

POULTRY YARD

Starting a Poultry Business

By J. H. Collander

Knowledge is necessary before launching out in the poultry business on a large scale. Start with a few hens, study them and work up gradually. That is the surest method for success. But it is a long way from the beginning, to the point where the profits beg to accumulate on the right side of the accounts.

The first essential is to have a place to raise the poultry. Then a suitable building should be erected for the housing of the flock. Then the floor should be of earth, or better still filled in to the depth of six inches with coarse gravel. The building should face the south and have all the light it is possible to get into the pen on the south side, making the lower half of the windows of glass, and the upper half of simple factory cotton. The advantage of the cotton is in the fact that it is not only warm enough, even for the high combed varieties, but it is much drier than the house that is completely closed with glass. With such a house, fitted to suit the ideas of the poultryman and kept clean and sweet, the comfort of the flock is assured. More depends on that than on any other to the beginner who looks for success in handling poultry.

Next comes the stock to be used in the venture. The beginner has probably seen a few good flocks at the neigh-

bors, or admired the birds seen at the fall fair, but has had no means of discovering the good and bad qualities of any one particular breed. He is undecided what variety to secure. He must make up his mind whether he wants to enter to the egg trade, or the broiler and market poultry trade, or wants a combination of all these. If an egg farm is his ideal, then the choice will naturally fall on some Mediterranean breed, the "egg-machines." These give a wide choice, including all colors of the Leghorns, both rose and single comb, the Minorcas, and the English favorites, the Hamburgs. If a visit is paid to a winter poultry show, and a study made of these classes, it will soon be determined which of the breeds enumerated catch the fancy, and another step has been taken. He can then get in touch with a breeder of this class of stock.

If a general purpose fowl is wanted, then the choice will fall on some heavier sort, Plymouth Rocks, Wyandottes, Orpingtons, Asiatics, and French breeds will be examined. When the final choice has been made, and the stock procured, it is not time to sit down and let the hens begin to make you rich. The work is just starting. The advice of the writer is not to start in with a big outlay, but to spend a year getting acquainted with the needs of the flock, and the ways of making a few pay. Let the incubators alone for the first year, and let the hen show you how to hatch and care the young chicks that are the nucleus of the future ranch. This year will give you a chance also to discover whether you are yourself adapted for

a poultryman or not. If not, then you have no big investment to dispose of, perhaps at a sacrifice, and are nothing out except your time.

If you already have a flock of mongrels, or mixed blood, then the best way will be to get eggs and give them to one of your hens to hatch, securing them as early as possible in the season so as to have your next season's breeders well matured by fall and ready to lay enough to pay their board bill when the snow is on the ground.

Testing Eggs

Can you give a good method for testing eggs, so as to remove the infertile ones from the incubator or under the setting hens? How long should they be left before testing?—D. A. Renfrew Co.

Secure an empty box about the size and shape of a canned goods or soap box. Set on end and stand a small lamp inside. Then cut a square hole in the bottom of the box, about opposite where the blaze of the lamp will come. Over this hole tack a piece of soft rubber or leather, such as can be cut from an old boot top, and in this cut a small hole about one inch in diameter. When it is dark, set the lamp in the box so that the light comes directly in front of the hole, and when the egg is held against the hole it can be seen whether the egg is fertile or not.

Six or seven days after the eggs are set is about the right time to test them. The fertile ones will then show a dark spot in the centre, from which the red veins spread in all directions. The infertile egg will show perfectly clear and can be cooked and fed to the young chicks when they hatch.

Which Mating is the Best?

Which mating will give the best results, one consisting of a cock and a hen, or one made up of pullets and a cockerel?—A. C. Wellington Co., Ont.

It is considered that the best results are obtained by mating young old hens to a good vigorous cockerel, and pullets with a good lively cock of one year or more.

Black Spanish Cockerel

Could you inform me through the columns of The Canadian Dairyman and Farming World, where I could get a Black Spanish cockerel, and obligate?—A. C. Galbraith, Ont.

Look over our advertisers' offerings for what you want. We cannot give names of others not in our columns. The above question should show specialty breeders that Dairyman readers are looking for their stock.

Moisture in Incubators

The conclusion reached from a study of the science of birds made by Prof. Graham of the Ontario Agricultural College, and reported in Bulletin No. 151, are that a great deal of moisture is necessary in the incubator, and that the addition of steam to the moisture proved of the greatest value in maintaining the vitality of the chicks, by protecting them from diseases which always demand such heavy toll from incubator chicks where no disinfectant is used. To the essential of proper temperature must be added proper moisture and a proper disinfection, and for the latter purpose Zenoleum must be given first place.

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