

# INTERESTING AGRICULTURAL FEATURES FOR OUR COUNTRY READERS

## POULTRY

### THE INCUBATOR

Its Value in Poultry Raising—A Word About the Ender.

When the old sitting hen has been given every attention for eighteen or nineteen days, and the nest is full of eggs, the farmer should turn to artificial methods of incubation.

The last year we tried hatching our eggs under hens, and got 72 chicks from 94 eggs. The result of that season's efforts was a small number of chicks, and as we were to be expected, each manufacturer of incubators has his own special features. As we received some fifty different catalogues, the choosing of a machine was a difficult undertaking. Many kinds of wood and many different styles were used in the various makes. Some were heated with hot water, some with steam, and some with electricity. We had a most of them, and some of them seemed to have a point of superiority which the others did not have.

There are many points to consider in choosing a machine, but really little choice between different makes of incubators. Naturally one looks for superior quality and greater durability in the high-priced machine. Different buyers will have radically different ideas as to the relative importance of various features, and as to their simplicity and efficiency. In the main, there are matters of individual taste and preference, and a careful comparison of the various makes through the catalogue should enable practically every purchaser to select the machine which most nearly meets his ideas and requirements.

Now a few words about operating. I do not intend to give minute directions for running an incubator, as each manufacturer has his own special instructions, and these should be carefully followed. Then if disaster attends your efforts, you will just have to find out for yourself what you have done wrong. To operate a little, it is better not to keep the eggs intended for hatching over ten days, certainly not over twelve. They should be kept at a temperature of about 97 degrees, and should be turned every day. A handy way to manage the turning is to place the eggs, as fast as they are laid, in a box, and use for turning a stick, then turn the crate or crate first on one side and then on the other. If you have only a few hens and are using a small incubator, the turning may be done quite a task to turn each egg separately until the required number is obtained. Choose a place which is as handy as possible for running the incubator. It requires a good deal of attention and if it is not easy of access one is apt to neglect it. We usually run ours in the kitchen for the first week and after the time we are ready to set it again, it is too warm there, we move it into the sitting room.

Of course, the eggs must be turned often, and the directions will tell you how often. Placing a small mark on one side of the egg will help you to determine whether you have really turned the egg. The incubator after the regulator has been set, will remain at the desired point for six or seven days; when it will gradually rise and the heat comes off, this being due to the heat the eggs themselves generate as the incubation goes on. Thus the regulator will have to be set every two or three days, after the first week, on account of this. I mention it here, as we tried to find it in the directions furnished us, and when operating our machine for the first time we worried much, thinking the regulator had gone wrong. After the hatching begins, we prefer to remove the chicks as fast as they become

dry, putting them in baskets lined with soft warm cloths with one thrown over them, then placing them beside the kitchen stove where a good fire is kept. They shift up better under this treatment, and it makes more room for those in the incubator that are all the time coming out. Care must be taken if you follow this plan that the heat run down and spoil the latter part of the hatch. For removing the chicks at intervals also removes the heat they have been generating, and as the regulator has been set to a certain point, it must constantly be readjusted. Watch the thermometer and regulator closely at this time.

### A Word for the Brooder.

While I have not space in which to discuss the brooder, I would just say that I consider the brooder as necessary to the incubator, as the hen is to the chicks when hatched in the old way. The first season we tried placing under hens, and the hens did not take kindly to the little orphans, and a good many were killed. The brooder lightens the season's work for one can care for fifty chicks in this way almost as easily as fifteen can be cared for with the hen.

To the farmer or poultryman who keeps 200 or 300 hens or more, it is almost impossible to keep up the flock without the use of incubators and brooders. Even those farmers who do not keep over 100 hens, and who believe in a profitable investment, there is no waiting upon the inclination of the hen to commence incubation, and no leaving the nest with the work half completed. The brooder will not take the young chicks off through the morning dew, nor refuse the needed warmth at any time. The chicks in the brooder, there is no peeping for the mother, nor, in most cases, the need of getting lost, but with plenty to eat and with proper care, it is just a rollicking, joyful time to see which will grow the fattest and crow first.—W. W. Howes.

### USING INCUBATORS

Pointers on Handling for Most Satisfactory Returns.

Our first incubator was a hot water machine, and did better in a room of even temperature, than in a cellar. We secured a good hatch in a room from eggs under the hen, and the chicks seemed to thrive as well. The chicks were given to hens, several being set on the same day as the machine was filled. Directions were followed as closely as possible, and they were to turn the eggs daily, and cool down to a certain degree each day. To leave them out for a certain time won't do, because some days are so much warmer than others. On still, warm days the trays would remain out more than an hour; on windy, cool days, not longer than fifteen minutes.

The trays were always placed as well out of the draught as possible. For convenience we turned and cooled the eggs, directly after dinner, and then turned the lamp about 4 o'clock; this gave time to see that the flame was properly adjusted before night.

Not until the nineteenth day, when some of the eggs were pipped, did we need to look after the machine through the night. It is better to leave the chicks in the incubator ten or twelve hours after hatching, than to remove them to a warm box or brooder, as soon as the down is dry. Two tests were given through the hatch. To do this, the incubator was left open for a few minutes, and the heat and cold created outside, and when operating our machine for the first time we worried much, thinking the regulator had gone wrong. After the hatching begins, we prefer to remove the chicks as fast as they become

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### ABOUT LITTLE CHICKS

Some Characteristics That Develop at an Early Age.

It is very common to find in a bunch of young chicks several who have exceedingly large tail and wing feathers entirely out of proportion to the size of the rest of the body. A few chicks with this abnormal growth are to be seen every year, and with a brood of incubator chicks, where there are usually a great many together, the per cent. looks to be larger, but it seems so only because of the great number in one brood who are the fastest and crow first.—W. W. Howes.

This excessive feather growth is so pronounced in some cases that the chicks become weakened and in time die, unless they are given special care. Some breeds of poultry, as the Leghorns or other nervous breeds, are subject to this excessive feather growth more than other breeds, but usually chicks which start this early tail and feather growth are weaklings and of course should never be used for breeding stock.

Many poultrymen clip off the tail and wing feathers when the chicks are a week or two old, and this is a very good plan. The marked growth is noticed and some report success. This process sometimes leaves the chick by checking the strain on the tail and wing feathers, and the fact that the tail and wing feathers are not growing together, it would do much good when the chicks are well grown. Just what is the cause of this trouble no one seems to know definitely.

No doubt many have noticed that there are a few weakly, unthrifty or puny chicks to be found in nearly every brood. These individuals are much smaller than the rest of the brood, and they are very weak. At the time they never catch up in growth with the rest of the flock. At different times we have separated these weaklings from those that seem promising, and given them special care and attention, but with all this extra care they never grew to the healthy, plump chicks that the rest of the brood did. Last year we had a brood of chicks which were very weak, and they were backward in growth the entire season. At the age of about seven months they were finally matured and sent to market.

A characteristic of brooder chicks is crowding and is one which should never be tolerated. The chicks never crowd unless they are kept in a small space, and sometimes forgotten and not separated when going to roost, and they will crowd in great bunches and the weakest will be trampled upon and die. It is a case of the survival of the fittest. If the chicks do not manage to death they may eventually die anyway as a result of this crowding. By

crowding, those in the centre of the huddle become too warm and perspiration takes place. Then when they are let out in the morning they soon get chilled and contract cold, which often proves a source of disaster to the flock. Overcome this crowding by dividing and separating the brood into several bunches.

Constant watch must be kept over the young broods for lice. These pests develop and do great harm many times before they are detected. The house wren more have an itch than any other bird, possibly because the chicks do not have the strength to combat the pest. Prevent lice by keeping all quarters carefully and regularly cleaned and disinfected. The premises, with some good disinfectant. If the lice are very bad it would be well to dust each chick with insect or lice powder. Much of the supposed sickness of chicks is lice.

Little chicks must have plenty of exercise to do their best. They are very active little creatures and must be given every possible advantage for exercising. Keep them in a straight line, and do not let them sit too long at any one time, but several times per day. However, in our eager desire to have the chicks grow they are often kept too long in the brooder, and they are not able to get much, if anything, for several meals. A close watch on the chicks and their food will bring success in poultry raising.—G. S.

### PREVENTING WHITE DIARRHOEA

Since the disease cannot, apparently, be transmitted through the food supply after the chicks have reached the age of three or four days, every means should be pursued to prevent the spread of the infection during the critical period. We suggest:

The segregation of the chicks in small lots during this interval. Perfect cleanliness and cleanliness of brooders or brood coops. Food and water supplied in such a manner as to prevent contamination by the droppings. The use in the brooder of a liberal amount of fine, absorbent litter which will quickly cover and seal up the droppings. For these purposes we have used sawdust with much satisfaction. Raise and maintain the vigor and vitality of the breeding stock and chicks by every reasonable means known to the poultryman.—G. S.

### STOCK

#### TRAINING THE COLT

Facts from the Experience of a Practical Ontario Farmer.

I have always been an admirer of that most noble of all animals, the horse. My experience has been principally with the heavier breeds, but I have handled also several spirited road horses, with equally as good results. My methods of training and handling the young horse have proven successful.

I commence the education of the colt when the little fellow is but a few days old. As early as possible I get him accustomed to me handling and speaking to him. When approaching the apartment where the mare and foal is, be careful not to come on them too abruptly, as they will become nervous and will spring suddenly to their feet at any noise for the first few days. In this way he may do himself harm, as his muscles are flabby and soft, and a slight slip may cause a permanent injury.

When about two months old place a neat-fitting halter on him, and leave it on for some days at a time; then, when he is following his dam to or from the field, I take hold of the halter and walk alongside of him. I repeat this as often as convenient for a week or two, then we take a tie line on the halter, and take the colt out by himself. Have him in your left hand and a short hold of the tie line. By this time the colt has become so accustomed to you walking beside him, having him tied by the halter, that he will nearly always come along without much trouble, but if he stops and begins to pull, don't start a tug-of-war, because he will hold his own with you every time, but step back and tap him up from behind, and he will walk up with you. As soon as he will walk along fairly well put him in a snaffle, and give a handful of oats in his mouth. Do not keep him out too long at a time.

He should now be learned to stand tied beside his mother, with a strong halter that he cannot break. We prefer tying him where there is no danger to a ring in the wall about three feet high, so that he cannot get his feet over the tie line. Do not keep him just to keep him in mind of his tied too so that they will not get mixed up.

Take him out for a lesson on the halter two or three times a week at least. Teach him to walk up smartly and keep up even with you; also the same when the trot; never let him get behind you. Always keep going in a straight line. Do not teach him to circle around you, for this will teach him to paddle with one front foot. Teach him to stop and start to the word, and using the same word to convey the same meaning. When you ask him to stand make him stand with his feet firmly under him. What is nicer to see than a well-mannered horse in a show ring that, when asked to stand, will stand at attention, looking every inch a horse, and when asked to move will start to the word.

When training time comes, which should not be sooner than five months, put the colt in a roomy box-stall. Let him in to his dam three times a day at first and gradually break him off till in two weeks he has the colt properly weaned and his heart is not broken. Give him some clover and a little grain and water regularly. See that the hoofs do not grow in an unnatural shape.

We generally learn our colts to drive when they are rising three years old. Up to this time we give an occasional lesson on the harness, but keep him in mind of his early training. We have been very careful with him all along, no loud shouting at him or rough handling in any way. We now proceed to harness the colt by first putting on the collar, using an open one so that you will not have to turn it; always have a close-fitting one. Take the harness on your own shoulders, and have the hand and whip ready in your hand. Hitch him to either a sleigh or wagon. Do not hitch to anything that has no tongue. This is so that if he takes a quick step ahead the tongue will not catch and the whip ready in your hand. Now give the word to start, and he will go because he has been taught to start to the same word while handling on the halter.

If he is an ambitious one, and wants to bore ahead do not jerk him back. Just keep a firm hold on him and let him have a little of his own way for a while, and it is inclined to stop, give him a sharp clip with the whip and make him turn up with the other horse. When you turn, turn to the side of the old horse is on for a time or two; when you turn to the colt's side, don't try to turn in a small space; give him lots of room and he will come around without scarcely knowing it.

When you put him in the harness off as gently as you can, always unhook the cropper, for if you pull it off he gets to hugging it with his tail and will give trouble afterwards by gripping the line in the same manner. After removing the harness and grooming him, give him some grain and he will be quite cool and composed and not the least unnerved after his first lesson in harness.

Do not be afraid to drive him out to town as he will see objects he is not accustomed to and become used to them as soon as possible. If he becomes frightened at something don't get the whip going right then; in fact, don't use it at all if you can help it, unless he begins to back, for if he gets a severe whipping he will associate it with the object he was frightened at, and will only be worse next time. Keep talking to him and he will recognize the voice of the one that has been using him kindly and it will go a great way in allaying his fears.

For the first six months never hitch him to a load that drives the colt. If he is not discouraged by trying to make him draw more than he is able, later on he will draw all he is able any place you put him. If possible let it all ways be the same person that drives the colt till he is thoroughly educated. After he becomes accustomed to the harness, check up fairly tight and teach him to walk up smartly. Don't let him slouch along. If he deserves a cut of the whip give him a good one; don't be afraid to hit him. Always try to have your horse appear his very best. When you want your horse to trot go to a smart gallop and don't get him into the habit of picking along no more faster than a walk.

No matter what kind of a horse you are driving or where you are driving, always keep your eyes on the horse. A number had some ugly tricks or bad habits that were almost impossible to overcome and made them unpleasant to work with. It is not one of the greatest comforts a man's life (that has to do with horses) to have a properly trained and well-educated horse at his service.—T. J. Moore, Kitleigh, Ont.

### DAIRY

#### GROWING A CROP OF RAPE

Rape is essentially a hog and sheep pasture. Land should be prepared early by deep plowing and the seed sown about May 1st or as soon thereafter as the land is in condition, either in drills or broadcast. Small lots may be sowed with a hand drill in rows 24 to 32 inches apart, and about the 24th of June. This method requires about two pounds of seed per acre. Set the drill to turn the seed in at a depth of four inches. Broadcast sowing requires about four pounds of seed per acre. A farmer having from five to seven cows will find the separator a necessity in these days of competition when every margin counts. The farmer who finds it a lessener of his work, doing away, as it does, with the cleaning of a score of crocks or cans, for the separator can, or ought to be, cleaned out at 10 per cent. A farmer without the lifting of heavy utensils, besides it can be done on the kitchen table without standing in a cold cellar or milk room. One separator (that has to do with object lesson in cleanliness and the milk or operator will not forget to keep person and raiment clean while milking, etc.) But the use of the separator, fresh, sweet cream can be had from the morning's milk and butter fresh from all improvements have been made and the buyer must be careful to get the best. Simplicity of construction and ease in cleaning marks the best separator. It should clean to 98 per cent. A farmer having from five to seven cows will find the separator a necessity in these days of competition when every margin counts. The farmer who finds it a lessener of his work, doing away, as it does, with the cleaning of a score of crocks or cans, for the separator can, or ought to be, cleaned out at 10 per cent. A farmer without the lifting of heavy utensils, besides it can be done on the kitchen table without standing in a cold cellar or milk room. 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