

Poultry Notes.

GAPE IN CHICKENS.

Every spring for the past dozen years I am besieged with inquiries from poultry raisers asking what to do to prevent or cure gapes in chickens. To forestall some of these inquiries, admitting it is a little early in the season, I am going to give here an exhaustive talk on the subject.

The disease known as gapes has been prevalent almost ever since our domestic fowls became domesticated. If our forefathers had had the advantage the present-day poultry raisers have, the disease in all probability would have been long since stamped out. If all other poultry diseases were as easy to stamp out as this one, the lot of the average poultry raiser would be a happy one.

It is a parasitic disease caused by the presence of worms in the windpipe of young chicks. On hasty examination the worm appears to be a small, reddish, forked worm resembling the letter Y, and is attached to the lining of the windpipe by the heads of both branches of the fork. The fork is made up of two worms, the male and the female. The long branch or trunk is the female, while the lesser branch is the male. The worms attach themselves by their mouths and suck the blood of the chick.

In some sections of the country gapes prove very troublesome, and many chicks die. Death may result from debility and loss of blood and from suffocation. The disease is most dangerous to chicks from two to four weeks old. It sometimes affects larger chicks and even grown fowls, but the presence of a few worms in the windpipe of a large, strong healthy chick or adult bird seldom causes serious trouble to the bird, but it may prove a bad thing to the poultry-raiser as a source of infection to the other birds.

The female worm does not lay her eggs, but when the eggs are developed, several thousand of them, they escape by a rupture of the body of the female. These eggs may hatch and develop into perfect worms without leaving the windpipe of the affected bird, but as a rule, the adult worms and their eggs are coughed up and become a source of infection of other birds by contaminating the food and water. Frequently such infection takes place through the drinking water. Well chicks may eat the worms coughed up by the sick ones, or may get the eggs in food or drink and become infested with gapes. Many wild birds are liable to gapes, and their excrement dropped in the chicken yard may prove a source of infection.

Garden slugs and common earth worms are given the credit of harboring the eggs and embryos of the gape worm. One small forked worm, if allowed to go unmolested, is sufficient to infect a large flock of chicks and ruin the ground for chicken raising for a long time, unless the ground is thoroughly disinfected.

You are all familiar with the symptoms of gapes, frequent gasping, sneezing, whistling cough with discharge of mucous and worms, dumpyishness, weakness and drooping wings. When badly affected, the bird shakes its head frequently, gapes and coughs as if suffocating, droops and is not able to keep up with the rest of the flock, stand in dumpyish position with eyes closed, wings drooped, mouth open and tongue protruding.

The treatment for gapes is very simple, and if taken in time, sure.

Firstly, isolate sick chicks, or, better still, remove all the well birds to new or not recently occupied pen. Secondly, disinfect drinking vessels, coops, feeding troughs, etc. Thirdly,

give the ground where the chicks range and are fed a heavy coating of air-slacked lime, and, if possible, spade or plow under. Lime not being available, make a strong solution of salt and water, and with a watering can give the ground a good sprinkling. Fourthly, give one teaspoonful of turpentine and one of asafetida in a bran mash to twenty-five chicks. A pill of camphor the size of a wheat grain pushed down the throat has often given good results. Another good remedy is to soak over-night a small handful of wheat and feed this to the chicks the next morning. Turpentine and asafetida mixed in the mash food soon load the fowls' breath with their fumes, and thus kill all the worms in the throat as well as those higher up. Another means of getting the worms out of the chick's windpipe, and one that has proven successful in a number of cases, is to confine a number of chicks in a shallow box and sift powdered air-slacked lime over them; the lime dust will cause them to cough, and up come the worms.

In all sections where gapes are known to be prevalent, chicks should never be fed on the ground, but always on boards, shallow pans, or in troughs, and these should be scalded every few days. You never find gape worms infesting sandy soils, but damp, tight, clay soils seems to be their breeding ground, so those of you who have this latter character of soil, to make assurance doubly sure, had better give the ground a top dressing of lime or common salt, and to ward off the trouble, feed the chicks a little wheat that has been soaked in turpentine twenty-four hours.

Quizzes.

Question: "Are oats good for feeding laying hens?"

Answer: Yes, oats are one of the best of feeds. They can be fed whole in dry state or soaked in water until the hulls are softened. They can be sprouted also, in which condition they make excellent feed. Ground and mixed with other feeds is another good way to feed them.

Question: "What can I give as an appetizer when the fowls do not seem to relish their food as they should?"

Answer: It depends upon the condition of your fowls and what you are feeding them. If the ration is a wholesome one and reasonably well balanced so that the fowls do not have a craving for some element in which the ration is deficient, which is often the case, and they are fed a sufficient variety, there is nothing better than to miss one feed, let the fowls get hungry, when they will usually relish the next meal. If the fowls are badly out of condition you must find out what the trouble is and some medical treatment might then be employed to aid in correcting the trouble. I cannot recommend anything, however, without knowing the exact condition of the fowls.

Question: "Is it safe to buy day-old chicks and have them shipped by express?"

Answer: Yes, this business has grown to be very extensive, the little chicks arriving safely at their destination and apparently uninjured by their journey. But don't, I beg you, buy from any Tom, Dick, or Harry. Buy from a breeder of known reputation, paying from 40 to 50 cents per chick, and get good ones; you don't want to raise a lot of culls. I have noticed newly-hatched chicks, described as from first-class stock, advertised at prices that would barely pay the cost of production, let alone

a profit and claiming shipments of hundreds per week. If the eggs set to produce them were figured at market price, oil, labor, interest on cost of incubator, advertising, stationery, postage, and shipping package included, there could have been no profit no matter how many he sold each week. Buy good ones or none.

Question: "I am thinking of taking up the breeding of Leghorns, but would like to ask you if they can be raised with profit as friers?"

Answer: The Leghorns are generally considered in the light of egg producers, but of late years in some sections, west mostly, where they are taking the place of quail on toast, the Leghorns are given the preference for the purpose you name. The market demand of your section must be the governing factor on making a selection for this purpose.

Question: "What causes a hen to bag down behind, and what is the cure?"

Answer: Sometimes hens become so fat that the posterior portion of the body almost drags the ground, which condition is commonly termed "bagging down behind." The flesh becomes diseased and is red and inflamed. In chronic cases the roots of the feathers are affected and the plumage drops off, leaving the bird in a most unsightly condition. When the trouble has not reached the incurable stage the remedy is to feed sparingly, giving mostly green food and compelling the bird to scratch for all the grain given it. In addition to this, apply vaseline daily to the exposed portion of the body.

Question: "How can beets, turnips, and other like vegetables be fed raw to yarded fowls with the least waste and to best advantages?"

Answer: Take a piece of board, preferably one inch thick, six inches wide, and of any convenient length, three feet being a good size. Drive wire spikes into it six inches long and have them about six inches apart. Place the vegetables upon these spikes, forcing them down till they rest on the board. Set the board on a convenient place and allow the fowls to eat at will. To prevent the spikes from falling out, another board the same size may be nailed over the first one, covering the head of the spikes.

Question: "What is the cause of my Single-Combed Rhode Island Red cock's comb turning ashy gray? He seems in perfect health otherwise, and his wattles are red. I feed nothing but clean grain and mash. He has plenty of grit and greens, also range. The house is 12 x 18, with only ten birds roosting in it, so he is not crowded. I have tried several home remedies, but it seems to turn the comb darker. It has not been cold enough here so far this winter to freeze his comb even if he had roosted outside. The comb stands erect.

"(2) One of my hens has a dark sore or scab on her leg which appears as if a drop of blood had dried on it. What is the remedy?"

Answer: Your cock bird appears to be suffering from indigestion, but perhaps only a slight attack, and he may recover in a short time. The color of the comb is only a symptom, and treating it would do no good. Give the bird a few doses of some mild cathartic, feed sparingly for a few days and he will be well in a few days.

(2) Anoint the legs of the hen with carbolated vaseline or some good household salve, and it might be well to give her a small dose or two of purgative medicine.

From my long connection with the poultry industry, I have become known as an authority on all poultry subjects.

WAKE COUNTY UNION MEETING.

The Wake County Union meeting will be held in the Masonic Temple building on second floor in library room on February 7, 1913, at 11:30 o'clock sharp. All Locals are requested to send a full delegation.

W. L. BAGWELL,
Secretary-Treasurer.

Raleigh, N. C., Route 2, January 28, 1913.

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Governor Wilson Will Be Inaugurated President March 4, 1913.

Account of the above historic event which, as we all know, will be the grandest occasion our Southland has enjoyed in 20 years, the Seaboard Air Line Railway is making preparations to take care of the great multitude of people who will attend same. Special trains, special Pullman sleeping cars, special coaches will be required in large numbers. If you expect to attend this great event, you should get busy Clubs, societies, schools, and other organized bodies of all kinds expecting to attend should get in line at once. Write the undersigned, who will give you important information and take care of you or your party in best manner possible. H. S. LEARD,
Div. Pass. Agent, Raleigh, N. C.