Value of Bran

Properly used, the feeding value of bran is a very different thing to the value of bran as food. As a poultry food, it is not so much a thing of very near the bottom of the list, and many poultry-keepers, noting this, avoid its use; but, even considered as a food, it abounds in body-forming elements and is well suited for forming materials, and, at its price, compares favorably with other food stuffs as value for money. Good, sound, bright bran has, however, a very great feeding value, apart from the actual food it contains for what may be called its mechanical action. Besides giving necessary bulk, it divides the finer and more expensive meals, and so exposes them more fully to the digestive process.

A mash composed of one part (by weight) of bran to four parts ground oats or barley-meal is more thoroughly digested, and in every way more economical, than one of all meal. The use of bran as a food is to soak or "soak" a sufficient quantity some hours before, and to dry it off with meal when required. By this method the bran is softened, and to some extent broken up. If not sufficiently soaked, the roughness is apt to irritate the bowels and cause scouring.

Fasts for Fowls

Whilst an occasional starve is probably an excellent thing for both humans and poultry, there are three times in the life of a fowl when a 24 hours' fast is to be specially recommended. These are: first, to be immediately after birth, before death, and on confinement in a coop previous to fattening. The reason for the first is that the young bird has provided the new-born chick with sufficient nutriment for about thirty-six hours, and any food taken during the first twelve hours or so is probably distinctly detrimental to its well-being. Fasting before death ensures that the crop and intestines shall be emptied of food, and thus prevents decomposition and staling of meat. Another good reason is that the flesh of fowls thus fasted eats better, being less liable

to the hardness often found in birds killed shortly after a meal. Thirdly, starve a bird is more or less dry drawn, and the intestines being dry and compact, come away cleanly.

A day's starve, immediately after cooping a bird to be fattened will ensure a good appetite at the start. Many birds, especially somewhat wild ones, will reject a meal if offered soon after confinement, and will finish up by refusing food. Any sort, be it ever so tempting. So much is being continually written about feeding fowls that this short article on starving a bird is hardly worth the occasional fast to man or bird as a refreshing novelty, and to such should prove useful. This has the advantage of giving advice easy to follow, for whatever excuses may be offered for neglecting to feed scientifically, the latest can hardly find any trouble in starving a fowl.—F. H. Cooper, in Feathered Life.

Replies from all over Canada

The replies I received from my small ad in the Poultry Exchange of The Canadian Dairyman and Farming World came from all over Canada. I feel well repaid for the money spent. Please renew my advertisement.—Walter Brown, Hamilton, Ont.

Geese and turkeys cost less to raise than chickens and ducks, and the prices realized for them are much higher, yet the supply never equals the demand. These larger fowl forage for a great deal of their feed. It is also true that they are not given more attention, and their production doubled.

The poultry page is for the use of those interested in this branch of the farm work. The editor will welcome discussion by its readers, of the many questions pertaining to poultry. The free use of this page will surely be a help all round. The editor makes no claim to being infallible, but will endeavor to answer all queries to the best of his ability, and as promptly as possible. Cannot we have a letter from at least a hundred people this month?

The Poultry page of the Canadian Dairyman and Farming World is a good one to use as an advertising medium. Those who have tried it this spring report splendid results. The reason for this is found in the fact that the Canadian Dairyman and Farming World goes to more farm homes in Canada than any poultry publication, and thus reaches the buyers. Try selling your surplus stock by its help this season. A small ad will do it.

Some prominent dairymen of the United States have been investigating the cheese industry of Ontario. They are Mr. Flanders of Albany, N. Y., First Assistant Dairy Commissioner, Mr. Kirkland of Philadelphia and Mr. Hall of Gouverneur, state instructors. These gentlemen were accompanied by an inspection by Mr. G. G. Fubow of Kingston, Chief Dairy Instructor for Eastern Ontario, and visited a number of our factories.

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