

Demonstration flock of purebred White Leghorns in Kershaw County, S. C.

SOUTHLAND OFFERS MANY POULTRY POSSIBILITIES

By A. B. BRYAN

Editor's Note: The possibilities in an intelligent development of the poultry industry throughout the South is pictured in this thoughtful analysis of the situation in South Carolina.

ALTHOUGH 85 per cent of the farms of South Carolina produce some poultry, poultry production has not kept pace with the increase in population and egg production does not meet food requirements of the people of South Carolina.

"Poultry production could be materially increased within the state without creating a surplus," says Professor C. L. Morgan, head of the poultry department, Clemson College, "thus producing a larger farm income and meeting the real requirements of the people for necessary food products."

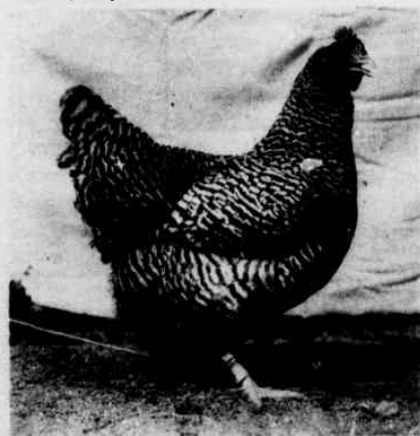
Professor Morgan states that the number of chickens on farms in the state is only about 3,057,137 birds, or eight-tenths of 1 per cent of the total for the United States, while the state's population is about 1½ per cent per cent of the country's population. The average number of chickens per farm is slightly less than 20 birds, or only one-third of the average per farm in the United States.

Egg Production Inadequate

From 1900 to 1930, the increases in number of chickens and number of people for the United States were approximately equal. For the same period, the number of people in South Carolina has increased twice as rapidly as the number of chickens. The number of chickens on farms since 1930 has shown little change except in 1934, when there appears to have been a decrease.

A study of egg production in South Carolina, on the basis of population, shows the state far below the average for the remainder of the country. For the entire country, the average egg production per person in 1929 was 262 eggs. In South Carolina, only 109 eggs per person were produced, or less than 42 per cent of the average for the country. South Carolina is considerably short on

This 200-egg Barred Plymouth Rock is rightly considered an ideal type of heavy layer.



A flock of high-laying White Wyandottes, which averaged 152 eggs. One bird, in the center, laid 242.

producing the amount of eggs her population might be expected to consume. Two or less eggs per week per person can hardly be accepted as a standard for proper nourishment and health.

More than 2,000,000 dozen eggs were brought into South Carolina by freight and express in 1929, according to figures on yearly imports and exports. It is believed an equal or greater number of eggs is brought in by trucks. Egg exports are insignificant.

Farm Flocks Inefficient

The average farm flock in South Carolina is not only small but inefficient in production. The average number of chickens per farm in South Carolina is only 19 birds compared with an average of 60 birds per farm in the United States. The average number of eggs yearly per chicken is 63 in South Carolina against 85 in the United States. The average number of eggs produced yearly per person in South Carolina is 109 against an average of 262 per person in the nation.

The cause of this inefficiency in egg production may be due to several factors among which are quality of stock for egg production, hatching date of pullets and their development to laying age, lack of sufficient quantity and proper balance of feeds supplied, lack of culling of non-laying and old hens, inadequate housing, and lack of parasite and disease control.

More and better hens, with more intelligent feeding and flock management are Professor Morgan's remedies for the undesirable conditions.

Egg Prices High

"That the quality of stock for egg production in many flocks of the state is equal to that found anywhere in the country has been proved by trap nest records and at national egg-laying contests," he says. "The average egg production per hen in state demonstration flocks shows approximately 2½ times as many eggs produced by hens of the average farm flock."

"The difference in feeding methods and management in demonstration flocks may account for the increased return. Average labor income per hen from demonstration flocks for seven years shows that by following proper practices a satisfactory return may be expected."

"The market prices for eggs in South Carolina are among the highest in the country."

"Much of the basic feed supply for poultry may be produced on farms of the state, and climatic conditions are favorable for poultry production, especially during the Fall and Winter when egg prices are highest."

More Hens the Answer

Professor Morgan's conclusion is that the state needs more egg factories in the form of hens.

To produce the eggs shipped into the state by freight and express would require an addition of more than 175,000 laying hens of similar egg production quality as the average of demonstration flock hens. To produce the additional number of eggs brought into the state by truck would double this number of hens. Reduced to a county basis this would mean approximately 75 additional 100-bird flocks per county.

Professor Morgan thinks that in a state so largely agricultural as South Carolina it seems logical that sufficient eggs and poultry products should be produced to meet the needs of the population.

True In Other States

"An adjustment in poultry production in this direction with high-quality stock and proper feeding and management methods is not only highly desirable from a food standpoint, but should prove economically profitable to those engaged in the business."

The general facts and conditions presented here must be true also of North Carolina and other Southern states, so that in those states there knocks the same opportunity for profitable poultry production.

An excellent example of profitable poultry is found in the experience of John E. Jackson, York County.

Twenty-five years in the poultry business, Mr. Jackson has increased his poultry enterprise from a start with "six red hens and a rooster" to where his annual production is from 2,000 to 3,000 Rhode Island Reds and White Wyandottes, his main source of cash from the 70-acre farms. The 1935 output was 2,200. Sales of eggs and chickens for eight years have been chiefly to a special trade in Gastonia, N. C.

That poultry raising as a chief money crop has not been a failure for Mr. Jackson is clear from the fact that he continues to stake his main chances on hens. For over two decades there al-

ways have been some profit.

Careful breeding and good sanitation are at the bottom of Mr. Jackson's poultry success. After trying nearly a score of different pure breeds he believes most strongly in Rhode Island Reds and keeps usually around 600 hens of this breed along with about 300 White Wyandottes. Both sell well on any market, he finds, and his strain of Reds lays particularly well, some hens running to 250 eggs per year. By close attention to selection, mating and breeding, he has improved the strain with only a little new blood since 1921. The result is a fine demand for breeding stock. At poultry shows the Jackson stock has always taken a lion's share of blue ribbons.

In flock management, sanitation comes first with Mr. Jackson, proper feeding next. He has learned through close attention to prevent most poultry troubles and to check outbreaks promptly.

Simple, Efficient Layout

A simple, but sufficient and efficient layout of housing and equipment makes it practicable for Mr. Jackson to do his own incubating and brooding and fattening as well as to carry on his breeding flock. A 1400-egg incubator in the basement of a laying house does the hatching. Two brooder houses of four and five rooms each will care for 3,000 more chicks. The layers are housed neatly in second-story quarters, while the breeders are all on the ground in small plots. While there is some range for laying hens, those in upstairs quarters do not get out at all.

Poultry feeds are largely home-grown—corn, wheat, and oats for grain feeding, and oats, rye and barley for grazing. Wheat and cracked corn are used as a scratch feed.

That Mr. Jackson finds chickens a safer dependence than cotton is shown by the fact he now plants no cotton on his farm. His other sources of income from the farm are a purebred Berkshire herd of hogs and a small herd of Guernsey cows.

Sanitation comes first in flock management with many successful poultry men.

