

The fattening-crate is made of laths nailed upon a stout framework, with a few light boards for the ends and partitions. The crate should be 6 feet long, 18 inches wide and 18 inches high. The laths on the top, back and bottom run lengthwise of the crate and are placed 2 inches apart; care should be taken to have the front and back slats on the bottom at least one inch from the front and back sides of the crate, so that droppings may pass through and not accumulate. The laths on the front of the crate run up and down and are placed 2 inches apart, so that the fowls may eat from the trough.

A V-shaped trough, 3 inches deep and 5 inches wide at the top, is placed on brackets which are placed 4 inches from the bottom of the crate.

The crate should stand on legs about 3 feet high.

The fattening-crate should be placed in a cool, comfortable place, and where the birds will not be disturbed. The birds should be dusted with powder to rid them of lice and mites, otherwise they will not fatten profitably.

Best results are obtained by feeding all fattening birds on soft mash. The gain in weight is greater and the quality of the flesh is superior when wet mash is used than when the chickens are fed whole grain. The ground grains used to make up the mash are usually oatmeal-feed, finely ground buckwheat, cornmeal, low-grade flour and middlings.

With a ration composed of two parts oatmeal-feed, two parts buckwheat, one part middlings and five-eighths parts beef scraps, all parts by weight, one pound of gain in weight may be obtained with four pounds of grain.

These ground grains should be mixed thoroughly, and the mixture moistened with sour skim milk. Milk is an excellent food for fattening chickens. It tends to develop the tissues and improves the quality of the meat. The proportion of milk to the mash mixture is about two pounds of milk to one pound of mash by weight. Best results are secured when the food is mixed twelve hours previous to feeding. Give the birds grit once a week.

Great care should be taken not to feed the birds too much during the first week of the fattening period; feed very lightly three times per day. For the second week feed more heavily, and for the third week feed all they can possibly eat.

Under average conditions a chicken will gain about one pound in weight after three weeks of careful feeding.

When the birds are ready to be killed, they should be starved about twenty-four hours. This will clean out the crops and intestines of all food and the birds will keep longer and will be of better quality. When they