

The Poultry Yard.

WINTER EGGS ARE SELLING AT HIGHER PRICES.

After taking careful note as to the number of chicks grown in Tennessee this season, I find that from late hatching, backward spring, and in some localities various diseases, the chick crop has been cut short, and eggs are now going at from twenty to twenty-five cents per dozen. So it behooves every farmer and poultryman to get busy and prepare for the high-priced winter eggs. Begin now. From accurate calculations I find that on the farms we can produce an egg for one cent, and the same food for one cent will make yours do the same.

Figure the profit that can be made from one hundred hens. From October 1 to April 1, six months, no definite profit can be figured, as one will make his or her flock produce more than another, and it is eggs that make it possible to produce eggs at one cent each. If a hen only lays two or three eggs a week, then the eggs cost more than one cent each. But if a hen lays four eggs per week, you can produce eggs at a cost of one cent each. Now the secret of getting eggs cheap is to feed your little egg machine (the hen) only such feeds as are required to make an egg. In other words, do not feed the hen and require her to digest any food but such as will make eggs. Eggs are the prime object, so don't feed a pound of feed that is not in conformation with the eggs. As we all know the raw feed fed to the hen makes the egg, so if the hen has to digest such feeds as do not conform to the egg, then we handicap egg production and make our eggs cost more. Again, the hen requires feed to produce energy, so we can save along this line by not forcing our birds to hunt altogether for her living, and feed food to make eggs. It takes energy to do the walking some farm hens do to procure enough food to make an egg. Then again it takes food to produce heat in the hen's body to stand the winter weather, yet if they have houses of the proper temperature it requires less food, doesn't it? We are not troubled so much with parasites and diseases in winter, but we must keep a vigilant watch for same and keep droppings removed and the house swept and clean. Another thing of importance is to keep the birds dry; no man can get winter eggs with birds running in muddy soil, wet, damp soil, or in rainy and snowy weather.

There is nothing of so much importance as scratching sheds for winter egg production. So, after all, it seems a matter of economy to get winter eggs; or, in other words, aiding nature by giving the right kind of feed to produce an egg. We might say most feed produced, or grain produced on all farms, fed in right proportion, will make eggs, yet some come nearer to the analysis of the egg, and these are the ones to feed and give our study to—clean and pure grains, fresh and pure water, and meat meal in some form. We can't get around this, as 10 per cent of the ration has to be meat meal in some form, say commercial beef scraps milk, blood meal, green cut bone, or animal meat in some form. It seems that vegetable protein will not answer as well for egg production as animal protein. There is some question as to this, however, and I hope that soon more light can be had on the subject.

A ration for eggs should run from one to four, to five—say one part protein to four to five parts carbohydrates and fat. Now, if we have on hand such feeds as wheat, corn,

oats, wheat bran—soy bean meal; we can very easily compound a ration for our hens to make eggs out of. But no one of the above feeds will make eggs. True, the hen can get and digest enough of one of these feeds if we can give her time to make an egg, but it takes too long. Wheat is the best one poultry food and nearest a balanced ration, but we will handicap egg production at least one-third by feeding wheat alone. We must have so much corn, so much wheat, so much meat meal, wheat bran and some of it fed whole grains, and some fed ground, and so on. This we must figure out for ourselves. I wish we could have quite a discussion through these columns in regard to feed and feeding for egg production and chick growing. I do not know it all, and perhaps others do not, and we must know more about these practical things if we ever place poultry raising on the plane of profit. There is no guess work in poultry raising; just as much common sense is required as in other live-stock raising, and we must derive as much profit—and we certainly can—but we can't unless we have good birds, good homes for our birds to live in and good feed to make eggs out of. So let's go after our birds; or, in other words, let's have profit and let's know how we got it.

I believe we must get more common sense into our poultry raising. It is no get-rich-quick scheme, nor play job for cripples, pastime for ministers, school teachers, and so on, but a great big live stock industry that brings into Tennessee more money than any live stock industry, yet we won't near think of keeping scrub cows, scrub hogs or beef cattle—won't pay you so well. Then how can a scrub hen pay? And worse yet, how can she pay under scrub methods? Let's forget the idea that, because a hen is little, and doesn't look as big as a beef steer, she can't pay us a profit; and she will do it as does the steer, with proper feed and management.

So let's go after winter eggs, and if we don't get them, find the reason and next year correct this reason, and don't keep it from the public. If you find something good out of your experience, let the public have it. This is no secret business, just common sense applied, and the old hen is just as much to be proud of as any farm animal.—J. A. Dinwiddie, New Market, Tenn., in Industrious Hen.

THE GREATEST YIELD IN AMERICA'S HISTORY.

Secretary of Agriculture Wilson makes the statement that "the total value of farm production for 1912 will be over \$9,000,000,000, the largest agricultural yield in the history of the country. The total value of 1911 farm products was \$8,417,000,000, as compared with \$8,694,000,000 in 1910." The figures are for farm products of all kinds, including animals.

The American potato crop this year will total 401,000,000 bushels, as compared with a crop of 293,000,000 last year. New England railroads started in this week to advance car rates for transporting the bumper Maine potato crop, by increasing the cost of the "heater car" service. The Interstate Commerce Commission promptly forbid any raise in present rates.

CHICKENS AND RHEUMATISM.

Chickens are affected with rheumatism pretty much like human beings. Exposure to dampness or cold, which is oftentimes caused by poorly constructed and ventilated roosting quar-

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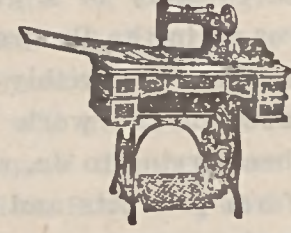
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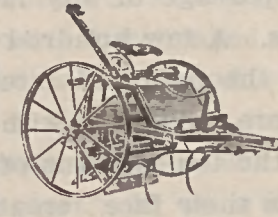
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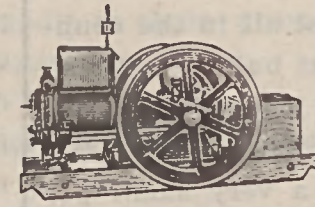
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39 Shockoe Slip,
Richmond, Va.

ters and houses brings it about. The bird is stiff in the joints, walks lame and lacks energy. Such birds should be kept in dry, warm places. See that the ventilation is good and give them good, clean grain and plenty of green stuff. A little tincture of arnica or liniment rubbed on the leg will sometimes help the bird along.

Train your eye to detect disease. Go over the flock carefully every day and see that the birds are all right and in a healthy condition. A great many people are unable to detect disease in its first symptoms and at a time when it is most easily overcome and remedied. By being able to spot the sick bird when it first becomes affected you will often prevent the spread of the disease over the whole flock. If you expect to make a success of poultry you must train your eye to detect disease and know when your fowls show the least sign of being out of condition. It often saves many dollars to the poultry grower.

CAUSES OF DISEASE.

Too many chickens is one flock or house.
Crowding the chickens in their quarters.
Dampness and drafts in the poultry houses.
Decayed vegetables and meats.
Filthy drinking vessels and food dishes.
Lice, mites and other insects pests.
Mistreatment, neglect, impure water, lack of exercise, bad feed, will

break down strong, vigorous birds every time.

All disease troubles in the poultry yard, as a rule, can be traced to the keeper himself.

WHAT ABOUT NEXT SEASON?

How can we plan to prevent poultry losses next spring? We must make the brooders and coops rat and vermin proof. This winter we can make some shelter shutters (6 x 3 feet) which placed on stakes and fastened two feet up from the ground, on the pasturing range, will furnish places of retreat and shelter from birds of prey as well as from rain storms and the sun's heat, according to the needs of the fowls. If we have neglected to clean out the brooders or the hen houses in the warm summer time we should attend to these things now. One of the best plans for preventing diseases and disorders in our flocks is to thoroughly clean their winter quarters in summer and open up the same to the sunshine and the breezes. Disease germs do not thrive in pure, fresh air and bright sunshine as they do in foul air and dark, filthy quarters. Spraying the interiors of hen houses with carbolineum, zenoleum or some effective sheep dip is an easy way to kill the bad germs if present. The spraying also destroys the mites if it hits them.—A. A. Brigham.

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