

POULTRY YARD

The Farm Poultry House

Prof. F. C. Elford, Macdonald College

The poultry house on the farm might be either stationary or movable. The house that already exists on the average farm is stationary, so we will deal with that first. What has been said in reference to having the plant dry, large enough to allow for growth, convenient to the house, etc., all apply to the house itself. Its construction need not be elaborate. It need not be expensive, but it should be comfortable for the fowl and convenient to the manager.

size

In building a permanent house or in estimating the number of hens that an old house will accommodate one has to take into consideration the breed of hens, the ventilation of the house, and the yard room. It was at one time advocated that each hen should have at least ten square feet of floor space. Then persons found out that they got along very well with eight or even six square feet. For three years we have been housing hens with less than four square feet of floor space to each hen and the results have been good. The hens at Macdonald College, are medium to small. Ventilation is good, and both summer and winter the hens are allowed to go outside. The smaller the space provided the more care should be taken that it is kept clean and fresh. If hens are fed in the winter time in a deep litter so that they will be required to scratch for the grain, they will do with less space than if fed mash or in such a way that requires no exertion on their part.

It will be seen that no absolute rule can be laid down for the size of house necessary. Other things being equal the flock with plenty of room should do better than the flock in cramped quarters. The size of the pen may also be provisional. I have seen good farm flocks of 100 laying hens do well in one pen. As a rule however, 50 hens will do better in a flock than will 100. In building a new house it is best to build a house larger than the present flock may require if it is the intention to increase.

SUN LIGHT AND FRESH AIR

Every house should have plenty of sunlight and fresh air. Sunlight is our best disinfectant as well as the cheapest. The windows should face the south or north-east and be large enough to permit plenty of sunlight to enter. They should be placed so as to utilize the sun to advantage. Don't place the windows up near the roof, nor horizontally near the floor. Place them upright, going nearly to the ceiling as well as to the floor. A window placed in this position will expose more of the contents of the room to the sun than when placed in any other way. Usually about one-third of the front wall may be given up to glass. The sun should, in its daily course, see as many of the corners of the pen as possible.

The roosting quarters should be ex-

posed to the sunshine. The health of the fowl depends upon it.

The sun and fresh air will keep dry a house otherwise damp. A house that shows frost in cold weather and dampness when it thaws cannot be improved by closing the windows or putting in a double sash. Rather opening up the windows and ventilate. Artificial heat is not necessary.

A straw loft is an advantage. If a hen house is not dry, good results cannot be expected. One can put

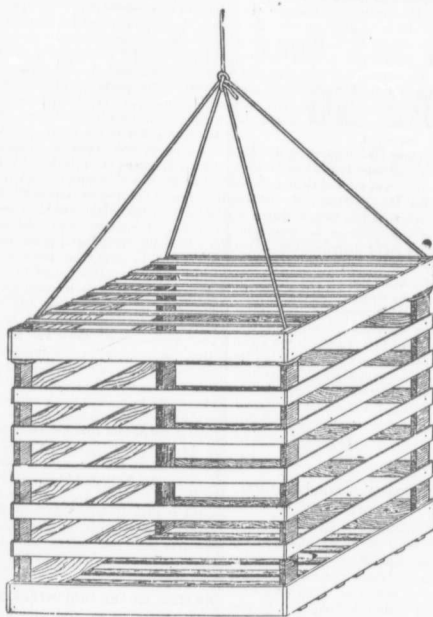
themselves in? Will not the road dust answer all requirements of a verminicide for hen houses?—E. B. Hutton Co., Ont.

The road dust answers the purpose very well without the sulphur.—F. C. E.

Breaking the Broody Hens

What method do you recommend for breaking up broody hens?—C. S. Peterboro, Ont.

The accompanying illustration



Convenient Coop for Breaking Broody Hens

cotton in part of the window, more or less according to climate. This will ensure a certain amount of constant circulation.

CONVENIENCE

A house that is inconvenient should not be tolerated. It is sometimes impossible to change the location of a house that has been placed in an awkward position, but any house could be arranged inside so as to lessen the work of attendance and cleaning. The door shall be on the nearest side. Have the furnishings moveable and have things so arranged that they can be taken out at any time. This aids in cleaning. Have no unnecessary furniture either inside or immediately outside. Roosts should be on a level. A feed bin at the door is convenient; then the feeder need only open the lid and take what grain necessary. Some houses are arranged so that who ever feeds the hens has first to go to the granary for the grain, thus making double or even treble the steps necessary. By having a barrel or box handy for the feed the men can fill it once a week, and a strict account can be kept of feed fed.

Next week we want to take up the subject of the movable colony house for farmers' use. The week after, we shall probably deal with the flock best suited for the farm.

Dust Bath for Fowls

It is advisable to add sulphur to a mixture of road dust for the fowls to dust

shows a coop that answers very well. It is made two to three feet each way and is hung by a wire or rope to the ceiling of the hen house. Leave it about a foot from the floor and give it a swing whenever convenient. At the Macdonald College after the breeding season, when more hens become broody we use simply a pen into which we have put our male birds. As soon as a hen shows signs of broodiness she is put into the bachelors' hall. If any hen is left on the nest, a day or even less, or is thrown off and allowed to return there is hardly anything that will cure her until she is ready. All hens so confined should be well fed and watered.—F.C.E.

Summer Care of Chicks

J. Marcy, Simsbury Co., Ont.

The hen will probably leave her chicks when they are six or eight weeks old. To keep the little chicks warm and to mother them at night, it is a good plan to make a frame, and stretch canvas across it. Sew pieces of flannel to the canvas from the under side. The chicks feel the flannel on their backs as they cuddle in; this contrivance also keeps in the warm air, and the chicks are protected from chills. This frame should be aired daily in the sunlight. Keep fresh, clean material for the chicks to rest upon at night.

Examine your chicks for head lice. These are their worst enemies. Head lice quickly kill the chicks unless looked after. Dusting powders have very little effect on head lice. The best remedy is to use common lard, adding one-twentieth part kerosene oil. Rub this mixture on the entire head. For a chick a week or 10 days old one-quarter of a teaspoonful of the lard should be rubbed well into the down on the head. Apply the ointment first to the neck, work it forward to the bill, then smooth down the neck from the bill. You thus smother the lice and they quickly die.

Coops should be cleaned twice a week or oftener. Apply kerosene or some other preventive to the coops to keep them from being overrun with lice in warm weather. Keep pure fresh water before your chicks and change it three or four times a day if you wish them to grow.

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