

POULTRY YARD

The Moulting of Fowls

All adult fowls moult once a year, and the process may take place at any time between June and November. The exact time at which it occurs is governed by many things, such as the age of the fowl, the way in which it is housed, the food it receives, and its state of health. As a general rule, fowls which are under two years old, healthy and well fed, begin to moult in June, but when a year older the process is frequently deferred until August or September; and hens which are four or five years old frequently run into October and November before they cast their feathers. Late moulting is undesirable, because hens will not lay steadily during the period of moulting, and if they lay at all during that time it is exceptional; and it has also been observed that hens which start to moult late in the season are in bad or indifferent health, and the process with them is tedious and difficult, and, moreover, they do not produce any eggs during the winter months. Early moulting, on the other hand, is distinctly advantageous, because, if hens can get rid of their old feathers during the warm weather of July and August, they assume their new garb with great rapidity, and are in excellent condition for the following winter's laying.

The duration of the moult varies greatly with different fowls, but it is in all cases a trying process, and poultry-keepers should study ways and means of getting it over as rapidly as possible, and with the minimum inconvenience to the fowls. Hens

which are young and in good health will cast some of their feathers, perhaps, in June or July, but in the early stages of the moult they will not cease laying; it is not until the new feathers are growing profusely that the strain on the system is sufficient to cause cessation of egg production. With hens of this class the actual moult may take something over two months from the dropping of the first feathers until all the new coat has been assumed, yet it may be continued all the time until the moult has been practically completed, and it is only then that a rest is taken.

Hens of three or four years old will, on the other hand, cease laying when they drop their first feathers, and will not resume for a month or more after the last new feather has grown to its full length. This means that too long a part of each year is spent in complete idleness by the older birds of a flock, and that at a period when eggs are in greatest demand, and are fetching high prices. Consequently, the wisdom of getting rid of the old hens at a certain time every year and replacing them with pullets, will commend itself to all who keep farm poultry for profitable egg production. Poultry Journal.

Advantages of Poultry Keeping

The poultry keeper above all other business men has the advantage of having for sale a product which is saleable every day in the year in any part of the country. There is no town so small, no village so remote that poultry and eggs are not in demand at all times, and in many instances the more remote the town the better the prices. The poultry keeper has also the advantage of being able to foretell within a narrow range what price he will obtain for his produce. He knows that at certain times he will be able to get high prices and at other times prices are very likely to fall. He knows that year after year certain price curves will be found in the market quotations and these will not vary widely in any series of years. The prices of beef, mutton, pork, wool, cotton, farm produce of any kind, is likely to swing through a wide arc in consecutive years, prices being made on demand or according to the quality produced. With the products of the poultry yard it is different. Prices go up and down almost as regularly as if they had been fixed to remain permanent, and the poultry keeper need not worry about supply and demand. He should give his whole attention to the economic phases of the work.

He should endeavor to feed so as to produce the greatest possible revenue from a given quantity of feed. He should study his fowls and use every endeavor to secure the largest number of eggs from each laying hen. It is characteristic of the business of producing eggs that a shortage in the summer or an overplus in the winter does not affect prices to any great degree. This is because the law of average applies. If one poultryman's hens lay well in winter the increased supply is not large enough to lower prices, while if one flock ceases to produce in early summer other flocks go right on producing the usual summer supply. This gives the individual poultryman an opportunity to conduct his business so as to get the best results by producing the largest number of eggs at a time when the prices are highest. In the poultry keeping as in any other business it is ability to see ahead which makes for success.

Seasonable Hints

Don't think because you have a pure breed you have reached the limit. There is more difference very often in the individuals of the same breed than there is between the breeds. During six months of last year one half of our whole flock (four breeds)

laid over 13,000 eggs, while the other half laid 5,000; but ten hens out of one pen laid 1,400, while another ten hens in the same pen laid 140—that is one hen laid as many as ten. Which kind is the more profitable?

Arrange for early green feed for the poultry. Winter rye makes the earliest. Sow it any time from now to the middle of September; the earlier it is sowed the more late pasture will there be available. Prepare the land as for wheat and sow one bushel to the acre.

If you have a piece of root ground,

that is clean, and it is near the poultry plant, or can be turned into it, try some alfalfa next spring. Prepare it well as for grain, and sow 25 or 30 lbs. of good seed an acre. What the hens do not eat can be cut and saved for winter use.

The hen that does not lay during the winter will not be profitable. The pullet that lays during September will moult before New Year's, and not start to lay till March or April. The mature pullet that starts to lay the middle of November or December will probably lay all winter.



Selecting a Roof

Every prospective builder should show the same discrimination in the selection of a roof as in the investing of money. There are a lot of poor roofings on the market. Discriminate, examine and test roofing before buying it. You cannot do that with all roofings, but it is possible to do so with

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