

POULTRY YARD

Hatching in March

When the March sun begins to make itself felt, and the warmth invades the hens outside, the poultryman, who wants early chicks, is looking for setting hens. There is one thing that many of the uninitiated overlook, however, and that is the fertile egg. If the hen is laying it looks only natural, that if the eggs are incubated, they will hatch, and bring forth a healthy brood of chicks. This may, or may not, be the case. It depends more on the attendant than on the hen herself. It is possible that the food given, and conditions surrounding the hen, are sufficiently correct to induce the hen to lay, but it does not follow that the eggs will hatch.

The annual statistics along this line show that every year the percentage of eggs that hatch, is remarkably small, even with all the knowledge at the disposal of the breeder. For years the cry from all parts of the country has been that the eggs hatch poorly, and many bright hopes are dashed to the ground. This lessens the crop of early chicks, and the breeder has to be satisfied with Mr. Y chicks, instead of March and April.

To be prepared, and have your flock laying fertile eggs in February and March, is the desire of all. This is missed, however, for various reasons. Some, in an endeavor to take too good care of their birds house them too closely, keep them too warm, and feed them too generously. The consequence may be eggs, but with the germ weak, and useless for incubation. Others are either too

opinionated, or too lazy, to look after their fowls, as they are told to do through the farm and stock journals, and with the same result. The difficulty requires early attention, as the fertility of the egg depends entirely on the healthy condition of both the males and females of the flocks. Those who read the poultry items in the papers and magazines, will know that it has been settled in the minds of the majority of old breeders that the hen is not a hot house plant, but an animal that is well adapted to almost any climate. Instead of being kept closely housed all winter, perhaps, with artificial heat supplied, she is much better off if permitted to apparently rough it a little, and to be treated to plenty of fresh air and unlimited exercise.

The hen house that is rendered airy, and dry, by the use of a cotton roof, in whole or in part, and the flock given a scratching shed directly open to the outer air during day time, will have the healthiest and largest lot of birds in it. Furthermore, the egg basket will be full of fertile eggs, if other conditions of food, grit, lime and water, are properly looked after. All hinges on the giving of fresh air, dry quarters, and plenty of exercise, which are far more important than the art of getting hatchable eggs, in early spring.

This Flock is a Good Asset

Ed. The Dairymen and Farming World: In 1907, with a flock of 220 hens composed of barred Plymouth Rocks, and Buff Orpingtons we marketed 20% dozen eggs from each of the 220 layers. That is a pretty fair average for the size of the flock, and considering that the record covers only a part of the year. After September we marketed the hens as custers. These eggs were sold to a grocer in Montreal at an average price of \$60, a hundred. After deducting \$1.30 a head for expenses, it leaves a nice profit for our work, of \$1.55 a hen. The profit on the flock of 220 would thus be \$341.50.

Wilbur Bennett, Peterborough, Co.

Ed. Note.—Mr. Bennett is a very successful poultryman. He keeps a large flock of layers over winter and finds them the most profitable branch of the farm stock. His experience is valuable therefore to any who contemplate going into the poultry business on a large scale. Elsewhere in this issue will be found pointers from his pen.

Photo Contest

We want to show our readers some of the splendid poultry houses and yards that are scattered all over the country and to induce owners of them to have them photographed; we will offer the following prizes for the best poultry subject, to be houses, yards, flocks, or some scene that at once suggests poultry. Subject and quality both considered. Contest closes on April 30.

1st prize \$3.00
2nd prize 2.00
3rd prize 1.00
Conditions—Photos should be at least 4x5 inches, and as much larger as is convenient. They must be a poultry subject, preferably poultry houses, runs or flocks. Photos are sent after if unmounted, and should be a glass finish.

All photos must reach us before April 30.
We reserve the right to reproduce all photos sent, whether prize winners or not.

Eggs for Setting should be advertised in our Poultry Department.

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MISCELLANEOUS ADVS.

Important to Financial Officials of Cheese Factories for 1908

Forward, by mail, or otherwise, to the undersigned, your statements and cheese buyers' statements, mentioning any deductions necessary, and your accounts will need no audit. I have made cheese factory accounts a specialty for over 25 years. Charges reasonable.

PETER M. WOOD, Ivy Lea, Ont.

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