

POULTRY YARD

Co-operation and Education

Prof. F. C. Elford, Macdonald College, Que.

Wherever in Canada co-operative circles have been tried the results have been satisfactory.

At Fergus, Ontario, Messrs. Armstrong Bros., were keeping a feed store, handling a few chickens of doubtful quality brought in by their customers. They commenced a campaign of education that has resulted in a yearly output of thousands of dollars. Wholesale dealers who buy their product say it is of superior and uniform quality and they can afford to pay a price that will net the farmer much more than if each handled his own.

At Holmesville, Ontario, prior to the establishment of a Poultry Station by the Dominion Government, the limited quantity of poultry marketed was not first class. The birds were unsuitable and little attention was paid to that department. Through the work of the station and the co-operative work that has followed, there is to-day a good class of poultry kept on the farms and the station sent to Montreal last year, from a very limited territory several thousand dollars' worth of dressed poultry and is shipping eggs during the entire year. The education and the co-operation has almost created a department of the farm there into an important industry.

At Petit Brule, Que., is a small co-operative circle managed by the salesman of the cheese factory, which is shipping eggs to Montreal. The members of the circle are getting a bonus for taking care of their eggs, which is a decided benefit to themselves and the trade.

There are other instances which might be mentioned but the cases are isolated and act entirely separate of one another, but show that co-operation is an advantage and can be carried on among the farmers of Canada.

EDUCATION A FORERUNNER.

A study of these shows also that before there is much co-operation there must be considerable education. In the case of Holmesville the education was done through the assistance of the Government from their Poultry Station. At Fergus, the Messrs. Armstrong Bros., did the educating work themselves. They say that the work should not be borne by private individuals as there is no guarantee that as soon as the educational work is far enough advanced other firms will step in and reap the benefit, as has been their experience. Mr. Armstrong thinks that the Government should assist such co-operation the same way that they assist cheese and butter factories.

At any rate before we can expect to have a uniform system of co-operation even to a small extent a campaign of education will be necessary. For this purpose the Poultry Producers' Association of Eastern Canada has been formed and through it the Dominion Government will assist in this campaign of co-operative effort.

Poultry Keeping Has Its Advantages

Poultry keeping is probably the most fascinating branch of animal husbandry. Every poultry raiser is an enthusiast for a time at least and general conditions are against him.

Persons with a limited capital can start on a small scale and gradually work up. The returns are quick and even so many farm departments its revenue may be divided over the 12

months of the year. Every farm is benefited by a well kept flock of hens. They keep down the insects, enrich the soil, turn refuse into money and interfere but slightly with the time required for other departments.

Managing a flock of hens is an education in itself and may allow a younger member of the family an opportunity of learning business principles that will never be forgotten.—F. C. E.

Scaly Legs on Fowls

B. Smith, Lambton Co., Ont.

This disease is very common where fowls roost in filthy quarters. It is very contagious and is caused by a small parasite working underneath the scale of the leg, spreading upwards. The legs are swelled much above their normal size. This disease in most cases, is not fatal but is most unsightly and spoils the appearance of the bird.

To treat it apply equal parts of lard and kerosene oil, with enough pulverized sulfur to form a paste. Repeat this twice, leaving for a week. Repeat till cured. If equal parts of sweet oil, kerosene and alcohol were applied monthly this disease would not occur.

Fattening Chickens

1.—I have about 125 chickens, which are now about ten months old; they are Rhode Island Reds, and have any idea how much I ought to feed them, as this is my first experience. I am feeding them all the males, and fatten them to pick out the best. Can you tell me what is the right age, and how to know what the solution is? I am sure I will do it right if you can tell me what it is. I am sure I will do it right if you can tell me what it is. I am sure I will do it right if you can tell me what it is.

1.—If your chickens are doing well under the present treatment I would continue it. If they have a free run, good, big yard, give them all the grain they will eat up clean, twice a day. You will not make much of a success of feeding chickens if you endeavor to measure it out every feed. I am feeding mine in the hopper, that is, a box out of which they can feed themselves. In this box is put frozen wheat and they eat all they want of it. In addition to that they get some grit and leaf scrap, but you may be able to give yours table scraps or milk, and the grit they will pick up. If you have any cockerels weighing 1½ lbs. to 2 lbs. each, you might be able to sell them as broilers now, without any special feeding, or if you want to feed them specially, give them a mash of any meal that is handy, mixed with milk.

2.—We spray our henhouses with Zenolium, about 10 per cent. solution.—F.C.E.

Preparing Poultry for Market

In proportion to the quantity of poultry offered for sale in the past, altogether too large an amount has been poorly dressed and equally poorly packed. This condition of affairs is due simply to a lack of knowledge of the best methods of handling and preparing birds. Therefore, farmers and others who are raising poultry would do well to kindly note very carefully the following instructions.

TIME TO FATTEN

The most profitable time to fatten poultry is between three and four months old, although birds of almost any age may be fattened. The idea is to have them plump and well fleshed.

FATTENING CRATES

Chickens for fattening should be placed in crates. These crates are generally made six feet long, 10 inches wide and 20 inches high divided into three compartments, each compartment holding four birds. Set the crates on stands four feet from the ground. Each crate may carry a light "V" shaped trough two and a

half inches deep. The bottom of the trough is four inches above the bottom of the crate, and the upper side edge two inches from the crate.

FEEDS.

A very palatable and effective ration may be made of two parts ground oats and one part corn, or, equal parts of ground oats, ground corn, and ground buckwheat or two parts flour, two parts ground barley and one part wheat bran, mixed with skim milk, sour milk or butter milk to a thin porridge. A quantity of meat, meat, beef scraps and grain should be mixed with the mash on alternate days.

On the first day mix some Epsom Salts in the drinking water, and for a couple of days feed lightly, the food being given twice daily, and after the birds have eaten what they require, troughs should be removed or cleaned. Quantities of fresh water must be supplied constantly, and also grit two or three times per week.

MARKING NEGLECTED.

In fattening chickens the object should be to conform, as nearly as possible, to market requirements. The breast in shape, should be long and broad, giving the bird a plump appearance. Short legs, indicating the low, blocky type, are a good feature. The leg should form as small a proportion of the weight as possible, because the meat is largely composed of skin and therefore inferior. About four pounds is the preferred weight of dressed fatted chickens, and as the gain in live weight made by birds ranges from one to four pounds a bird during the fattening period, it is necessary to calculate the amount of work necessary.

PASTING.

A mistake which results in the spoiling of many promising birds is killing them when their crops are full. Green spots of decomposition on the flesh can invariably be traced to the fact that the birds were not fasted. Birds must fast for at least 24 hours, preferably 36 before killing, so as to prevent rotting their crops and intestines. This is a point about which one cannot be too particular. Next week we shall deal with killing, plucking,umping and packing.

Pointers

In lieu of a dust bath, sifted coal ashes are preferable to wood ashes because they do not contain so much potash.

If your egg supply is falling off, probably it is because your hens are not getting as much ground bone as they need. Bone makes eggs.

Be a poultryman, if only a backyard fancier. Did you ever step to think how much money there could be made in the backyard? Some one try it and see.

Just because you have not quite as good a hen-house as the neighbor has is no reason for neglecting it. It often happens that the house which looks the best from the road is not the best from the inside view.

There is a constant demand for breeding and exhibition stock, and fortunate is the poultryman who can

supply, in a degree, this want. There are no fixed prices for fancy stock and eggs, and he who can furnish the best will obtain the best returns.

In raising poultry for the market the profit lies in hatching early, pushing the chickens forward as rapidly as possible and marketing them as soon as possible. The cost of food for poultry is less and the dividends of investments are more frequent and also larger than in most other stock.

There never was a time when careful selection failed to give good results and especially when extra care and attention is given to the selection of the male. Usually between a little extra care and a little neglect lies all the difference between the flock of hens that lay in winter and the flock that does not.

There can be no fixed method of feeding or breeding fowls. Success comes from right methods, and these methods must be learned in the school of common sense and experience. I contend that every poultryman should stand upon his own ground and work out his own methods of keeping poultry successfully, but in this he may be greatly helped by the experiences of others.

The one great principle that is sadly neglected in the poultry field to-day is 'system.' It is the by-word that keeps the affairs of the world going to-day. Very few of us work under exactly the same circumstances and therefore different methods of works must ensue. There is a diversity of circumstances, and no one can successfully copy the method of another, for if he does he will not succeed. Old breeders can only give the beginner pointers to work by. There is no royal road to poultry culture.

The thoroughly qualified poultryman, the one who can make good money in one month out, year after year, does not have to seek a position nowadays and this should be accepted as a pointer by young men and women interested in poultry, and willing to do the hard work necessary to qualify themselves for a successful career in the industry. There are any number of positions seeking poultrymen competent to fill them. The demand is constantly increasing.

I consider Farm and Dairy a splendid farm paper, and one that is continually improving. The special magazine issues are especially fine. I keep them all for reference.—A. E. M., Algoma.

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