

In the Poultry Yard

The Chicken Crop

As soon as you find that Biddy remains on her nest all night, you may depend on it that she means business. If her nest is in a quiet, suitable place remove the egg, or eggs, she is sitting on, and scatter some flour of sulphur in it, and also rub some under the hen's wings, as a precaution against lice. Now select eleven or twelve medium sized, strictly fresh eggs, and carefully place them under the would-be mother. If the other hens have access to the nest the eggs should be all marked as some of them will probably lay there. Now, after Biddy is set simply leave her alone, for she understands her business perfectly. Don't be afraid she will starve to death if she remains on the nest for a couple of days at a time. You need not carry food and water to her when she is on the nest. Just wait; when she is real hungry she will fly to look for food. When you see her off, give her a good dinner, and then quietly go and look to see if her eggs are all right. If you find one broken, take it out and if the other eggs are soiled or wet wash them with warm water. When the time has arrived for the chicks to be hatched don't disturb the hen; if you do you will probably cause her to tramp on the little, tender chicks and kill them. Curb your curiosity to see how many chicks are hatched and just wait. No, they are not hungry. Don't give them a particle of food for at least 24 hours. Their first meal should consist of a hard boiled egg. Afterwards oatmeal, moistened with milk or water and bread crumbs should be given. Keep them in a warm place, and give them plenty of pure water. They will thrive well if properly attended.

Now, farmers' wives, if you want to raise a good crop of chicks, do not procrastinate. On your nest set 10 hens quite early, and had about 75 chicks. There is money in early chicks.

A. R.

Mark only Clean Eggs

No matter how fresh an egg may be if it is not clean it will not attract customers. It pays to go to considerable trouble to have eggs bright and clean before sending them to market. To clean eggs it is not necessary to use much water. Do not put the eggs in water to clean unless it is necessary. If it is necessary then rub dry afterwards. For most stains on eggs a damp cloth will clean them. In any case always rub dry. If this is not done the eggs will have an appearance that is not natural. There is on freshly laid eggs a mucilaginous covering which gives it a velvety appearance peculiar to new eggs. Water removes this, making the eggs have an older appearance and destroying its keeping qualities, as this covering makes the shell impervious to air. Nevertheless eggs should be cleaned in order to get the highest market price. The story is told of two girls in New York State who were on the lookout for some way to make a living. They had seen that most of the eggs marketed were dirty and were sold at a low market price in cash for the eggs; cleaned them, packed them in clean, new cases and shipped them to a popular and fashionable market in New York city, setting a price five cents above the market price for eggs. The eggs were strictly fresh, as they had not only cleaned them, but had tested every one

of them. They sold at the price asked at once, and the commission merchant wrote to them to send more of the same kind and he would give them seven cents above the market price for eggs. They were soon buying all the eggs, not only in that town, but in all adjoining towns; secured larger rooms, and became wealthy by cleaning eggs that other people sent to town dirty. This shows that it pays to have the nests so that the eggs will be kept clean and carefully cleanse and test all eggs before sending them to market.

Good Egg Record

At the Central Experimental Farm a pen of 12 White Leghorn pullets, hatched between May 25th and June 15th, 1904, laid an average of fifteen eggs each during January last. Some of them produced as many as 17 eggs each during the month. These pullets were fed a ration composed of a mixture of grain made up of one part wheat and one part oats; mash, made up of two parts shorts, one quart ground oats and one part finely ground barley; cut bone, beets, and oyster shells.

Producing Eggs in Winter

Desiring to obtain information that would be helpful in enabling farmers to produce more winter eggs, we submitted the following questions to a number of prominent poultrymen:

- (1) Is a modern, up-to-date poultry house necessary for the successful production of winter eggs?
- (2) At what age do hens give the best return in winter eggs?
- (3) What ration have you found to be most profitable for winter egg production?
- (4) What have you found to be the greatest hindrance to successful winter egg production?
- (5) What is the difference in cost between producing eggs in winter and in summer?

(6) Provided he has the proper equipment, is there anything to prevent a farmer producing winter eggs?

John O. Allan, Scotch Line.

(1) No and yes. No, if that means one built to an architect's plan with swinging feed trays, etc., etc. Yes, though as far as the necessity of a dry and comfortable place is concerned a lean-to, to the cattle byre is good, as the heat may be allowed to go from one to the other by having part of the partition of poultry netting.

(2) Pullets that are mature before the cold weather comes on, say by December 1st.

(3) Breakfast and supper of any good sound grain in litter. Dinner of cut bone or meat scraps. This every farmer can handily obtain. When butchering save the blood, mix with hash and give a little (a very little at first) at noon. Save livers, lights, beef heads, etc., and freeze them. Cut up and feed raw. A small bone cutter will cut them when frozen very easily and rapidly. On no account cook the meat, as that makes it more of a fattening food than a laying ration. Clear water, gravel and lime before them at all times is necessary, and if this feeding, with comfortable quarters, does not make good winter layers it would be better to have a few pot pies, and get something else. Clover is a very good food and one that farmers can have. Just scrape up the seeds and clover tops from the bottom of the horses' mangers twice a week and throw them to the hens.



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(4) Uncomfortable buildings, overcrowding and too heavy a grain ration. Also immature pullets and late moulting hens.

(5) I would not like to estimate, but it is certainly not so great as the difference in the selling value of the eggs.

(6) Certainly not. The average farmer carries enough stock to keep him at home the greater part of the day in winter, and he has every chance to give the poultry care also. It is not hard work, but it takes constant attention.

W. M. Lockwood, Melbourne, Ont.

(1) The main object is to construct a house that will exclude all moisture and wind, and yet give the poultry plenty of good fresh air. If the house is too closely built the moisture will condense on the walls and ceilings on frosty mornings. This will be of greater damage to fowl than cold, clear frost. I have seen birds have their combs frosted in buildings that gathered moisture, as I have stated, while in open sheds or rudely constructed out-buildings they would not show the least sign of frost.

(2) Hens give the best returns at from six to eighteen months old.

(3) I usually feed in the morning a mixture of chopped oats, barley and wheat dampened a little, a handful of beef meal to twenty hens added, will have good results. At noon some rough grain, a little meat (for this I use beef heads cut up and boiled until the meat can be removed from the bone, slice up and feed to the hens. A little clover chaff scattered on the floor or in the scratching pen is excellent for green food. At night I feed corn or wheat. It is necessary to keep plenty of grit and fresh water before them all the time.

(4) Improper feeding, poor and filthy housing, and extreme cold.

(5) I believe from experience that the cost of producing eggs in winter is about 25 per cent greater than in summer.

(6) There is nothing to prevent a farmer from producing eggs in winter if he has proper equipment, with good judgment and experience; the two latter are the most essential.