

yards rather than one large one. This will permit of growing green feed during the Summer. The flock can then be put into one yard while grain is sown in the other. As soon as this is up a few inches, they can be put back again and the other yard sown the same way. For fencing, it is best to get a regular poultry fence instead of the wire poultry netting. A five-foot fence should be high enough to keep the flock under control. If necessary, the primary feathers of one wing can be cut off, so that the birds cannot fly over the fence. Clipping off three or four inches is usually sufficient even in Leghorns.

Feeding

In feeding the backyard flock the aim should be to use all the kitchen waste that is adaptable. Care should be exercised in feeding waste fat or other greasy substances. Such food should be mixed with a bran mash and fed in small quantities only. Feeding soft mashes and also hopper feeding dry mashes will mean a saving of hard grain. About one-quarter to one-third of the feed given may be mash both in the wet and dry state, and in some instances feeding these up to one-half the ration will be all right. Wet or soft mashes, if not fed too sloppy, will stimulate egg production. For a dry mash there is nothing that can equal crushed oats with a little granulated charcoal added.

The kind of grain to feed will depend on the price and the food demands. The coarser grains and grains lacking milling qualities should be fed. The amount to feed can be judged only by experience. The hens should have to scratch for all hard grain. Plenty of straw should be kept on the floor and the grain thrown into it. Lawn clippings will make excellent green food. These can also be dried and stored for winter use. Grit and oyster shell should be in a hopper before the hens all the time.

Getting a Start

There are three ways in which a start can be made in backyard poultry keeping. The first and most popular is to get eggs for hatching and setting hen; the second is to buy baby chicks, and the third is to buy laying hens. No matter which of the three is followed, the beginner should start with pure bred stock, if at all possible. The superiority of pure bred stock over mongrels or scrubs is so pronounced that even the beginner will realize the difference. Size, type and color are more uniform in pure bred stock than in mongrel. They take less feed and will lay more uniform eggs.

The first way of starting will mean an outlay of two to three dollars for a setting of eggs, and about the same amount for a broody hen. With good luck there may be ten to thirteen chicks hatched, in which case the baby chicks cost about 20 cents each. This way of starting may be the cheapest of the three, depending, of course, on the price of the eggs and how they hatch.

In starting with baby chicks, it is necessary to have some small equipment to brood and rear them properly. A home-made hover