

available source for your incomes. I know a hen is a small thing—perhaps beneath the attention of some men, but she is either a profit or a loss to you. Which are you going to make it? It depends entirely upon yourself.

BREEDING AND MARKETING EGGS AND POULTRY.

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EVERY fowl and every egg that is disposed of for less than the highest market price is sold at a loss; and a very large percentage of poultry and eggs is so disposed of.

1st. There is a loss when the produce is marketed at the wrong season of the year.

2nd. There is a loss when it is marketed in poor condition.

3rd. There is a loss when it is the product of unsuitable stock.

Under these three headings I will endeavor to give reasons for the above and point out the remedy.

1—MARKETING AT IMPROPER SEASON OF THE YEAR.

Take the egg trade.—The market is flooded with eggs from April to July; the price is correspondingly low. In August and September the supply from producers is not great, but the middlemen have been laying in large quantities during the four earlier months, and these are placed upon the market, so that prices do not revive to any great extent. From October to March is the season of high prices. Prices vary each year and so does the supply. Much depends upon the weather. During October of one year, eggs may be fairly plentiful, while in the corresponding month of the next year, they may be scarce as was the case last October. Similarly with regard to the other months. The endeavor, therefore, should be to enforce laying from October to March inclusive. This necessitates comfortable poultry houses, built to admit lots of sunshine, and to exclude the frost, continual attention and observation, egg producing food in proper quantities (not patent medicines), and most important of all a flock of birds that were hatched early. Breeds which mature rapidly should be hatched the latter

part of April or early in May. The larger breeds, which mature slowly, should be hatched in March or early in April. This gives ample time for the pullets to be full feathered, and in good laying trim before the cold weather puts a seal on the prospect of egg production. Remember that where the market price in spring and summer is fifteen cents, it will in winter be about double. So much for the egg season.

NOW AS TO POULTRY.

Do you market your surplus stock in October, November and December? If so, you lose money. How old were those cockerels you sold in October? Six months. Just so, and after feeding them for six months they sold for about fifty cents a pair, and lucky to get that. Suppose you had sent them to market in June or July, after feeding them only ten to fourteen weeks, you would have received somewhere around seventy-five cents a pair and saved three months feed. "That's funny, but it is so." Your cockerels of the larger breeds hatched in April or early in May should be marketed in June or July to secure greater profits. After that they are kept at a loss. The hens should not be kept over about two years. If they bring out an early clutch of chicks, they may be sold at a good figure just about the time the chicks are old enough to look after themselves. The hen will then be in good condition and the prices will be right.

2—MARKETING IN POOR CONDITION.

A fowl marketed when young (and, as I have said, that is the time to sell it) must have been well fed, and intelligently reared, or there will be nothing but skin and bone to dispose of, and the price paid for such a combination is not high. A well fed, healthy bird, will have a nicely rounded breast, and plump thighs, and will command a high price. Add to this the enhanced appearance if it should be well dressed, and it commands a still higher figure. In the case of old fowls, it is of still greater importance that they be neatly prepared for sale. Leave in the pin feathers and stubs, and twenty-five per cent is clipped off the value. Scald your fowls so as to make easy the removal of the feathers, and you will lose nearly an equal proportion. Everything should be done systematically. Kill your fowl by bleeding; immediately pluck it, taking care not to tear the skin; then plunge it into cold water to plump it, and see that it is skewered so as to give it a still more plump appearance. I need