OUR POULTRY DEPARTMENT

CARE OF FLOCKS DURING SUMMER WEATHER—THE IMPORTANCE OF GREEN FEED—OHTER ITEMS OF INTEREST TO OUR READERS THAT WILL HELP THEM

BY POLK T. BRAMBLE

We cannot stress too strongly the importance of shade for the flocks during the extreme weather that we are bound to have from now on until the last of September. There are a multitude of things that we could bring up such as providing shade, feeding regularly, keeping the premises clean, keeping up the supply of fresh drinking water, inspecting the range for dead carcasses, fighting vermin, etc. Eternal vigilance must be the watchword.

Sun has both a benefical and detrimental effect on fowls. It is sought by the fowls in the early morning, and it is then that it does a world of good. But when the time is nearing noon, the rays become hot, and fowls exposed to this burning heat are frequently weakened, if not prostrated.

It will be noticed that fowls, when left out early in the morning, at once scatter and forage They search here and there for bugs, worms, insects and blades of grass, and whatever else may be lying about that tempts their appetite. But by about eight or nine o'clock, if the day be bright, and the sun is getting higher, the fowls will repair to some shady spot where they will remain until late in the day.

Cows that drink from stagnant pools or feed on garbage give milk that is dangerous to health, according to the opinion of eminent physicians.

The same applies to hens. Those which drink from dirty pools, especially when located in barnyards, and feed on grain scratched from manure piles, or eat impure, decayed, rotten garbage, cannot lay pure eggs, and their flavor will be such that will not appeal to the taste.

But we can change the appearance of the interior of the egg, and also give a disagreeable flavor with even, pure ffood. For instance, the yolks of eggs will become dark when the hens are given large quantities of raw meat. The flavor, too, is apt to be strong.

If milk is liberally given, the yolk pales, and the white or albumen has a milky appearance. In fact, the whole egg is watery and less firm in texture than when laid by hens where the main diet was good, sound grain. Just as the color and general appearance is affected, so will the flavor be.

I have likewise exeprienced bad results from a strong nitrogenous diet. Feeding hens largely on wheat, instead of a balanced ration, I found imparted a most disagreeable flavor and color. The yolks, too, were smaller, and the keeping qualities inferior. This applies equally with any highly nitrogenous ration.

Likewise we may take up the influence of food on the color of the flesh: It is said that animal feed, as meat meat, scrap, etc., tend to make it darker, and it seems fair to say that this may be true of any food rich in nitrogen.

At the Cornell Station, two similar lots of chickens were fed, one on a nitrogenous ration of wheat and skimmilk, the other a carbonaceous ration of Indian corn. When they were killed the flesh of the first lot appeared darker, more tender and juicy than the second, which, however, contained larger masses of fat.

On the other hand, a ration of yellow corn used at the Ontario Agricultural College and Experimental Farms produced "dark yellow" flesh, while oats, buckwheat, and milk gave a "creamy white" color. In later experiments the presence of a considerable amount of cornmeal in the ration with ground buckwheat and pearl oat dust produced a rather cream-colored flesh.

It is commonly believed in the United States that the fat fowls with yellow skin, which are to be desired, can be secured most cheaply by feeding a grain ration composed largely of Indian corn for two or three weeks before the fowls are slaughtered.

Many mature flocks, as well as young flocks, suffer in late summer because of green food shortage. A shortage of green food for the layers often results in hastening an early molt, and consequently induces a longer vacation period. Hens that continue to lay during the summer, and do not molt until fall or winter, are usually more profitable than the "Summer Boarders" hich molt during a longer vacation. Green food in moderate amounts is helpful in keeping up summer production.

Developing pullets are often stunted, or made more subject to disease and parasites, by allowing green food to become scarce. Green food has beneficial and health-giving properties for birds of all ages that no other food seems to have.

Outbreaks of disease and parasites, resulting in heavy losses, have been sustained by many poultry raisers because of their failure to realize the importance of green food and to provide ahead for it. In late summer good green food is apt to become scarce, unless provision is made for it in advance. Now is the time to plant such green food crops as oats, peas, clover, rye, etc., for use in August and Setember. Seeding a run is far more dependable than taking a chance on natural growth of grass. Grass usually gets unpalatable and unsuited to the birds in late summer.

Many poultry raisers pay heavily each year because of failure to plan ahead for green food.

One is apt to overlook the condition of colony and range houses during busy time in the summer. Dirty houses, with possibly a few birds dead birds lying around, not only are apt to give the birds a set-back, but may even tart in piedemic that will result seriously.

All range houses should be thoroughly cleaned, disinfected, treated for mites, and bedded with clean straw, at intervals as needed during the summer.

Some years ago the general idea of an egg laying contest amongst poultry breeders gained an impetus through great interest in the competitive side of the venture, to find out whose birds might be best in egg production capacity. It was at once agreed that such competition should be in the hands of disinterested, and if possible, official parties. Thus it was that agricultural schools, colleges and experimental stations came to be invited to take up active interest in the oeration of such egg laying contests.

The story of the development of the egg laying contest idea in New Zealand, Australia, England, Canada, the United Staes and other countries where it has been propagated is an interesting and important one, but time and space do not permit of telling it now. Rather would I attempt to suggest something as to what it seems to me the present day egg laying contest, descended from that older idea, is doing considerable for the modern poultry industry.

It is a well-known fact that the external and internal parasites of poultry are many. They are found wherever poultry are kept. Under the ever increasing intensive methods which are being applied in the management of the birds in our day and generation, the problem of controlling these parasites becomes ever more acute. The external parasites are a source of continual annoyance to the birds where they are present and, if they exist in large numbers, they cause a slow and stunted growth in young birds, and reduce flesh and egg production in the older individuals. The internal parasites are a constant drain upon the vitality, growth and productivity of the birds affected. The elimination of both groups of parasites is an obligation which every poultry keeper owes to himself and his business.

The control of all parasites comes under the term of proper sanitation. By sanitation is meant the maintenance of conditions on the birds themselves, in the poultry houses and, on the yards and ranges, which will insure the elimination of these pests. It is our purpose in this rather short discussion to outline the most outstanding problem incidental to proper sanitation and parasite control, discussing the problem with special reference to the proper treatment and care of the quarters where the birds are kept.

The disease is brought on primarily by birds contracting or coming in contract with the specific organism responsible fo the particular disease with which they may be afflicted. The presence of the disease is also due to the birds inability, through natural resistence, to throw off the infection when it comes in contact with it.

Our first requirment then for health, is to see that the birds themselves are clean and free from parasites, so that they will not suffer the ravaging affects and the lowered vitality of parasite infection. To do this, the birds should be examined from time to time, especially in the early summer, again in the fall, and occasionally throughout the winter, when they are confined to the laying houses, to observe the presence of external parasites.

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The examination will be given in the followng subjects:

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3. Plane Geometry.
4. Modern, European and American History.
5. Latin.
6. Chemistry.

Applicants will be required to take the examination in five of the above subjects and may select either Latin or Chemistry

Those desiring to take this examination are required to file with the Register of Wills, Chestertown, Md., not later than August 9th, 1927, their applications with certificates as to mental and moral qualifications.

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