

Seasonable Reminders to Poultrymen.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

At this season of the year, when farmers are very busy, the poultry are quite liable to be more or less neglected, under the impression that so long as they get plenty to eat, their other requirements may be attended to later, when other farm duties, apparently more pressing, have been looked after. No greater mistake in poultry management was ever made, because, as has been demonstrated time and again, without adequate care and attention poultry will not pay a dividend, whereas with intelligent care and systematic attention to detail, the farm flock will show a larger return for the money invested than any other branch of agriculture. Given a fair show, the poultry will help pay off the mortgage on the farm.

The writer is often asked, "What do you feed your hens to make them lay?" and in this connection the answer is that the farmer should not worry about the feeding problem at the present time, as the hens are out on the land, getting plenty of grubs, plenty of grit, and plenty of green stuff and water, so that all they require at present is their grain feed which should be given in such a way that they will not neglect the exercise which is so necessary to them during the day, but fed so that they will go to roost with a full crop. The only part of the feeding arrangement necessary for the farmer to attend to now, is to be sure that he has laid in a sufficient supply of green stuff to last his poultry through the long winter months. See that you have an adequate supply of clover or alfalfa, and later on, don't forget the cabbages and roots. You cannot sell your produce to better advantage than by selling it inside the egg crates.

But there is an enemy in the poultry yard which will eat up all the profit and encroach on the capital investment if he is not exterminated, and to do that requires constant watchfulness and diligent care. Readers will realize at once that I refer to lice and mites. No pullet will commence to lay early and keep up a good supply of eggs all winter unless it has attained, prior to cold weather, a state of maturity in vigorous health, a condition which is practically impossible with the pullet which is being constantly tormented by day through the presence of lice and whose blood is nightly sucked by mites. The older hens will discontinue laying early, their moult will drag along into the winter, and they will not start laying again until spring. The hen which lays the valuable winter eggs is a happy, contented hen, free from vermin. Go after the winter eggs, and now is the time to start.

Roll up your sleeves and get into the hen house with the old broom, and thoroughly sweep down roof and walls, removing all dust and cobwebs.—Clean out all droppings, (it is presumed of course that this part of it is done regularly) and if you have an earth floor, remove several inches of it until you are sure that all sour earth is out, and then fill in again to the required height. Next remove all unnecessary fixtures or furnishings which could possibly harbor mites and don't replace them. The necessary roosts and nest boxes should then be removed for thorough cleansing when this is possible, and if not possible to remove them, cleanse them where they are. Plenty of boiling water and soap suds, with elbow grease on the side, is an excellent preparation. After that soak them with kerosene, making sure that all cracks and crevices receive a liberal dosing. Go all round the walls, especially at the rear of the roosts, and apply some of the oil to all cracks. Finally whitewash the entire interior with a good whitewash in which has been mixed a small quantity of carbolic acid, zenoleum, creolin, or other tarry compound, or any good disinfectant.

If this work has been properly done, it will be safe to assume that you have got rid of the mites—the worst of all poultry parasites—for they live in cracks and crevices, only coming out at nights to suck the life blood from the fowls on the roosts. There still remain however the body lice which are easily exterminated with any good commercial lice killer. The writer much prefers the lice killer in a powdered form, which should be applied thoroughly while the bird is held by the legs, head downwards. Care should be taken to see that the powder is worked into the feathers right down to the skin. Every bird should be individually treated, and the application repeated in a week or ten days to catch those stragglers which hatched out after the first application. Repeat the process from time to time as occasion demands, constant watchfulness being necessary, especially in the hot weather, in order to successfully resist the enemy.—"Safety First" should be the watchword.

Give your hens a fighting chance. Keep them comfortable and in vigorous health, and they will fill your heart by their cackling, and your pocket by the eggs they will lay for you.

York Co., Ont.

J. JAMIESON.

Kill the Old Hens Now.

The average farmer poultryman neglects paying attention to the age of his fowls. All this year's chickens should before this have been leg-banded so that no difficulty will be experienced in identifying them later on when the culling-out process starts. And by the way, it is getting close to the time to get rid of the old hens. It has been found most profitable to sell off all the old layers just before molting commences. Hens are usually in fairly good condition when they begin to lose their feathers but after molting has gone on for a few weeks they will generally be found thin and light. This means a loss, particularly so in the season when grain is so high-priced as is the case this year. Besides, turning away the unprofitable old hens leaves more room for the chicks coming on to take their places. It is well also to separate the cockerels from the pullets and hasten growth of both as fast as possible with at least one mash feed per day in addition to the regular whole-grain ration. When wheat is \$1.25 per bushel it should not take much urging to induce owners to part with their old hens which have stopped laying and are simply being fed at a loss.

HORTICULTURE.

Box the Apples.

While on a recent trip through Western Canada the writer was asked time and again about the fruit-crop prospects in the East. The people living in the Prairie Provinces are always interested in the condition of the fruit crop in Ontario and the Eastern Provinces, and a large number of them having gone West from these provinces appreciate Ontario fruit, particularly the apple. But they all have the old complaint of the wrong kind of packages and bad packing. Everyone spoken to made the remark that they would rather have Ontario apples than any Western fruit could they get them put up in the same kind of package and the same uniform pack as is the case with the fruit which comes in from west of the mountains. Most families do not care to buy barrelled apples. They prefer the box, which is a handier package and when opened the fruit is more attractive. Growers in the East seem to forget that the Western winter climate is not well suited to keeping apples in good condition in the average house cellar. Large quantities of apples stored in the fall in these cellars, many of which are not frost proof, are very liable to be ruined by frost during some of the cold weather experienced. Box-packed fruit held in proper storage may be bought box by box by the consumer and loss is thus avoided. Furthermore, the Western consumer would rather have boxed apples because he believes that a better class of fruit is put up in boxes than in barrels. He must pay a high price for apples, and consequently wants the very best obtainable. An extra 25 or 50 cents means nothing to him when he gets the class of fruit he wants. Eastern growers should take the hint and put up their choice fruit in boxes for the Western trade. Assume the Western consumer of an even, high-class grade of fruit, and Ontario will have one of the best markets in the world for her surplus apples.

Cut Out the Black Knot.

The season of 1915 seems to have been very favorable for the development and spread of black knot fungus on plums and cherries. Every reader of "The Farmer's Advocate" is familiar with this disease, and a minute description is not necessary. Some years ago the trouble became so prevalent that many orchards were ruined. Now, as heretofore, it is the neglected orchard that is suffering most, and wild cherries and plum trees growing around the fences are very common producers and distributors of this death-dealing fungus. The fence-corner tree is dangerous and should be rooted out at once.

Black knot is more prevalent on some varieties than on others, but it will attack in greater or lesser degree almost any variety of cultivated plum and cherry as well as the wild varieties growing in neglected places. The fungus works in the inner tissues of the limbs and young shoots and cannot be entirely controlled by spraying. The knots break through the tissues early in the spring, causing the familiar warty appearance. At first these knots are light colored, often described as yellowish and they gradually turn darker and darker until in the fall they are quite a dull black, with a fine granular surface, which in reality is a crop of late spores. As soon as any of the knots are noticed they should be cut out and burned. Small twigs carrying knots should be removed entirely and burned immediately. Larger knots on the trunk or larger limbs should be pared down to the healthy tissues, and the injury painted over with red lead or with a thick paste made of white lead and turpentine. Some

use turpentine alone. It is generally advisable where the knot has succeeded in eating well through a large limb to take the limb out entirely. If the trunk is badly affected it is sometimes safer to remove the tree entirely.

It is generally believed that the spores gain entrance to new limbs only through injuries to the tree. We are certain that they do gain entrance through injury, because some years ago we remember a case of a farmer shooting birds in his trees, and the next season these cherry trees were literally covered with black knot. Almost the entire top was cut off each tree and new shoots induced to grow, and these trees are now as fine cherry trees as stand in the country. Too much precaution cannot be taken to keep this pest in check. We would advise fruit growers to watch plum and cherry trees closely, and cut out any limbs showing signs of the knot. It is well too, to go over the trees late in the fall or in early winter and trim out any knots which may have escaped. The foliage will then be off the trees and it will not be so difficult to detect the knots. In picking fruit, care should be taken not to injure the young branches or to scrape the bark from any part of the trees, as this leaves an opening for the spores to gain a foothold. It is not difficult to keep the disease in check where these methods are practiced in conjunction with spraying. The ordinary sprays given just before the buds burst, after the fruit is set, and about two weeks later aid in controlling fungus.

FARM BULLETIN.

Clear the Roadsides of Weeds.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

Much is being said and written just at this time of the year about the control of weeds. The weed question, in most farming districts, old and new, is rather a live proposition for the farmer who wishes to have a clean farm. Weeds seem to be about the easiest of all crops to grow. If wheat or oats are sown, wheat or oats will most probably be the crop harvested. But weed seeds do not require to be sown to produce a big return, they are right on the job from the word "go" and the live farmer needs to use no gentle measures to keep them in subjection. It has been said that weeds have their uses in encouraging cultivation of the soil but most of us would be as well satisfied with less of such encouragement. Each farmer may look after his own weed crop but whose duty is it, to attend to the public weed grounds? I refer to the highways and railway property. On a recent trip along one of our main roads, a much-travelled one, such weeds as oxeye daisy, wild carrot, wild mustard, Canada thistle, burdock, curled dock, besides ragweed, lambs quarters and about a page of other varieties, were observed, not just growing here and there, but in regular miniature forests. We presume some pathmaster was neglecting his duties. But what is true of this section of road is true of many others and these weeds are allowed to seed and the seeds are carried by passing animals and vehicles to farms and other roadsides possibly many miles away.

Every farmer who has a railway line through or past his property does not have to guess many times regarding the reason for the appearance of strange weeds on his farm. Railways are splendid weed distributors. To do the railway companies justice we may say that they do make spasmodic attempts to keep the weeds down. A gang of men, armed with scythes, clear off the right-of-way, maybe twice a year. This treatment seems to hinder the growth to some slight extent.

We saw, a very few years ago, a piece of land, area two or three acres, which by its position we should judge to be part of, the yard allowance of a railway, on the outskirts of a city, which had the best crop of its kind we ever hope to see. Nothing but burdocks, some as high as six or eight feet, loaded with burs, almost ripe, enough to generously seed a township.

It is supposed that each township has its own weed laws but the aforesaid laws appear to be honored more by the breach than by the observance in a great many cases. A law that has not the support of public opinion has little force but farmers generally and each farmer individually should be as much interested in clean roadsides, and vacant lots, as in clean farms. A road free from weeds and other unsightly rubbish is an asset to the community. It has a value outside of appearances.

Elgin County, Ont.

ELGINITE.

One thing is sure, farming is being done with greater ease now than it once was, and we believe it is being better done as well. Modern machinery has worked wonders.

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