

pen before eggs for hatching are selected. At the end of the breeding season a good proportion of fertile eggs may be expected up to about seven days after the male bird has been removed from the breeding pen.

Eggs for incubation should be selected with care. The number of chickens reared to maturity in proportion to the number of eggs incubated is the best possible criterion of one's ability as a poultry raiser. Under average conditions it takes about four eggs to produce a mature chick, therefore, it takes about eight eggs to produce a mature pullet.

Good chicks can be produced from good eggs only; they should each weigh about two ounces, have a smooth surface and be oval in shape. Do not incubate small, dirty or washed eggs, nor unevenly shaped eggs, nor eggs with cracked shells. The sooner the eggs are incubated after being laid the better, but they may be held for seven days, during which time they should be kept in a temperature of from 50° to 60° F. and they should be turned occasionally.

NATURAL INCUBATION



Hatch early; the earlier the better.

Boxes eighteen inches square and eight inches high make good nesting boxes. The nests should be built carefully, preferably with earth in the bottom, having the corners well filled, covered with soft straw or leaves. If the nests are too deep the eggs may pile up and break; if they are too shallow the eggs may roll out. The nests should be placed in a secluded place and the hens should be set after dark. Set a number of hens at the

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