

# The Poultry Yard

## Push Egg Production When Prices Are High

**MY EXPERIENCE** in the chicken business may be worth something to those persons who are able to sell eggs only when eggs are bringing the lowest price. The first year I kept only a dozen hens, which I permitted to loaf through the fall and winter, in the meantime reading about everything I could find on the subject of chickens.

The next season I devoted much spare time to the birds, raised about 100 and saved the best pullets in the flock. All these were hatched in early March and were ready to lay in November. The floor of the chicken house, which was used for a scratch pen, was kept covered with clean straw, and small grain was thrown into it twice daily. Dry mash, fresh water and oyster shells, with occasional bone meal, were accessible at all times. Those pullets worked from morning till night. They were turned on rye when the weather permitted. From a flock of 35 birds, some of which did not begin laying as early as others, I got from 14 to 20 eggs a day during the latter part of November, all of December and January, and when the price of eggs dropped from 65 to 40 cents in the course of the spring I sold off my choicest hens and ate most of the others. Those hens paid good dividends.

From my experience, I am convinced that there is as much money in raising chickens, especially on the farm, as there is in any other livestock. The principal consideration is to have a dry, warm house for the chickens to sleep in, a good place where they may scratch all day and to prevent them from catching cold and dying of disease.

In a more limited way I am in the chicken business this winter and for a month allowed the hens to do about as they pleased. The result was no eggs. Early in January I began paying attention to the birds and they have started to pay me for my trouble and expense.

S. H. FARABEE.

## Early Hatching Pays Best

**CHICKS** hatched between the middle of February and the end of March have the greatest natural opportunity to develop into heavy layers, good breeding birds, or winners at the poultry shows held in connection with the state and county fairs, says Prof. F. C. Hare, South Carolina Poultry Husbandman. The well developed cockerel is always salable in the fall, while the well developed pullet will commence laying before the cold weather sets in and will continue to lay all through the winter.

There are two efficient incubators illustrated and described in the bulletin "Poultry Culture for South Carolina" which has recently been issued and can be obtained from the Extension Service of Clemson College. One style is heated by hot water and the other by hot air. Both are successful hatchers and they have been fully tested by the Poultry Division of Clemson College. The hot air machine lasts indefinitely and it has an improvement in allowing the chicks to escape under the eggs and give room to those just breaking the shell.

It is exceedingly simple to hatch chicks successfully in an incubator, but it is more difficult to raise them successfully in a brooder. An excellent style of hot-air brooder to hold 50 chicks is shown in the bulletin. The large oil burning hover

has not yet passed the experimental stage. In some cases the burner has overflowed and set fire to the building. However, to those who desire to brood several hundred chicks in one flock the mammoth hover heated by a coal stove is recommended. This is absolutely safe and there is no danger of the chickens being chilled even in extremely cold weather.

## A Good Poultry House

**A READER** is interested in poultry-raising and wants information concerning building a chicken house, location, ventilation, etc.

Not knowing the number of fowls he wishes to keep, I can answer only in a general way.

A poultry house, to be sanitary, should stand on elevated ground so that there can be good drainage from the house in every direction. If it must be on a slope, ditches should be dug on the high sides to keep rain water from floor of house.

The house should face south or southeast, so that the interior can get sun most of the day.

A house 12 to 14 feet deep and 16 feet wide should comfortably house 15 to 20 fowls. By making it 24 feet wide and dividing into two compartments—each 12 by 14 or 16 feet—one-half can be used as scratching shed, the other half for roosts, nests, etc.

The rear wall can be 4½ feet high, front 8 feet. Rear and side walls should be made tight, either with good battens over joints, or with tarred building paper lining inside. Roof of sound boards, covered with good roofing paper. Front can have one width of board at top 8 to 10 inches, and at bottom 2 to 3 feet from floor boarded. Above this the space should be covered with strong ½-inch mesh wire, making full open front.

Roosts should rest on cross-pieces supported on posts, not coming nearer the walls than 8 or 10 inches, to keep mites away. Roosts made of 2x3 or 2x4, rounded at top, should drop into sockets cut for this in cross pieces, and tar or crude kerosene well painted on post and bottom of cross bar.

Nests should be movable to allow taking out for cleaning.

There should be a low platform on which to place water fount and hoppers for mash, etc., so arranged that

fowls either in roosting compartment or scratching shed can reach it. Six inches above the floor will answer.

A muslin curtain may be hung inside just large enough to cut off rains from beating through the open front during heavy storms.

Doors should be in the end, not front, of building. You can get very full, detailed information on all sizes of poultry buildings by writing your Member of Congress or to Secretary of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., asking for Farmers' Bulletin No. 574. It is on poultry house construction.

F. J. R.

**REPORTS** from county agents regarding the value of terracing show that broad terraces are saving many thousands of acres of land and reclaiming many more thousands of acres. Conservative estimates of the value of terracing in many counties put the saving at \$25,000 in actual cash. Terracing is being done in many counties and should be done in every county in the Cotton Belt. Land is becoming very valuable and we should prevent washing by constructing broad terraces with a slight fall to carry the surplus water out of the field.

Plan now to save the big Reference number of The Progressive Farmer to be issued February 21.



## Working For You

Day and night, feed manufacturers are grinding out chick feed for spring chicks.

Without it, early chicks would perish and eggs would be like hothouse grapes—for the rich only.

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