POULTRY NOTES

ITEMS OF IMPORTANCE THAT WILL HELP OUR READERS SOLVE THEIR MANY PERPLEXING PROBLEMS

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In the September issue of American Poultry Journal was printed an article on "The Value of a Good Mash Feed" which aroused considerable interest. A comparison was made between two flocks of layers under the same conditions except for the feed: one flock was fed a good home mixed mash and the other a good commercial mash feed.

Careful records were kept on both flocks and in spite of the fact that the commercial mash cost $15 a ton more than the other mash, there was found to be greater economy in feeding this than in feeding the home mixed mash. There was less mash consumed and there were more eggs produced in the pen getting the commercial mash than in the pen getting the home mixed mash and the birds were in better condition.

To many poultry keepers this is enlightening; to some it may seem hard to believe. But the facts are there. Which leads us to the question, How many poultrymen actually know all the facts about their own flocks? How many, for example, know what it costs to produce a dozen eggs from time to time throughout the year?

This cost, of course, will vary from time to time, depending on production and feed consumption. It will be higher some months than others. But it is wise for the poultryman to keep an eye on this figure just as a manufacturer watches his production costs. Mr. H. E. Heston in New York State, for example, was able to produce eggs in August at a feed cost of 21¼ cents a dozen, while in September his feed cost was 20.9 cents a dozen.

By keeping records on his flock, Mr. G. G. Fox, of New Hampshire, was able to check up the difference between a commercial feed and a home mixed formula. He found that in late summer his cost per dozen eggs was 29.3 cents in the pen getting the commercial feed and 55.5 cents per dozen in the other pen.

In a bulletin from the Ohio Experiment Station by F. L. Morison, the cost of producing eggs on the farms in one county was shown to vary from 19.7 cents per dozen to 53.2 cents per dozen. Naturally, there was shown to be a wide variation in the profits from poultry on these farms.

Practcularly is it advisable to know production costs in late summer, fall and early winter, for this is the time when eggs are worth money—not in the spring when all hens lay. Producton depends largely upon good feed and skillful feeding, and the keeping of records as to the amount and cost of feed consumed and eggs produced enables a poultryman to check up on facts about his business he should know.

One of the factors that appears to have considerable influence on economy of pullet flock egg production is the basis upon which the poultryman is to divide his available pullets into laying units as he places them in permanent quarters for the season. Not all the pullets of the same hatch and same general line of breeding behave in similar manner as to egg producton. Some will mature quicker than others, will pay earlier and will make better use of their feed than others.

It is not common sense, then, to say that the first attempt upon the part of the poultryman should be to place the pullets which are nearest alike together, and therefore to divide the pays to take measures to prevent this. Since the birds gather around the drinking pan, and dampness is a good carrier for the disease, this is one of the most important places to watch and the first place to wage war against it. The use of a good disinfectant in the drinking water is necessary to sterilize the water so well birds will not catch the disease from the sick birds that dip their beaks in the same water.

When the disease has progressed beyond the first stage and the symptoms described at the beginning of this article are shown by individuals, these birds should be removed from the flock and kept by themselves in a warm place. Swabbing out the eyes and nostrils with disinfectant will help further to clean up cases of roup. ance in a flock. So are drafty houses, damp litter and birds in poor conditions as far as it is possible to do so will go a long way toward keeping these colds that later develop into roup out of the flock.

Prompt attention in the early stages of roup, that is, when it has only progressed as far as the eye cold stage, is of extreme importance in fighting this disease; the less of a start it gets, the better. A dose of Epsom salts as soon as these colds are noticed will help considerably to check the trouble. They are usually given at the rate of 1 lb. per 100 birds. They may be given in a wet mash or in the drinking water; in either case they are given for one day at a time and the dose is not repeated again for at least a week.

These roupy colds—and roup itself—are easily spread in the flock, so it more nearly alike together, the chances are we may be able to handle each group more nearly as they should be handled. What are some of those characteristics which we should consider as we go over the pullets n anticipation of placing them in winter laying quarters?

Eyelids so swollen that they are closed much of the time; slimy, foul melling mucus matter running from the eyes and filling the nasal passages to the chickens sneeze and shake their heads; birds standing in a hunched-up position, with drooping wings and a general appearance of depression;—that's roup.

It usually starts with simple eye colds, as evidenced by running eyes, and is easily spread in the flock. The cold, damp weather of fall and winter is largely responsble for its appear- available pullets into units or laying flocks according to certain characteristics whch tend, at least, to indicate close similarity as to egg production capacities. It is common sense to beleive that if we do divide the pullets into units, placing those which are The swab may be made by twisting some cotton on the end of a small stick and dipping in the disinfectant.

Our readers should be on the constant lookout for roup which will play havoc at this season of the year.

The number of birds to keep in the house can be determined by multiplying the width of the house (in feet) by the length and dividing by four.

There is little use to raise healthy pullets without having decent quarters in which to house them. In fact, satisfactory quarters are absolutely essential. A freshly cleaned, disinfected and whitewashed hen house is a good start.

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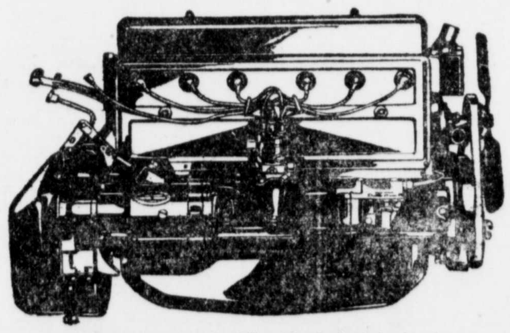

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