

PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
(LIVE STOCK BRANCH).

4/2L  
POULTRY CULLING.

DEMONSTRATIONS AND APPLIANCES.

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THE Poultry Division of the Department of Agriculture has carried out demonstrations on culling-work amongst poultry-flocks throughout the Province of British Columbia for some time past. It is felt that the greatest amount of benefit has not been derived from these demonstrations, however, because the same have not been sufficiently advertised in very many districts. This circular is therefore being presented for the purpose of getting this information before those persons interested in poultry production in British Columbia, so that they may avail themselves of assistance if they so desire.

We know from experience that there are many farmers keeping poultry which do not begin to pay for themselves. This is true also of many of our commercial poultry-farms.

The following figures will tend to show the necessity of culling flocks in many sections of the Lower Mainland.

A Chilliwack flock of 1,000 hens laid:—

|                |           |
|----------------|-----------|
| July 6th ..... | 496 eggs. |
| "   7th .....  | 509 "     |
| "   8th .....  | 459 "     |
| "   9th .....  | 490 "     |
| "  10th .....  | 480 "     |

This flock was culled on July 10th, taking out 190\*culs, whilst 900 hens laid:—

|                 |           |
|-----------------|-----------|
| July 11th ..... | 524 eggs. |
| "  12th .....   | 400 "     |
| "  13th .....   | 470 "     |
| "  14th .....   | 474 "     |
| "  15th .....   | 478 "     |

An Eburne flock of 300 birds laid:—

|                 |           |
|-----------------|-----------|
| July 30th ..... | 109 eggs. |
| "  31st .....   | 124 "     |
| Aug. 1st .....  | 129 "     |
| "  2nd .....    | 122 "     |

These birds were culled the evening of August 2nd, taking away 40 culs, whilst 260 birds laid:—

|                |           |
|----------------|-----------|
| Aug. 3rd ..... | 127 eggs. |
| "   4th .....  | 117 "     |
| "   5th .....  | 127 "     |
| "   6th .....  | 147 "     |

A Burnaby flock had 178 birds culled from 958 layers. These 178 were housed separately, and laid:—

|                 |          |
|-----------------|----------|
| July 11th ..... | 18 eggs. |
| "  12th .....   | 16 "     |
| "  13th .....   | 12 "     |
| "  14th .....   | 6 "      |

The Department of Agriculture is anxious to assist in placing the farmers' poultry-flock on a better paying basis as well as the commercial poultry-flock.

Undoubtedly there are two factors which should be taken into consideration at the present time by all persons interested in better poultry production. These factors are: First, the culling of stock for egg production during the spring months, so that as few "boarders" as possible will be kept on the poultry plant during the summer; and, secondly, all interested breeders should begin in the spring or early summer to select the stock which they intend keeping over for breeding purposes during the following year.

The Department will undertake to carry on this work whenever possible amongst breeders that are interested in increasing the production of their flocks or of building up a better strain of strong prolific birds that will under ordinary conditions give more profitable egg production.

It is preferable to have a culling demonstration on a farm or poultry-ranch centrally located, so that other persons interested beside the owner may be able to attend and thus obviate the necessity of an official visiting all separately.

It is desired that as many farmers as possible in any one immediate locality shall co-operate together in this work and fill in the card as follows:—

"We, the undersigned persons residing at \_\_\_\_\_, are anxious to have a culling demonstration in this district for the improvement of our flocks. We have a total of \_\_\_\_\_ birds."

The points generally to be observed in culling, other than early moulting, are the changes of the moist purple vent to the yellow dry one; the yellow pigmentation staying in the leg of yellow-legged birds and not fading to white, as should be the case of the heavy layer; the shrivelling and white, scaly, bloodless-appearing comb in conjunction with the hardening and tightening of the abdomen by the closing of the pelvic bones and drawing-up of the keel-bone, and various other points of less importance.

When culling for breeding-work Bulletin No. 74 of this Department is followed.

It is desired by officials of this Division that the culled birds be kept for a period of at least five days in a separate compartment so that their egg production can be recorded.

It is also desired that the cards which are enclosed with this circular be filled in by owners of each flock culled so that the Department will have some figures to show as the results of the work.

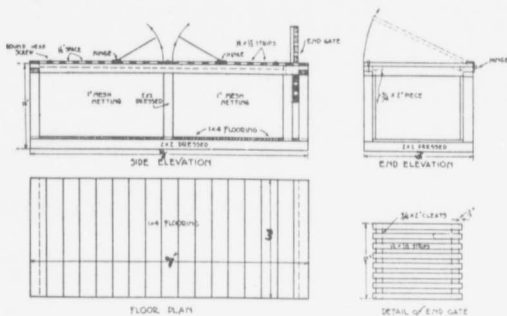
It is advisable where breeding stock is to be selected to have a good set of leg-bands on hand for banding such birds.

#### CULLING APPLIANCES.

There are several different methods of culling flocks, but probably the most approved is that of having a proper crate made that can be placed against the exit-hole in the poultry-house. This crate should be made of wire (1-inch mesh), with the exception of a board floor and two board (or slatted) doors (to lift up) on the top as per the attached plan. This crate should be 7 feet long, 18 inches high, and 3 feet wide.



Catching-coop.

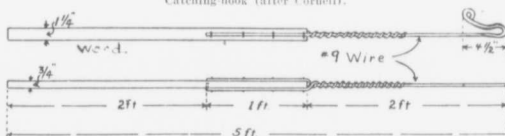


Working plans for catching-coop.

A crate of this kind will always be found useful wherever poultry are kept. If it can be constructed of cedar it will be much easier to handle. A good coating of paint will also greatly enhance its value.

The catching-hook is also a valuable adjunct on the poultry-farm. The following plan is given by Cornell and California, and can well be copied by ourselves:—

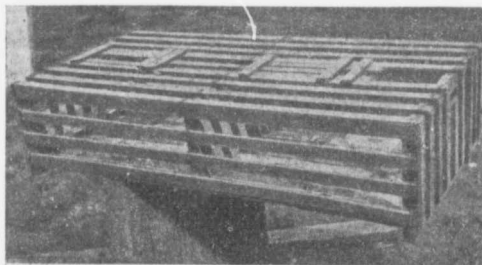
Catching-hook (after Cornell).



Working plans of catching-hook.

An old broom, hoe, or rake-handle will usually make a good handle for the catching-hook. Two common wire hurdles or gates will also be found handy for culling-work to assist the operators in driving the fowls through the exit-hole without causing extra commotion. The more handy size should be 6 feet long and 2 feet high, of common 1-inch mesh tacked on a firm frame.

Ordinary market crates after the following picture are always useful when one is culling fowls or moving them from pen to pen.



A suitable crate for shipping fowls alive.



This crate is 8 feet long, 3 feet 6 inches wide, and 16 inches high. The floor is 1- x 4-inch material; corner pieces of 2- x 2-inch, while the slats are of 2-inch cedar strips. The crate is divided in the centre by a solid board partition.

Plenty of disinfectant should also be available on each farm or poultry-ranch where the culling is done.

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