

POULTRY

Growthy Chicks at a Minimum Cost

J. W. Clark, Brant Co., Ont.

Good growthy chickens ready for the market in late summer or early fall can be raised at a minimum cost when fed from hoppers and allowed to range in the orchard. My chickens have the run of my orchard, which is kept well cultivated so that there is lots of green food provided such as a chicken can eat. I sow a little clover for them. Since the orchard is cultivated, say once a week, the soil is in splendid shape for the chickens to dig and scratch and thus secure much animal food. The different young weeds and clover that keep popping up makes the ideal green food for them.

The chickens also do a world of good in the orchard. It is most interesting to watch them in the early morning out under the trees. Codling worms, canker worms, and so forth, which let themselves down to the ground by means of their silken ropes, are quickly snatched up and converted into chicken. The shade which the trees provide is a necessity of chick life in hot weather; hence it is an all round benefit to have them in the orchard.

My chicks are fed wheat screenings and cracked corn, all they want, as they take it from the hoppers. They are watered from a barrel, the water from which drops slowly into a drinking pan beneath. A mash feed of ground oats and corn mixed with sour skim-milk, is fed once a day. Sweet milk should never be given, as it propagates disease so readily. Buttermilk is even better than sour milk, and may be fed liberally to great advantage.

If fruit growers generally will feed their chicks in this way, they will raise the best chickens they ever did. Their chickens will be much better than they have been, and they will have such chickens as they will get off to market early—chickens that will not need crate fattening, and there will be but little labor in raising them.

Grit is Essential for Poultry

E. F. Eaton, Colchester Co., N.S.

The grit in the food of the hen performs the same function in preparing the food for the assimilation as do teeth in the case of other farm animals. In the gizzard of the fowl, the strong muscles in the walls keep the food and the grit grinding continually against each other, and in this way coarse food is rendered fine and put in the proper condition for assimilation. Without grit, bowel trouble is sure to result in as the food will not be digested.

Very fine grit should form the first food of the young chicken. As soon as the chicken is taken from the incubator, it should be given a chance to pick at grit so that it will have the means whereby it can make use of its food. Failure to observe this rule is a most frequent cause of loss in the brooding of young chicks.

Fine sand, oyster shells, broken crockery, and mortar from old walls are all desirable forms of grit. Old mortar serves a double purpose of supplying grit, and the lime to make the shell of the egg. If lime in some form is not fed, soft-shelled eggs result. Where hens have free range in the

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—Mack Lillis, Glenburnie.

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—G. A. Petapiece, Oxford Mills.

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