

Indications of a Good Layer.

Just as a mild feminine expression is rightly regarded as indicative of good milking and breeding qualifications in a cow, so also is a smart, bright appearance regarded as indicative of a good laying capacity among hens. Heavy birds with dull, sluggish temperaments very seldom prove free layers. The really good layer has a smart, active appearance, with a bright eye and generally "intelligent" look—if that term can be correctly applied to a bird. Good layers are always the most active



PAIR OF SHROPSHIRE EWE LAMBS.

First-prize winners at Toronto Industrial Exhibition. First prize, and in first-prize flock, at Western Fair, London; and one winner of sweepstakes as best ewe any age.

PROPERTY OF D. G. & J. G. HANMER, MT. VERNON, ONT.

members of the flock, and they never seem to tire looking for such food as comes within their reach. On the principle that all cows which are heavy milkers are also heavy feeders, it follows that hens which produce a large number of eggs must be more liberal feeders than those which produce only a very small number.

Directions for Dressing and Shipping Poultry.

The Sprague Commission Co. of Chicago, in a circular issued to poultry-raisers, tells how poultry of various kinds should be killed, dressed and packed for market so as to bring the highest price.

In the first place, poultry should be well fed and well watered, and then kept from 18 to 24 hours without food before killing. Stock dresses out brighter when well watered and adds to the appearance. Full crops injure the appearance and are liable to sour, and when this does occur, correspondingly lower prices must be accepted than obtainable for choice stock. Never kill poultry for shipping by wringing the neck.

To Dress Chickens.—Kill by bleeding in the mouth or opening the veins of the neck; hang by the feet until properly bled. Leave head and feet on and do not remove intestines nor crop. Scalded chickens sell best to home trade, and dry-picked best to shippers, so that either manner of dressing will do if properly executed. For scalding chickens the water should be as near the boiling point as possible without boiling; pick the legs dry before scalding; hold by the head and legs and immerse and lift up and down three times; if the head is immersed it turns the color of the comb and gives the eyes a shrunken appearance, which leads buyers to think the fowl has been sick; the feathers and pinfeathers should then be removed immediately, very cleanly, and without breaking the skin; then "plump" by dipping ten seconds in water nearly or quite boiling hot, and then immediately into cold water; hang in a cool place until the animal heat is entirely out of the body. To dry-pick chickens properly, the work should be done while the chickens are bleeding; do not wait and let the bodies get cold. Dry picking is much more easily done while the bodies are warm. Be careful and do not break and tear the skin.

To Dress Turkeys.—Observe the same instructions as given for preparing chickens, but always dry-pick. Dressed turkeys, when dry-picked, always sell best and command better prices than scalded lots, as the appearance is brighter and more attractive. Endeavor to market all old and heavy gobblers before January 1, as after the holidays the demand is for small fat hen turkeys only, old toms being sold at a discount to canners.

Ducks and Geese should be scalded in the same temperature of water as for other kinds of poultry, but it requires more time for the water to penetrate and loosen the feathers. Some parties advise, after scalding, to wrap them in a blanket for the purpose of steaming, but they must not be left in this condition long enough to cook the flesh. Do not undertake to dry-pick geese and ducks just before killing, for the purpose of saving the feathers, as it causes the skin to become very much inflamed, and is a great injury to the sale. Do not pick the feathers off the head; leave the feathers on for two or three inches on the neck. Do not singe the bodies for the purpose of removing any down or hair, as the heat from the flame will give them an

oily and unsightly appearance. After they are picked clean they should be held in scalding water about ten seconds for the purpose of plumping, and then rinsed off in clean cold water. Fat heavy stock is always preferred.

Packing and Shipping.—Before packing and shipping, poultry should be thoroughly dry and cold, but not frozen; the animal heat should be entirely out of the body; pack in boxes or barrels; boxes holding from 100 to 200 lbs. are preferable, and pack snugly; straighten out the body and legs, so that they will not arrive very much bent and twisted out of shape; fill the packages as full as possible, to prevent moving about on the way; barrels answer better for chickens and ducks than for turkeys or geese; when convenient, avoid putting more than one kind in a package, mark kind and weight of each description on the package and mark shipping directions plainly on the cover.

APIARY.

Notes on Outdoor Wintering.

BY MORLEY PETTIT.

FALL CALENDAR—DATES APPROXIMATE.

Sept. 15-22—Removing supers and adjusting brood-chambers.

Sept. 22-Oct. 10—Feeding.

Nov. 1-17—Packing for winter.

Choose a cool day to pack up bees, as they are not so easily aroused as on a warm day.

Either by making holes through the combs or by laying strips of wood across the frames, to hold the cloth up, provide a way for the bees to pass freely from one comb to another without leaving the cluster.

Do not neglect to remove the supers before the beginning of cold weather. A whole colony has been known to perish, during a cold spell, in the empty combs of a super, with plenty of honey a few inches below them.

Do not attempt to winter queenless bees. They do not cluster well, and suffer even worse than weak ones having a queen. Then they are almost sure to be robbed out in early spring. Unless you are pretty sure most of them are young bees, it is better to "take them up" than to attempt wintering them.

Bees winter a little better packed several hives in a single case than separately, but there is the disadvantage of fall and spring moving from and to summer stands. Many bees, not having noticed their new location, would perish while searching for their home. However, some practice leaving hives in groups, which require but little moving.

Do not try to winter weak colonies. Small clusters cannot keep warm without consuming much more food proportionately than large ones. Excessive eating brings on dysentery and causes spring dwindling. Then, it is so late before they can breed up strong enough to work, or can be safely united with another, that there is little profit for the feed and care spent on them. It has been wisely said that a man's profits are by no means in proportion to the number of hives he has sitting around in his bee-yard.

Bees require from 25 to 30 pounds of stores, preferably sealed, for winter and spring use. If the hive is not full of bees, it had better be contracted by division-boards to the number of combs they can nicely cover. They will then keep the boards around them warm all winter, and we shall avoid the loss that often ensues by bees perishing of cold in the outside combs. Furthermore, it often happens that these unoccupied combs next the wall mould, and require to be removed to a stronger colony to be cleaned up in spring.

A good covering of loose dry straw affords the best protection to the hive. It is well known that snow protects vegetation, and even keeps ground from freezing so deeply as it otherwise would. In the same way, being a poor conductor, it retards the escape of heat from the hive, and, if we were sure of having it all winter, no other covering would be needed. Since dry snow cannot be depended on in our climate, single-walled hives should have an outside case packed with about two inches wheat-chaff, dry forest leaves, sawdust or planer-shavings, on all sides and the top.

The greatest trouble with outdoor wintering is the uncertainty of good ventilation; the entrance is so apt to become clogged with dead bees or ice. A good device to facilitate ventilation is a two-inch rim placed between hive and bottom board, with vertical entrance, three-eighths by two inches, leading to the center of the horizontal entrance. Put in three or four strips perpendicular to the entrance as climbers for the bees to reach the combs. Contract the horizontal entrance to four or five inches. Except days when bees can fly, a large board should be leaned up to protect the entrance from storms, also from direct rays of the sun. Do not allow the entrance to clog with dead bees or ice. For upward ventilation, replace the cloth on the frames by a cloth of best cotton or other porous material. Unless the packing above is very close, however, a two-inch strip of porous cloth would probably be enough. Just turn back the regular cloth two inches and lay on a strip of the other.

It is well to watch the thermometer carefully all winter. If it gets to 50° Fah. on a calm, sunny day, take down the shade-boards and let the bees fly; but if there is much wind it is better to keep the entrance shaded and retard flying as much as possible, even with the thermometer at 60°, unless they are much in need of a fly. Bees need very careful attention all winter, and much experience and judgment must be exercised in winter management. Even then, the best of men make grave mistakes.

In more northern latitudes, where snow comes early and remains all winter, some, after the first deep fall of snow, dig a well about two feet by the width of the hive, in the snow, in front of the entrance, for ventilation, then lay a board flat over it to keep snow from drifting in. After that the bees are not disturbed until a suitable day comes for flying. Then the apiarist throws back the snow, removes the boards, and lets the bees have a good fly.

When to Use the Outdoor and When to Use the Indoor Method of Wintering.

The beginner will often ask the question whether he shall winter indoors or out? The answer to this will depend upon the weather conditions. If one has in his locality cold weather that lasts nearly all winter, with only now and then a day of temperature above the freezing point, I would recommend by all means indoor wintering; or if the weather conditions are such that there is a month of cold weather ranging from 10 degrees above to 10 below zero, then a warmer spell a little above the thaw point, followed by three or four days of weather at that temperature, followed again by freezing weather, such weather continuing clear up till actual springtime, then I would still advise the indoor method. But if, on the other hand, the winters are somewhat open, there being perhaps a month of zero weather, followed by a month of warm, open weather, continuing thus through the winter, the bees should be wintered outdoors, in doubled-walled hives. We may have in our locality a month of real cold weather, but two weeks is about as long as it lasts at a time, when we will have general breaking-up, a thaw, and perhaps rains. This will last for three or four weeks, when we will have another cold spell, lasting possibly a month. This kind of weather will continue in alternation till along in April. In such a climate the average beginner will do far better with the outdoor method.—*Gleanings.*

The annual meeting of the Ontario Beekeepers' Association will be held at Niagara Falls on December 4th, 5th and 6th, and every effort is being made to have an interesting programme. Papers will be prepared and read by a number of



COTSWOLD YEARLING EWES.

First prize at Toronto Exhibition, 1900.

PROPERTY OF JOHN RAWLINGS, RAVENSWOOD, ONT.

practical and popular beekeepers. Messrs. W. Z. Hutchinson, Flint, Mich.; E. R. Root, Medina, Ohio; P. H. Elwood, New York; Prof. Shutt, Experimental Farm, Ottawa; Prof. Harrison, O. A. C., Guelph; John Fixter, Experimental Farm, Ottawa, and other prominent men, are expected to be present and assist the Convention. All persons interested in the beekeeping industry are extended a very cordial invitation.