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Get Rid of the Rooster

Infertile Eggs are Better Keepers

By J. E. Bergey, B.S.A.

THERE is every year, an enormous waste in eggs through poor care and improper management in handling them. It is estimated that Canada loses several million dollars every year in this way. While such a waste is deplorable at any time, it is more particularly so when we are all putting forth every effort, not only to produce the maximum amount of food stuffs, but also to prevent any possible waste. Now is the time to eliminate as much of this loss as possible, by paying more attention to the handling of the eggs.

Some idea of the quality of the egg market can be had from the following table. This gives the total number of eggs inspected in Winnipeg, April to December, 1917, for inter-provincial shipments, with the percentages of the different grades:

	No. of Cases	Extra No. 1 per cent.	No. 1 per cent.	Graded and Extra No. 2 per cent.	No. 2 per cent.	Discards per cent.
April	450	38.3	39	24.8	6.7	.2
May	3,150	22.4	40.8	30.4	6.1	.3
June	4,825	22.9	39.5	30.3	6.2	1.1
July	3,586	5.7	32.9	53.7	6.2	1.5
Aug.	1,232	7.4	50.4	38.9	2.7	.6
Oct.	3,923	3.9	44.6	44.4	5.8	1.3
Nov.	4,000	3.2	47.9	42.0	4.7	2.2
Dec.	.900	3.1	57.6	32.8	4.9	1.6
Total	22,066	13.4	42.9	37.2	5.4	1.1

A word of explanation may be necessary for the different grades. Extras and No. 1's are eggs that are fit to use on the breakfast table; No. 2's and also cracks and dirties are sold for culinary purposes only, being of too poor quality for table use.

This table shows the general quality of eggs handled in Winnipeg. The low quality is more noticeable of course during the summer months, particularly July and August. This is the time of the year when better care must be taken if we wish to raise the standard of western eggs.

Some Actual Cases

A few special instances will serve to show what actually occurs in egg shipments. In Edmonton one shipment of 355 cases which cost \$12 per case, graded out: Cracks, 6 cases; broken, 8 cases; shortage, 1 case; rots, 39 cases.

The last two were a dead loss, 40 cases at \$12 each amounts to \$480. Winnipeg on shipment of 304 cases graded: Cracks, 65 cases; leakers, 2 cases; shortage, 1 case; rots, 33 cases. Dead loss of 36 cases at \$12 amounts to \$432.

The leakers, shortage and rots were a dead loss of 36 cases which, at \$12 a case amounted to \$432.

Preventable Losses

A large percentage of this loss can be avoided by a little care and management. The loss cannot be attributed to any one particular source. The producer, the country grocer, transportation companies, and city dealers, all bear some responsibility. It is shown however that nearly 79 per cent. of the loss can be traced directly to the farmer. This is not a mere estimate but was arrived at by extensive experi-

ments carried on by the Federal authorities in the U.S., and our conditions are very similar.

To prevent all the losses it would be necessary to change our marketing system. All buyers should buy on a quality basis; all eggs would be candled before they are paid for. This would be an incentive for the producer to market only high-grade eggs. Until such time when this will be possible the producer must try to market the best eggs possible, regardless of whether he get direct recognition for it.

One of the chief causes of loss is fertile eggs. A fertile egg under a hen for 18 hours will start the growth of the embryo and therefore spoil it for eating purposes. In a temperature above 70 degrees a fertile egg will be spoiled in a very short time. All eggs should therefore be kept at a temperature of from 50 to 60 degrees. Infertile eggs will evaporate and deteriorate in a high temperature but will not spoil so easily. For this reason all the male birds should be separated from the laying hens as soon as the hatching season is over.

To Improve Egg Quality

A few simple rules if followed will do much towards improving the quality of the eggs marketed:

1. Produce only non-fertile eggs (kill all male birds).
2. Break up broody hens.
3. Keep everything clean.
4. Gather eggs twice per day in hot weather.
5. Keep eggs in cool place, below 60 degrees F.
6. Market at least once per week.
7. Market only clean, sound eggs.
8. Market in clean fillers.
9. Market only eggs you know are fresh.

In a recently issued circular letter the U.S. Food Administration state that "careful and conservative estimates show that for the past five years, during the period from June 1 to October 1, 25 per cent. of all eggs were a total loss, and 40 per cent. materially depreciated in food value." In order to prevent much of this loss the administration appeals to all receivers of eggs to candle each case carefully and keep them cool and dry, the candling certificate to be placed on the top of each case. On the reverse side of this certificate the following appears: "In order that the eggs in this case serve the purpose of food for our people and our Allies to the fullest extent and help to win the war, it is necessary that they be chilled to a temperature of 60 degrees F. or below wherever possible and be moved into cold storage or consumption."

Plan to market at least a part of this year's hatch of cockerels in the broiler stage. All cockerels of the Mediterranean breeds, except those reserved for breeding, should be marketed from eight to 12 weeks old. With the general and meat purpose breeds, a part of the cockerels may be carried over for roosters in the fall, but, with present feed prices, we would prefer to market a part of these as broilers.



Row of Open-Front Poultry Houses at the Alberta Poultry Station, Edmonton. In winter the openings are closed with cotton. No glass is used in the construction.

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