

ever the operator lights the lamp and sets it in operation. What is required, therefore, is, in the latter part of March, a supply of strongly fertile eggs. If the eggs are put in the machine by the last of March the pullets will be fully developed and laying the following November when eggs are high. The cockerels may be marketed as broilers in July or as roasters in September, when they will bring the highest prices obtainable in the year.

When to Operate an Incubator.

The question which incubator to buy is an easy one to answer. There are plenty of good incubators on the market and advertised in the Western Home Monthly. Some poultrymen will prefer one and some another make, and all the readers of this article have to do is to write for the different catalogues and decide for themselves which machine will give them the best service and purchase it now. It is not safe to wait until the season is farther advanced for at that time the incubator companies are more likely to be flooded with orders and also because incubators are usually shipped by freight, and freight moves slowly at this season of the year. It is better to have your machine on hand two weeks before you want to use it than two weeks after.

With each machine the purchaser will receive instructions for operating it. These instructions should be carefully read, for a maker of a machine ought to know better than anyone else how it ought to be operated for the best results.

Not long ago a cellar was believed to be the best place to operate an incubator, because the temperature varied less there than in the house above ground. Lately it has been proved that most cellars are not sufficiently well ventilated and well lighted so that the atmosphere is not the kind that is needed to produce a healthy chick. Light is one of the best destroyers of germs that the poultryman can make use of and the oxygen of fresh air is as necessary to produce a healthy chick as is the required degree of heat. Unless the cellar is exceptionally well lighted and well ventilated, do not place the machine there but put it in a vacant room in the house; a room where there is no applied heat. This can be ventilated by opening the windows and the sunlight admitted through the windows will be an advantage, although it must not be allowed to shine directly on the machine. Strong fertilized eggs placed in a machine in such an environment should produce a fair percentage of strong chicks.

The Best Incubator—Wyandottes or Leghorns.

To the Western Home Monthly.

I want to get the best incubator and brooder; what make shall I buy and how large a machine? I am trying to decide whether to keep White Leghorns or White Wyandottes. Which will give the best satisfaction? There is a good market for eggs here. A. J.

Ans.—The best incubators are advertised in our columns. Write the advertisers for catalogs, etc. The size of machine you need depends upon how many eggs you desire to incubate at one time. We do not, however, advise you to buy a machine holding less than one hundred eggs. For eggs, only, except in localities where brown shells are preferred, the Leghorns are considered the best; for eggs and meat combined and in localities where brown shelled eggs are not preferred, you would find Wyandottes more satisfactory.

Importance of Good Brooding.

Although most people consider the incubating the most important part in the hatching and rearing of chicks, it is a fact that the brooding gives the most trouble. There are plenty of good brooders on the market but the manner of running them and the manner of caring for the chicks frequently makes success well nigh impossible. There is no good reason for this, for a larger per cent. of the chicks hatched may be reared with brooders than is possible with hens, especially in the early season.

Until the weather is fairly warm, a hen should not be permitted to brood more than eleven to fourteen chicks and it is pretty near as much trouble to care for such a brood as it is to care for a brooder in which fifty chicks are brooded, which, if properly located and operated, is more comfortable and more healthy to the chicks and more clean for the operator to work with. A well ventilated place, where the sunlight may be admitted freely is the only place in which one should attempt to brood chicks artificially. If the brooder is well constructed, an expensive house is not necessary. A single boarded structure, made wind and water proof, is usually all that is necessary.

There is no danger of the chicks obtaining too much fresh air even though the house itself becomes quite cold provided they can run into the brooder whenever they feel the need of warmth and provided they can scratch for exercise in a litter hunting for small grains.

Feeding brooder chicks is not a more difficult problem than feeding chicks with hens at the same season of the year. The prepared chick feeds now on the market offer a comparatively cheap and convenient means of supplying every need of the chick without the trouble of compounding a ration, which is sometimes a difficult matter for the poultryman. Damp mashes have been almost entirely dropped by progressive poultry raisers, with a great saving of time and considerable gain to the chicks.

Taken as a whole, it is very plain that the use of incubators and brooders by the farmer's wife who rears a limited number of fowls is advisable in most cases. Where but a small flock is to be raised, one hatching will suffice for the entire season. Where larger flocks are needed, two or three hatchings at the most will equal the requirements. The advantage of having the work done all at one time, and at the time when it is most profitable to do it, will be apparent to all.

In succeeding numbers of this paper we will take up further questions relative to artificial incubating and brooding, in our poultry department.

Oats Don'ts.

Don't try to raise a crop of oats from poor seed; get the best large, plump-kernelled oats in the neighborhood and take it to a fanning mill and blow out half of it for feed and sow only large, strong, plump kernels.

Don't try to prepare ground that is wet. Wait until it is in proper condition.

Don't "mud in" oats.

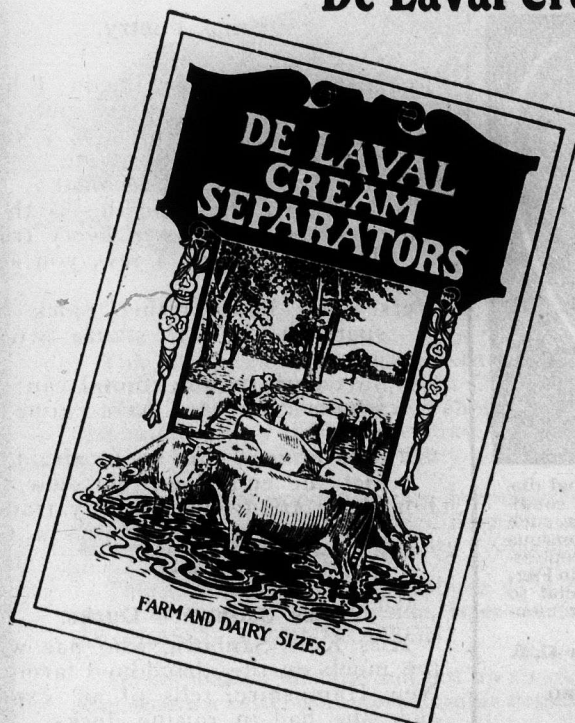
Don't try to prepare a seed bed with a rusty or dull disk.

Don't leave any ground not stirred two inches, even if you have to unhitch from the disk and use a cultivator.

Don't try to raise a crop of oats without a well prepared seed bed.

Don't try to raise a crop of oats without disking twice (no skips) and harrowing twice.

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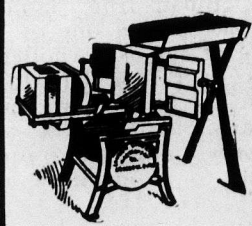
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