

THE O. A. C. REVIEW

"THE PROFESSION WHICH I HAVE EMBRACED REQUIRES A KNOWLEDGE OF EVERYTHING."

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Colony House Brooding

By E. C. Foreman

Commercial poultry breeders all agree that renewing the flock is the greatest drawback to success in the industry.

Our ancestors would have us believe that failure to secure a fine flock of pullets, results from disregarding the old theories of the moon's influence on all incubation and brooding operations or that cornmeal as an ideal chick ration is not fully appreciated by poultrymen of today.

In this enlightened age such theories are ridiculous, as the ability of the egg to hatch is an hereditary character, peculiar to the individual. The eggs of certain hens will hatch, whether incubated during the light or dark of moon, while with others it is almost impossible to secure a strong healthy chick. A comparison of the composition of cornmeal and a growing chick, clearly shows how impossible it would be to attempt raising chicks on cornmeal. A balanced ration is as necessary for growing chicks as for heavy egg production. Since the chick's body is made up of what is received into it in the form of food, it is evident, that the character of the food assimilated will determine the character of the body. The food determines the kind of growth and if deficient in any nutrient, the growth will also be deficient in that respect, thus a very close relationship exists between the growth of the individual and the food it eats.

On the rearing of chicks depends the results in egg production later on. The first six weeks is the most vital epoch

in the life of the chick, and after reaching this age the rest is practically smooth sailing. Of the millions of chicks hatched annually, it is a safe estimate that not over 50% are matured. How to reduce this great burden of expense and get a larger proportion "from egg to egg," thus swinging the balance of profits to the poultry breeder, is the problem.

UPON SUCCESSFUL BROODING DEPENDS:

Pre-Natal Conditions—Only breeding stock of strong physical condition will be able to transmit vitality and hustle to the chicks, chicks that will live and grow every day from the time they emerge from the shell. Conditions affecting the physical welfare of fowls is a long story in itself, suffice it to mention here, that fresh air or open front housing, deep litter feeding, with animal food given in the form of skim-milk, all exert a beneficial influence in that direction.

Incubation—The old saying that a well hatched chicken is half raised contains a great deal of truth. It is generally supposed that incubator hatched chicks do not have so complete an absorption of the yolk as do the hen hatched chicks. Commercial poultry farms whose stock have been hatched year after year with incubators entirely, show no signs of weakened vitality which leads us to believe that, incubators properly operated, can and do produce robust and thrifty chicks.

Brooding—The season for artificial brooding with the coal burning brooder stoves, is limited to the months of