

POULTRY YARD

Artificial Raising of Chicks

M. Lockhart Tindall, Renfrew Co., Ont.

Having heated up the brooder for 24 hours and covered the floor with a litter of barn chaff, finely cut hay or straw, the chicks may be removed from the incubator about 36 hours. To avoid chills and subsequent bowel trouble, they should be transferred in a warm lined basket or box and carefully placed under the hover.

It behooves one to be careful as to the material used for bedding, and for the first week would strongly advise the use of cut clover, cut straw or chaff from the barn floor, if clean. Avoid shavings, saw dust, bran, etc., as the chicks are sure to pick up some and thus cause bowel trouble.

The proper heat at the start is from 85 to 90 degrees. This should be maintained for the first week. The second week about 5 degrees lower, gradually reducing it as the chicks grow older, depending of course on the outside temperature. After all is said and done, the chicks themselves are the best guide, for if comfortable they will spread out and lay round under the hover, but if too cold they will bunch up and chirp disconsolately.

Feeding:—The chickens should not be fed for the first 48 to 60 hours, as the young chick is well supplied by nature with food in the shape of the yolk which is absorbed just before exclusion, and if fed sooner they are sure to contract bowel trouble, (indigestion) and die. More chicks are killed by over feeding too soon than can be imagined.

The first feed should consist of dry bread, cracker crumbs or pinhead oatmeal moistened with a little milk and squeezed dry to a crumbly mass and sprinkled with fine grit, they should also be supplied with fresh drinking water or preferably skimmed milk given in a fountain so that they cannot smear themselves. This food may be used for the first week, after which a mixture of cracked grains such as wheat, corn, peas, or rice may be fed, and when ten days old a mixture consisting of oatmeal, shorts, cornmeal and bran may be fed dry from a hopper, which should be kept before them all the time. Grit, charcoal, bonemeal and oyster shell, and a good grade of beef scraps should also be before them in hoppers. Also plenty of fresh water, skimmed milk or buttermilk, and green food such as lettuce, onion tops, cabbage, etc., cracked grain should also be fed in the litter during the day to compel the chicks to exercise.

A small wire-in run should be made in front of the brooder and the chicks should be let out on the grass every day. For the first few days they should be carefully watched and driven in when showing any signs of getting chilled. After they get warmed up they can be let out

again. As they get older the run can be enlarged. In no case should they be allowed out until the dew is off the grass, as they will soon get wet through, when chills and bowel trouble will result.

Before proceeding further let me draw your attention to the importance of not overcrowding and of keeping the brooders scrupulously clean. Overcrowding is one of the most fruitful causes of mortality among chicks and it is false economy to crowd to crowd chicks in a brooder or colony house where there is only really room for fifty. For successful raising one ought to have at least two brooders to each incubator, in fact, for bringing out more than one batch, three is not too many. A brooder with a rated capacity of say 100, will carry that number until the chicks are two or three weeks old, after which time they should be separated into flocks of fifty, thus necessitating the second brooder. When the second batch is taken off the chicks are put into the third brooder and at the end of the next three weeks the first ones are old enough to go into colony coops and thus making room for the second batch to be started. As soon as distinguishable the pullets should be separated from the cockerels, the former given free range if possible, and suitably fed for breeding stock and the latter penned up and fed for market, with the exception of some of the most promising which should be retained for stock purposes.

On Trap Nesting Hens

A. G. Gilbert, before standing Committee, Ottawa

An important change in the manner of breeding in birds is made by the introduction of trap nests. In January, 1904, the work of building up profitable laying strains of fowls was commenced. There are two methods by which this purpose may be accomplished. One is by observation of the birds, and the other by "trap nests." The manner of operating the trap nest may be described as follows: Each fowl, in the different laying pens bears a number affixed to one of its legs. On entering a nest to lay, the hen involuntarily releases a hinged door which immediately closes the exit and also prevents another fowl from making her way into the nest. After the hen in the nest has laid she is released by the attendant, who notes her number and marks it on a card conveniently situated in each pen. A complete history of each individual hen is so secured. By this means the good layers are distinguished from the poor ones. The best layers are selected to breed from, the others are discarded.

PROLIFIC EGG-LAYING STRAINS

By breeding only from the best layers, in the course of a few years, prolific egg-laying strains of fowls are built up. Not only that, but the best market types are secured as well. This combined result is of the greatest importance, for we obtain by such selection from Barred Plymouth Rocks, White Wyandottes, Buff or White Orpingtons, Dorkings, etc., really dual purpose fowls; birds that are good for both eggs and flesh—money makers from both standpoints. And further, by selecting the chickens from these selected layers—while young—in one of the new pattern winter houses which I have been describing, we build up hardy winter laying strains of fowls as well as prolific egg laying ones. Surely this is most satisfactory progress, "his obtaining by systematic and careful selection—as compared with former haphazard methods—strains of fowls which are better lay-

ers, better market types, and harder in every way.

Professor Gowell, of the Ontario Experimental Station, at Marine, 10 years ago found that some fowls laid only 7, 9, 12 or 15 eggs a year. They were simply living on the others. He discarded them and went on breeding from his best layers. Now he has fowls which will lay 180 and 200 eggs per year.

TRAP NESTS AND FARMERS

The trap nest you speak of would be rather an inconvenient one for the average farmer, asked Mr. Owen, one of the members of the Committee. He would have to have someone there all the time to take a note of the fowl? That is really the point that was raised in this Committee when I brought this matter up some three years ago, remarked Mr. Gilbert. The farmer should not, as a rule, have more than one hen properly—and that means profitably—attend to. He should not under any circumstances have more than 100 at the outside and a few choice fowls to select from. I believe you will see at no distant date the Provincial Governments establish poultry stations for the direct benefit of the farmer. These stations will do the work of trap nest selection and the eggs, or that stock, from these selected hens will be sold direct to the farmers. Probably county or township councils may take the matter up if the greater body does not.

Six Eggs a Week

I have a neighbor who is blowing away a black Minorca hen which he says lays six eggs a week. How many weeks in the year could a hen keep up that record? The 200 egg a year hen would have to lay about 12 of the 13 weeks. It looks to me as though the 200 egg hen would be a scarce article. I kept a record of a flock of ten White Leghorns last year, and their record was 110 dozen eggs, or 132 per head. I thought that was pretty good as it gave me a profit over the feed of about 12¢ per \$1.50 per head. Can anyone beat it with any other breed of fowl? I would like to see their experience in the poultry department of the Dairyman—Geo. H. Middlesex Co.

As you say, it would require a hen to lay six eggs a week for 33 weeks, to make her a 200 eggs a year hen. That leaves about 10 weeks for her to rest, so that the record of 200 eggs is quite possible with the non-sitting varieties. That it is so is proven by the fact that many poultrymen are having such a return from an occasional hen, though it is not very general. Your record of 1320 eggs from 10 hens is a good one, and we trust your suggestion that others write their experience, will be acted upon freely, as we will gladly publish their letters.

Crosses or Pure Breeds?

I am breeding poultry for market and have a flock composed mostly of White Wyandottes. I have had fair success in hatching this season, but have heard two pure breed crosses together will make a better market fowl than either would be the first place. What variety would be a good one to cross with the White Wyandottes, in order to get a full breasted good looking market fowl when dressed 12-13 lb. G. K. Elgin Co.

All pure breeds of poultry were produced with a special object in view, either color or shape. The White Wyandotte is considered a first class utility fowl, both for eggs and a good plump carcass when dressed.

However, if any improvements could be made in them, it could best be done by a pen of pullets with a White India Game Male. This cross would still give you a white fowl, and add roundness to the breast of the carcass, giving about the only improvement we could suggest in a cross with a Wyandotte.

105 Strain Chicks

Ed., The Dairyman and Farming World.—Your readers may be interested in hearing of my success in hatching this spring, and of the cause to which I attribute that success. I have used Zenolium, which I see advertised in your columns, in my incubators, and will say that I have 105 of the braistie incubator-hatched chicks I ever saw. They are in every respect as good as fresh hatched.

The experiments at the Guelph College with Zenolium used in the incubators, and my own success, leads me to believe that the use of Zenolium tends to increase the percentage of chicks secured from the eggs used for hatching.

E. P. Bliss.

Fort William, Ont.

BROUGHT QUICK RESULTS

Through my small want ad in the Poultry Department of the "Dairyman," I sold the brooder I had for sale, and secured the first appearance of the ad.—J. H. Callender, Peterboro, Ont.

A Busy Season

"We are pleased to inform you that the demand for bronze turkeys has been greater than ever before. We have had more orders than we could fill. We sold four turkeys to go to the Experimental Farm at Trinidad, and have also shipped to Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec and to the United States. We have sold more turkeys in our own township than ever before." — Jas. Ford & Son, Drummond, Ont.

Messrs. Ford & Son recently placed a small advertisement in the poultry page of The Dairyman and Farming World, and the foregoing letter describes the results. A pretty good investment, apparently.

Whenever weather conditions will permit, allow the chicks to run outside the brooder, even if they must still be confined to the limits of some large box, in order to keep them off the cold ground. It will be a sort of holiday for them as they love to investigate new corners, and will help harden them gradually to a free run about the brooder.

POULTRY EXCHANGE

TWO CENTS A WORD. CASH WITH ORDER

ROUEN DUCK EGGS.—\$1.00 for 8—James Matheral, Drumbo, Ont. e-57

WHITE LEGHORNS a specialty; cup winners. Eggs, \$1.50 per setting. Dr. Brew, Holmesville, Ont. e-57

MINORCAS.—Rose Comb Black; prize winners and record winter layers. Eggs, \$2.00 setting.—Walter Brown, care of Hamilton, Ont.

SETTING OF EGGS FREE.—We will give a setting of eggs of any standard variety of fowl, for only two new subscriptions to The Canadian Dairyman and Farming World, at \$1.00 a year.—The Canadian Dairyman and Farming World, Peterboro, Ont.

900 QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS IN POULTRY RAISING.—The various chapters treated are: Care of Poultry, Diseases, Eggs, Incubation, Buildings, and Miscellaneous Queries. Paper, 60¢. Bound, \$1.00. Write for a copy of the book sent free on request.

FARM POULTRY.—By George C. Watson. A popular sketch of domestic fowls for the farmer and amateur, giving full descriptions of everything connected with the poultry industry, and concise directions for carrying out the details of raising the various breeds of fowls, buildings and their arrangements, feeding, incubation, and brooding, care of chicks, ducks, geese, turkeys, pigeons, etc. Illustrated, 537 inches, 64 pages. Cloth, \$1.00. Write for a copy of the book sent free on request.

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