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Graded Fruits or Vegetables Attract While Mixed Grades Repel—The Satisfied Consumer Will Come Again—Quality Pays.

(Contributed by Ontario Department of Agriculture, Toronto.)

Will the consumer pay for quality? Yes, and liberally if he understands what standardization means. Criticism is frequently directed at the farmer, producer for the lack of attention given to grading and packing of the product of his farm. Fruits in different stages of ripeness, different sizes, shapes and colors are frequently seen in the same package. Chickens of various breeds, sizes, types and degrees of plumpness are jumbled together in the same crate and form a marked contrast when placed beside a crate containing birds of the same sex, size, plumpness and color. To the well ordered mind uniformity always appeals, while mixtures and jumbles repel as so much junk. If a child goes into a candy store it will soon learn the mixture sold at a lower figure than standard confections. And so it goes through life—a mental attitude developed by the great majority of consumers to regard those products that are not standardized as being less attractive and having a lower value. The percentage of particular consumers has increased much faster than the percentage of agricultural producers who standardize their products. In the old days the wormy apple, the misshapen potato and the old hen may not have lost their attractiveness, but times have changed, more people have more money to spend on foods than ever before. With the increase of the younger generation towards the foods that they eat has changed very considerably. If we refer to the good old days when the standard breakfast food and citrus fruits were only seen at Christmas time, we will realize what present day attitude toward quality in food-stuffs means when compared with the past. With this advance in tastes for foods which may be largely flavor and of little value when considered from the standpoint of nourishment, the demands for foods that appeal to the eye and to the sense of taste have increased very greatly during the past five years.

People Will Pay for Quality.
Standardization of food products will put the rosy cheeked, clean, uniform, sound apples in one basket and it will put the wormy, scabby, misshapen product in another. People are willing to pay for quality providing they have a guarantee that they will be handed a quality product in exchange for their money. How many householders have had the all too frequent experience of putting one-third of their purchase in the garbage can? Inferior materials should be directed into channels where they would be used to the best advantage instead of being a millstone or dead weight in occupying space, increasing carrying costs in transportation and reducing the attractiveness of the superior portion of the commodity.

In seasons of food shortage mixed and lower grades of food products will usually sell and show a margin of profit, but when food products are abundant the more attractive grades sell more readily and create a want for more high-class produce, which demand frequently must be filled from the lower grade. This substitution of a low grade for a high or standard product kills the incentive to buy. Stung once, the particular purchaser consumer will hesitate to buy. They look, but do not buy.

Grading Best for Perishable Foods.
The amount of perishable food in the fruit, vegetable and poultry product classes that is now consumed, while very large, is not as great as it would be under standardization. Experiences with mixed grades, poor quality and poor packing leave an impression on the mind of the average purchaser that will take some time to erase. When the perishable food product of Ontario is standardized and marketed in a way that will command the confidence of the consuming public an increased demand is bound to follow.

The Satisfied Consumer is an Asset.
If all the food produce offered for sale could be standardized and marketed in such a way as to develop the market for future crops much benefit would result. Satisfied consumers of this year's product will look to the same source again next year. Consumers know or should know what they want, and if given a standardized packet of food product in exchange for their money will, if suited, go on patronizing standard products. Salesmanship has been too frequently used to sell a consumer something that he did not want, material sold with the one idea of getting rid of it and no thought of the future.

If the farm end of the food products industry is to develop to the fullest it merits, all produce grown for sale will have to be marketed

through co-operative marketing organizations. Standard, honestly prepared, packed and delivered produce is the only course to pursue in developing a worthwhile market for farm produce in our Canadian cities or abroad. Any food producing community that is without a co-operative marketing organization should consider the establishment of such. Those districts that have such should consider expansion by amalgamating with similar organizations. Standardized products, common honesty, any industry will make for success in producing and disposing of farm products.—L. Stevenson, Secretary, Department of Agriculture, Toronto.

WINTERING OF PULLETS

If Possible Separate From All Hens and Cockerels.

Prepare Quarters Early and Transfer by November—Good Light and Ventilation Necessary—Winter Care of Pregnant Mares.

(Contributed by Ontario Department of Agriculture, Toronto.)

Many times the failure of securing a satisfactory winter egg yield is due to neglect of the pullets early in the fall. The ordinary pullets begin laying at from six to seven months of age, and many farmers get a few pullet eggs in October and November, followed by little or no production in December or early January. This frequently is due to a change in roosting quarters or being overcrowded and underfed in the poultry house.

Place in Winter Quarters Early.

To get the best results the pullets should be placed in winter quarters by November 1st. Before that time the henhouse should be thoroughly cleaned, the walls, ceiling, etc., brushed down, and all old cobwebs, etc., removed. Then give the house a good whitewashing, and if the floor is earth or sand at least four inches of it should be renewed.

Separate Pullet from Young Hens.

If at all possible, separate the pullets from the old hens and cockerels. In order to lay well, they should be fed all they will eat, particularly of ground grains and green foods, and should not be overcrowded. About twenty-five to thirty-five pullets is plenty for a pen twelve feet square; in fact in many cases twenty-five pullets in the pen will lay almost as many eggs as the thirty-five. Should you be fortunate in having too many pullets, or where you can make a selection, get the earliest and best matured ones into the pen first. If you have to crowd or sell some, get rid of the small, weak ones and those that are slow to develop.

Have the Pen Well Lighted and Ventilated.

The pen should be light and well ventilated. Have all the ventilators or openings on one side of the house and close together. Do not have an opening in one end of the house and another in the other end. These cause drafts which are very apt to produce colds and sickness. It usually takes a pullet at least three weeks to get over a cold, and she seldom lays while she has a cold. Keep the house dry, and use plenty of dry straw in which the birds can scratch for the feed.

Give Laying Hens Plenty of Food.

Remember a laying hen needs plenty of food, grit, and shell material. Also there should be a variety to the food; that is green food such as clover leaves, cabbage, or sprouted oats, or if none of these can be had some roots. She also needs some form of meat food—sour milk is the best, but beef scrap, or other meat offal, if untainted, will answer. Usually about one-third of the grain should be ground or even up to one-half. The whole grain makes exercise in hunting for it in the straw. Always remember the pen should be clean, dry, and sweet.—R. W. Graham, O. A. College, Guelph.

Winter Care of Pregnant Mares.

The pregnant mare should be well fed and given regular exercise or light work. All food and water given should be of first-class quality. She should be given more grain than the non-pregnant mare, as she has the foetus to support. All possible care should be observed to avoid digestive derangements; hence, everything consumed should be of good quality, easily digested, fed in proportion to the amount of work performed and at regular intervals. In addition to hay and oats she should be given a few raw roots daily, and a feed of bran with a cupful of linseed meal at least twice weekly.

Work that requires excessive muscular or respiratory effort should be avoided, so also should plunging through deep snow, slipping, etc. All nervous excitement should be avoided; so also should sights which frighten her; also offensive odors; and operations.

The use of drugs should not be tolerated, except upon the advice of a veterinarian. If necessary to give

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a purgative, it is much safer to give raw linseed oil than aloes. Towards the end of pregnancy, still greater care should be observed; and, while daily exercise up to the very last is advisable, it should be given more carefully and less of it when she becomes somewhat clumsy on account of size and weight.

While it is better to allow her a box stall when in the stable at all times, it is practically necessary after about the tenth month of gestation; as the period of gestation is irregular and the foal may be born, without any well-marked premonitory symptoms, any time after ten months.

After the foal is born the mare should be given at least two weeks' idleness, and if she can be allowed to run idle until weaning time, it will be all the better for both herself and the foal.—J. H. Reed, V.S., O. A. College, Guelph.

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