

## War Time Rations for Poultry

Dry and Wet Mash—Economical Grains—Best Combinations.

By Prof. M. C. Herner

The question of cheap feed or low priced rations for poultry is engaging the attention of everybody who is keeping chickens. Conditions have changed so much during the last three years that farmers are compelled to make a change in their feeding methods. A year ago, although prices were high, still wheat in some form or other made up a certain part of the rations. Now, however, things have changed so that it becomes the patriotic duty of every farmer to let go all grain that can be used for human food, and resort to coarse grains for poultry. Besides this the farmer realizes that wheat at four cents a pound and eggs at 35 cents a dozen do not go together.

With all feed so high in price the farmer naturally looks about for the cheapest he can get. He is also concerned, or should be at least, with the cheapest method or system of feeding them, so as to get the best results.

Right here let me say that only too few farmers know how to properly feed poultry, especially laying stock. Very few know what a dry mash is and how it should be fed. The reason dry mash is mentioned is the fact that but few know what it is or what the advantages are in feeding it. Wet mash on the other hand are quite commonly fed, in fact if anything the average poultry keeper is inclined to overdo wet mash feeding rather than not feed enough.

### Mashes Utilize Much Waste

Mashes, both wet and dry, permit of using up a large amount of what would otherwise be waste product on the farm, such as potato peelings, table scraps, butchering offal, cabbage leaves and wheat seed. If properly fed there will be practically no waste in feeding mash either wet or dry. They permit also of using bulky feed that would otherwise not be touched by poultry. Laying hens should get both wet and dry mash as part of their daily rations.

The prices of feed that can be used in these mash are about as follows:—

	per ton.
Bran .....	\$34.00
Shorts .....	38.00
Oat Chop .....	45.00
Grade A. Recleaned Screenings	\$34.00 to \$42.00

These prices are f.o.b. Winnipeg.

Much has been said of late, and considerable interest has been aroused in the value of screenings as a feed for poultry and livestock. The Grade A. recleaned screenings contain roughly from 50 to 55 per cent. of wheat cracked and a few plump kernels. About 15 to 20 per cent. is wild buckwheat, and about 15 per cent. of oats, both tame and wild. The remainder holds chaff and some weed seeds, chiefly ragweed. All the constituents have good feeding value, except the last named. The difficulty in feeding these screenings as hard grain or whole grain is that the greater part is too small or fine to be used as a scratch feed to throw in the litter. In addition, hens do not take very readily to eating wild buckwheat or wild oats. To feed these screenings economically they should be ground and fed as a dry mash. In this way every part is made so the hens will eat it readily. All the weed seeds will also be destroyed. In this way they can also be fed as a wet mash.

The price of these screenings is high compared with bran, shorts, and oat chop, and it is doubtful whether as good results can be obtained by feeding them as by feeding the latter feed. For the poultry breeder who has to buy all his feed, the latter feeds would certainly be the cheapest when considered apart from the patriotic duty.

### Making Up The Ration

A ration for laying hens should be made up of hard grain, dry mash, grain food, animal food and mineral matter.

The cheapest hard grains available today on most farms are barley and oats. Barley can be fed in fairly large quantities if combined with other foods, but if fed alone it is not so good. It is not as palatable as most of the other farm grains. After hens get used to it, they eat just

as much as of other grains. By withholding other grains, the hens can be induced more readily to eat barley. Boiling water will also improve it very much, but it should be fed in troughs or pans, and not thrown in the litter unless it is quite well dried after boiling.

Hens will take to eating oats a little more readily than they will do to barley. Equal parts of oats and barley fed in the litter morning and evening will make a very good scratch feed. Bear in mind to keep the floor of the poultry house well covered with six to eight inches of straw. All hard grains fed should be thrown in this litter to induce the

hens to scratch for it. Exercise always keeps the hens healthy and in good condition for laying. As to quantities, that is largely left to the feeder's own judgment. The amount required will depend on the size and condition of the flock, the breed, and also what other foods are fed. Give grain feed once a day.

The value in use of a dry mash depends very much on what hard grains are fed. With liberal feedings of these the dry mash will form a good supplement. Remember that dry mash will not, and cannot, take the place of hard grains, even though such mash be made out of the identical hard grains. Hens want variety. Here are two good dry mash suitable for present day feeding. The first can be made by chopping fine grade "A" recleaned screenings; the second can be made by using equal parts of bran, shorts, and fine barley chop. All dry mash fed to be put in a hopper and the hens can eat all they like at any time.

### Arranging a Hopper—Preparing Mash

A hopper can be arranged so that the mash can be fed without a particle of waste. A good home made dry mash hopper can be made any size desired up to 300 lbs. capacity. The main things are first, to have a slanting hinged top so steep that no hens can stand on it; second, have the neck wide enough so the feed will not clog too much; third, nail an ordinary builder's lath on the front board forming the trough, so as to form a lip; fourth, run an ordinary light wire across the trough, a strand every inch and a half, attaching it in front below the lip and at the rear, an inch and a half from the bottom of the slant portion of the hopper. This arrangement will prevent the hens taking out feed with their bills. The inch and a half spacing of these cross wires prevents that peculiar side motion of the hen's head when hunting for feed.

To the dry mash a little granulated or crushed charcoal should be added. The same dry mash that is fed can be used as a wet mash by simply moistening with water, sufficient to make it nice and crumbly, but not sloppy. If made too wet or sloppy it will have a scouring effect and much of the good results will be lost. Wet mash should be fed in a trough with pans. Under no condition should wet mash be thrown on the floor or in the litter. Such a way of feeding is filthy and wasteful. Wet mash induces heavier feeding, and in this way they save grain. Boiled potatoes or potato peeling, table scraps, boiled or raw cabbage leaves, scalded clover leaves, alfalfa or lawn clippings, can be added to wet mash. Pulped mangels or turnips, raw or boiled, will also mix in well. Boiling usually improves any of the vegetables and will permit of feeding more without any bad effects than by feeding raw. One feed a day of wet mash is quite sufficient.

### Green Feed—Animal Food—Grit

Green feed can be supplied in the form of cabbage, mangels or turnips. For animal food, buttermilk is the cheapest. Skim milk, sweet or sour, is just as good. Probably under present conditions, neither skim milk nor buttermilk is available. If such is the case, the next best thing is to feed all the meat scraps available from the table, and also the butchering offal. Most farmers do not pay very much attention to feeding meat or animal foods, and it is next to im-



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