

# THE O. A. C. REVIEW

"THE PROFESSION WHICH I HAVE EMBRACED REQUIRES A KNOWLEDGE OF EVERYTHING."

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## *Selection in Poultry*

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AT the present time the cry for "increased production" echoes louder and louder. Everybody is strenuously struggling to produce. Production is pre-eminent. Even with the present degree of earnestness and close application there are still a few processes unutilized, a few opportunities slipping past. Most dairymen have adopted the motto "breed, feed and weed." The adoption of that motto in poultrydom never was more urgently needed. Instead of becoming pessimistic and relaxing hold on the "old hen" we should cling tighter and tighter. It is true feed prices have advanced out of bounds in comparison with egg prices. In view of those facts you ask—"How is it possible to produce eggs at a profit? You say there is no money in hens be they good, bad or indifferent." As to the bad and indifferent hens we quite agree with you, but as to the good hens we must delay our answer until we have considered the situation.

Did you ever stop to analyze the present circumstances? Let us be white about it and give the hen a chance. Let us consider the situation taking the year 1913-14, previous to the war, and the past eleven months of 1916-17. From information gathered by the Poultry Department, O.A.C., Guelph, and presented in the accompanying table you will notice that seven pounds per month is the amount of grain taken as consumed by a hen,

that being the amount generally conceded to by poultrymen. The grain is figured as composed of oats, corn and wheat in equal parts and fifty pounds taken as the weight of a bushel. It should also be explained that the figures for August, 1917, were not available when the table was compiled so August is taken the same as July of the same year. You will also notice the overhead expense taking in those constituents of the ration other than grains, as green food, buttermilk, etc., and also the labor, which has advanced about twenty per cent. since the outbreak of the war, is allowed for by the addition of two eggs per month.

From the table, then, it is clear that for the hen to pay for her keep in September, 1913, she had to produce 6.42 eggs while in September, 1916, she had to produce 6.22 eggs. Again in May, 1914, with grain at 74c a bushel the hen had to produce 8.42 eggs while in May of 1917, when grain took a leap heavenward to \$1.86 per bushel, the hen found herself in a more complicated condition from which she could only emerge by the production of 9.78 eggs. But she does not have to produce according to the advance in grain prices which is explained by the fact that in May, 1914, eggs were only twenty cents per dozen as against forty-one cents a dozen in May, 1917.

It is also shown that the 84 pounds of grain consumed in the year 1913-14 at an average yearly price of 73c per