

POULTRY YARD

Summer Tragedies

S. Short, Carleton Co., Ont.

After more or less expense and more or less anticipation, and after expending the pleasing hope of a successful hatch, great is the disappointment to find that one or more of our chickens has disappeared during the night-time. Good fortune is it if the body of the deceased is found in the coop—a victim of a clumsy mother—or to the diseases of chickenhood, for then one has a certain knowledge of the cause of death. But altogether different are the circumstances, or causes of death, when the body is not in evidence. What became of the chick is in most cases a matter of conjecture. The most likely theory is that it has been devoured by some animal or bird. If so, precautions should be taken at once to protect the rest of the brood, for, if any bird or beast takes one chicken without being caught or frightened off, they will nine times out of ten, return the following night and kill and take away another.

In country and suburban districts in summer time, the poultry have many enemies and brooders sometimes suffer heavily by these depredations. Years ago the hawks worked havoc amongst the young fowl. They still do in unsettled districts and near large towns and cities they are now rarely known to be troublesome. The crow seems to have taken the place of the hawk in destructiveness only much more so. The hawk is a bold fellow, coming down at midday with a swift rush, a pounce, and up and off with a chick right before your face. One chick every other day would satisfy him, but not so with Mr. Crow. He sneaks down at daylight, walks quietly amongst the coops, seizes and cuts the throat of the young chick to prevent it crying out and then flies off with it. He takes one the first morning, two or three the next and then if not shot or frightened will bring his friends with him and speedily destroy every chicken in the place. Fortunately the crow is very cowardly, and if fired at, will be so frightened that neither he nor any others will come near the neighborhood for some time. Whenever a crow perches on the fence near the poultry run or near the garden it is safe to suppose he means no good to either and should be promptly shot at and frightened off.

August Notes

J. H. Cullander, Peterboro Co., Ont.

The early chicks are now being rounded off, and showing what they will be at maturity. It is important that the feed be suitable for a strong feather growth. No stage of a chick's life makes a greater demand on its vitality, and many promising chicks reach only a moderate size because they were unassisted in the feathering process. Had they had an abundance of the proper food, they would have at least stood a chance of making a larger development. Chicks with free range, can generally secure enough natural food in the shape of insects and bugs, to bring them successfully through this season.

It often happens that the garden or some adjacent crop comes within their range, and it is desired to keep them out of it for a while. The chicks are reared up in close quarters and the bug crop is insufficient. At the same time the supply of green food soon becomes exhausted, or too foul for food. This is still another drawback. A wire netting fence around the garden is the best remedy. Then the birds can have their liberty. Failing this, it should be seen to that meal is given regularly in some form. A little beef scrap, from a poultry supply

house is the cleanest way to feed meat in hot weather, and it will pay for the investment, but any meat that is convenient is better than nothing. Some who have bone mills can provide feed with it. Others can procure it fresh two or three times a week from their butcher. Others use the entire plucks of beef or hogs, first boiling, and then letting the birds pick the cooked meat off the nail that secures it to the wall within reach. Others again get the heads from slaughter houses and let the chicks pick them clean without cooking. But as stated before, any way that is handiest will answer the purpose.

For green foods, beets or mangels, tops and all, are good. The cabbage stalks from which the cabbage have been cut will answer. The birds will eat also a lot of the refuse from the house, such as potato or other vegetable peelings. If the chicks are being fed on the dry mash system, a little linseed meal mixed in at this time is also a help to feathering quickly and properly.

During August we are likely to have some hot weather occasionally, and the late chicks need shade to keep them from getting sunburned, a most undesirable thing, and a great hindrance to growth. The hot weather is a thirteenth time, don't forget that, and if possible fill the water pans or fountains two or three times daily. Every little helps, and it's the little draws.

backs that are oftenest neglected, and that have disastrous effects.

Don't let the vermin that multiplies so rapidly get ahead of you. Give the poultry house a coat of good hot whitewash made from fresh lime, and with some crude carbolic acid added. Apply it if possible with a spray, using all the force possible to get it into the cracks.

If you are contemplating keeping a larger number of layers than last season, during the coming winter, it is time to be planning extended winter quarters. Be prepared in good time and avoid over-crowding in the fall, which means uncomfortable heated nights and colds developed in the chilly mornings, leading to roup, the most dreaded enemy of the poultryman.

Portable Brooder House

Portable brooder houses of several different sizes and styles of construction are in use at the Maine Experiment Station. They are of sufficient size to accommodate 2000 chickens to maturity. Each of the houses accommodates 125 or 150 chicks from the time brooding commences until they are moved into winter quarters. They are large enough so that the necessary work can be done comfortably in them. During rainy days, when the birds must be kept indoors, there is room for them, and they will not suffer

seriously if the floors are covered generously with cut clover chaff.

The birds in them are safe at night from storms, and all thieves that walk on four feet, crawl or fly. They are built on shoes so that they can be drawn near together for convenience in the brooding season, during April, May and June, and then to the grass fields for the range season.

Keep the chickens growing now, by carefully watching for any sign of trouble, and correct the fault at once. If it is the feed, change it, and you are generally safe to make it a dry ration, if it is lice on at them with both hands, and don't let the hungry pack destroy your whole season's profit. If it is dirty quarters and therefore unhealthy roosting places, don't allow that condition to last another day. A set back now is serious.

Chickens are now plucked in a wholesale manner by the use of pneumatic machinery. There is a receptacle in which the fowl is placed after being killed and into this are turned several cross currents or air from electrical fans revolving at the rate of 5,000 turns per minute. In a few seconds the bird is stripped of its feathers, even to the tiniest particles of down, and the machine is ready for another.



Be Prepared for Emergencies.

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