

Tattooing Doooms Chicken Thieves

Chicken thieving in West Virginia will soon be almost unknown, predict leading poultrymen, provided poultry raisers cooperate in the plan for tattooing poultry that has been put into effect through the cooperation of the West Virginia Poultry Association, State Agricultural Extension Service, State Department of Agriculture, and State Department of Public Safety. The plan is endorsed by the West Virginia Farm Bureau.

Poultry raisers who wish to obtain the protection should apply to the secretary, West Virginia Poultry Association, 202 Oglebay Hall, Morgantown, on blanks secured from the secretary of the county poultry association, county agent, or instructor of vocational agriculture, for a number which will be registered in their name with the Departments of Agriculture and Public Safety.

This number is tattooed in the web of the left wing by the owner on all of his birds. Tattooing may easily be done with an outfit supplied by the West Virginia Poultry Association. There is no injury to the bird and no effect on its market value, but the tattooed number remains permanently. No duplicate numbers will be assigned.

The cost of the tattooing outfit, it is reported, is only \$3. With it the farmer is furnished a metal sign, as a warning to would-be thieves. Each poultry raiser who obtains the tattooing outfit secures a year's membership in the West Virginia Poultry Association. It is pointed out that the tattooing equipment, if obtained commercially, would cost about double the amount the association is able to provide it for.

The greatest obstacle to the successful prosecution of chicken thieves has been the impossibility of identifying the stolen birds. The identification of tattooed birds is positive.

Chicks Confined Need Variety

Simple rations for starting chicks give satisfactory results when unlimited range is available with plenty of green feed, according to T. B. Clark, assistant poultry husbandman of the West Virginia Agricultural Experiment Station.

Under these conditions, he finds a mash composed of home-grown grains and milk gives good results. When chicks are started and partially grown in confinement, a variety of feeds is essential to provide necessary factors for a high rate of grain per pound of feed consumed and for the prevention of leg disorders.

Investigations at the experimental poultry farm at Morgantown show that large amount of yellow cornmeal in all-mash rations produced slow growth and increased the percentage of slipped tendons with chicks started in battery brooders. An increased efficiency was obtained by substituting 20 to 30 per cent cornmeal with wheat middlings.

Animal protein supplements and cereal grains and their by-products appear to carry sufficient amounts of minerals.

Fishmeal has been found to give more satisfactory results than meat scraps. Both of these protein sources must be supplemented with alfalfa leafmeal or milk when chicks are confined. The addition of both supplements generally gives better results than when only one is used.

Best gain per pound of mash consumed with less than 2 per cent of slipped tendons was obtained from a mash made up as follows: yellow cornmeal 44 pounds, wheat middlings 15 pounds, wheat bran 15 pounds, alfalfa haymeal 5 pounds, fishmeal 14 pounds, dried buttermilk 5 pounds, salt 1 pound, and cod-liver oil 1 pound.

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