

POULTRY.

Select Birds Having a Strong Constitution.

There is usually a fairly good demand for pure-bred cockerels in the fall, consequently it may be advisable to select a few of the best and put them in a separate pen from those which are to be fattened. You may be able to secure a considerably higher price for them for breeding purposes than for meat. In Bulletin 89, of the Experimental Farms, by F. C. Elford, the following information regarding the selection of male birds is given: To pick out the male with a strong constitution select the one that is bright as he runs with the flock, one that is alert and wide-awake and whose head is up at the slightest motion. The head is a good index of constitution. In the vigorous bird there is a general appearance of brightness, combs and wattles vivid red with an absence of scaliness. The eye bright, beak short, slightly curved and strong at the base. There should be an absence of the crow or snaky appearance. The neck should not be too long for the breed and gracefully joined to the shoulders. In the utility breeds for table use and egg production the back should be broad, with the width carried well back and not pinched at the base of the tail, a good oblong body with the breast well developed, as result of the keel being carried well forward and parallel to the back. A crooked breast bone is generally an indication of weakness. The body should be fairly deep and firm, on legs strong, straight and set well apart, the latter should be free from coarseness of scales and with a bright, shiny, healthy appearance.

It is also essential that the female have a vigorous constitution. The characteristics mentioned for the male will be present in the female. She will have that bright, alert appearance. The desirable female will be busy scratching for feed during the day, will be first up in the morning and last on the roost at night. By exercising a little care in selecting the birds for the breeding pen the vigor of the flock will be maintained from year to year. Too often the flock is disseminated promiscuously. So many birds are to be kept over winter and the rest are marketed in the fall. Market the old hens first, then discard the yearlings which are a trifle weak in constitution, are a little off in type, or that have some undesirable qualities; then go through the flock of pullets, market all weaklings, those with crooked breasts, narrow heads, shallow bodies, etc. If you still have too many to keep over winter, those with poor plumage may be sold. Prospects are that feed will be rather expensive this winter, consequently the birds which show every indication of producing eggs should be kept in preference to the doubtful ones.

The loss due to eggs spoiling in hot weather is high. Lessen it by removing the male bird from the flock.

Give the turkeys a little grain every night. It will encourage them to come home to roost.

Sick fowl are hard to treat. Prevent sickness as far as possible by giving the birds proper care and feed.

Watch the flock closely and if any birds appear sickly isolate them from the main flock. This precaution may prevent disease spreading through the flock.

Lameness and loss of weight in fowl are symptoms of tuberculosis. Birds so affected should not be left with the flock. They may cause the disease to spread to the young birds.

Avoid crowding of chickens in the coop. It is a good plan to separate the pullets and cockerels. Pullets do not require as strong a ration from now on as the larger cockerels will stand.

Don't market eggs gathered from hidden nests without candling them to see if they are good. If buying eggs you would be indignant if two or three out of every dozen were of doubtful quality.

Shorts and bran moistened or fed dry are good feeds for growing chicks. They could be fed once a day and are cheaper than whole grain. Of course, they will not entirely substitute grain.

Some hen-houses are in a deplorable condition at this time of year. Vermin run riot, and the litter and nests are filthy. Have a general clean-up and spray the pen thoroughly with some good disinfectant.

Gather the eggs regularly. There is frequently a tendency to neglect the hens during the rush of harvest, and many eggs are spoiled before taken from the nest. A hen sitting on a fertile egg over night will start the germ developing.

Some of the cockerels are about large enough to market. Pick out the biggest and put them in a fattening crate for two or three weeks. Prices are higher now than they will be when the bulk of the spring hatched chickens are being marketed.

Don't feed turkeys on the same ground as last year. The soil may contain germs of black head. Prevention is the principal way of avoiding loss from this disease. Remedies do not avail much, as the disease is often-times too far advanced before well-marked symptoms of the trouble are shown.

HORTICULTURE.

Symptoms of Little Peach and Yellows.

The two peach-tree diseases known as Little Peach and Yellows created considerable anxiety when their seriousness was first discovered in this country. Many trees, and in some cases entire orchards, have been destroyed either by the disease or the efforts to control it. Investigation has not thrown a great deal of light on the nature and causes of the trouble, but drastic measures have brought Little Peach and Yellows pretty well under control. To date the most effective means of controlling them have been the removal of trees and efforts not to allow waste fruit to lie about the orchard. In the following paragraphs the symptoms of Yellows and Little Peach are described as set forth in Bulletin 241, of the Ontario Department of Agriculture. Anyone who suspects the presence of either of these diseases in the orchard should communicate with the authorities while the fruit and foliage are on the trees in order that a diagnosis can be made.

SYMPTOMS OF YELLOWS.—On a diseased tree some of the fruit will usually be seen to ripen prematurely, be more highly colored than normal, blotched outside with red, streaked inside with this color, and the flesh around the pit redder than usual. Sometimes only one branch will show these symptoms and all the rest of the tree bear quite normal fruit. The foliage on at least some of the branches soon begins to assume a yellowish color and in many cases the leaves begin to curl and cluster as if they were affected by Little Peach. This is especially true when the disease is far advanced. On such trees we sometimes also find arising from the main branches little growths of slender, much-branched twigs, with narrow, yellowish leaves.

SYMPTOMS OF LITTLE PEACH.—The fruit on a typical diseased tree or part of a tree ripens later than usual, is smaller than normal but has no unusual color markings. In many cases, however, we find diseased trees in which the fruit ripens at the usual time and is about normal in size, but the foliage shows clearly that the trees are diseased. The symptoms on the foliage are the curling and clustering of the leaves, especially on the inner parts of the tree and the sickly yellowish, or reddish-yellow color that they assume. In younger trees the leaves on the outer branches will usually remain quite green for a long time after those in the centre of the tree have clearly begun to show the disease. If the centre of the tree looks healthy but the outer branches, because of the reddish-yellow color, look diseased, it will nearly always be found that such trees are not attacked by Little Peach but are merely in need of better nourishment.

Black Knot on Cherry Trees.

EDITOR "THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE":
Please state the cause and prevention or cure of black knot on cherry trees. S. C.

Ans.—The fungous growth which causes the disease known as black knot on many kinds of fruit trees works in the inner tissues of the limbs and branches and consequently cannot be successfully controlled by spraying, although spraying helps by killing spores before they have a chance to gain a foothold. Cut out and burn all diseased parts in early winter, cutting far back into the healthy tissue so as to make sure of getting all of the diseased wood. Early in the spring the black knot, visible on the trees, begins to throw off spores, which are disseminated by the wind and thus the disease is spread. It is important, therefore, that the cutting be done in early winter. If the main trunk is attacked, the affected part may be cut out, cutting well around into the healthy tissue, and the wound painted over. When a tree is badly affected it is often better to remove it entirely. Burn all diseased parts pruned out, also any dead and dying trees nearby. The sprays recommended in the Spray Calendar will assist in keeping black knot in check. In well-sprayed orchards it is not such a serious pest.

The Eastern and Western Apple Outlook.

Considerable interest now centres around the Canadian apple crop. The Ontario and Quebec yield will be light indeed, and large consuming markets will be looking to Nova Scotia and British Columbia for product. Reports indicate that the Western States will have a heavy yield, and, unless conditions are quite different from those of the past, a considerable volume of this will find its way into Canadian markets. Government reports of last week state that in Annapolis County, Nova Scotia, thirty per cent. increase over last year is expected; in Kings County, a fifteen per cent. increase is looked for, while the yield in Hants County will be the same as last year. The three counties mentioned comprise the apple-producing sections of the famous Annapolis Valley, the average crop for which, over the last five years, has been 737,000 barrels. British Columbia reports say that the crop has been seriously affected by lack of water for irrigation, and that the total crop is not expected to exceed that of last year.

The composition of the hen's egg compared with moderately lean beef, as given in a bulletin issued by New Jersey Agricultural College, shows the egg to contain 73.7 per cent. water, 10.5 per cent. fat, 14.8 per cent. protein and 1 per cent. mineral matter, as compared with 70.5 per cent. water, 8.5 per cent. fat, 20 per cent. protein and 1 per cent. mineral matter in lean beef. The egg is a good substitute for meat.

FARM BULLETIN.

Crop Conditions in York County.

EDITOR "THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE":

It might be interesting to some readers of "The Farmer's Advocate" to know what the crop conditions are in York County this month. Each township has exceptions both ways, but I shall endeavor to give a general explanation. The great problem which has presented itself all through the season and which has caused much trouble is that of labor. Much has been done by the High School boys, the retired farmers and the War Production Committee. The High School student deserves as much credit as any; he has done it for the good of the country, not asking too high a wage and doing as much work, in many cases, as the real farm hands. Many retired farmers now living in villages have come out and have taken the hoe in hand. The War Production Committee have purchased five tractors and plows and have them plowing in different sections. They have plowed as many hundred acres for buckwheat and are now busy on fall wheat land. They make a charge of \$1.50 per acre and furnish all necessities for the machinery. The farmer boards the man in charge of the machine.

At the first of June many people thought it was impossible to have a good crop of hay but we got it, although it was about three weeks or a month later than usual. It has not been an uncommon crop to have two tons per acre of first-class quality, and a large percentage has been cured without rain. We had first-class weather for haying. At present the grain is wanting our attention. Some barley and fall wheat has been cut. This week will see the most of it in shock. The wheat and barley have filled extra well, with plenty of straw. A severe storm passed over the county on July 26; although it was not a general storm a great amount of damage was done. Much grain was knocked flat but it is filling well. Oats, spring wheat, etc., are a grand crop and will practically all have to be cut one way. Although the south end of our county, including Markham, Scarboro, York and Etobicoke townships did not suffer as much as the northern townships there are streaks through the whole county down very bad. Haying and harvest have come so close together that it gave the farmers a poor chance to do their late hoeing. There are many dirty fields of roots but we do not blame it all on the farmer for it has been a very growthy season with quite a lot of wet weather. It is a rare piece of corn which looks well if it has been on heavy, low-lying land. Many farmers now depend largely upon this crop for fodder, and it is certainly a great drawback to the milk producer or any stockman when the corn crop fails. Roots are a promising crop; mangels and corn, which stood the wet, are looking fine and will certainly be a good crop if weather conditions are favorable. Turnips are a fine crop, and it is not an uncommon sight to see them touching in the row.

There is a very poor outlook for all fruits. Cherries, gooseberries, currants and raspberries have been very light but prices have been extraordinarily high. Pears are a poor crop in most parts, although I have noticed some who have a good crop of nice, clean fruit. Apples are probably the lightest crop we have, but we sometimes see fruit of this kind which is a first-class sample.

The honey producers state that a very poor grade of honey is the result of the slow growth in the spring and rapid growth after the buckwheat was planted. The grades of honey are mixed, and choice No. 1 clover honey will be a scarce article.

York Co., Ont.

ERNEST THOMSON.

The Crab or Finger Grasses.

This weedy grass enclosed is in some of our lawns. It makes a flat mat and kills out the other grasses. I think it is worse than dandelions in a lawn. What is its name and how can it be got rid of? J. M.

The species enclosed is the small or smooth crab grass. This and the hairy or large crab grass—both are also called finger grasses—are two weeds that like many other pernicious ones have come to us from Europe. They are easily recognized by the narrow, straight seed-spikes coming out like fingers from the end of the stem, usually 3 or 4 but sometimes as many as 8 or 10. The hairy one roots at the joints, the stem easily breaks when one attempts to pull it up. Its flat, creeping habit has suggested the name crab grass.

They are most troublesome in the lawn and garden. A market gardener near London told me that the hairy finger grass is the worst weed on his place. They are both annuals and could be eradicated in a season if their seeding was prevented. It is the smooth one that destroys the lawn. Although unlike the other, it does not root at the joints, it can keep its seeding stems or some of them so close to the ground that no lawn mower can touch them. Its compact rosette of leaves smothers out the other grasses. Of course it is killed in the winter but it leaves thin or bare patches prepared for its seed to start the next spring. Close and frequent mowing keeps it in check but the only way you can eradicate it is to cut it off its root with a sharp knife. The process may be hard on the operator's back but if the knife is sharp it is easy on the hand since no digging is required as in the case of dandelions. I have tried spraying it with iron sulphate, the dandelion formula, but the results were not satisfactory. The hairy species which is the worst one in the garden does not trouble the lawn because its seeding stems are erect enough to be caught by the lawn mower. Gardeners will not regret any pains they take to keep both these grasses off their premises. J. D.