

WHY PULLETS ARE NOT LAYING

Best of Care Must be Given to Get Results

With eggs tipping the scales at 53 cents and up per dozen, wholesale, the fowl the lays them appears closely related to that fabled bird of the golden egg. A flock of such fowls would make the owner's heart light and his purse heavy in the October and November days.

"That's all very fine," grumbles the farmer, "but when you get down to facts there's nothing doing among the flocks during the October and November days.

Very true. It requires judicious outlay, study and work, seasoned with infinite pains, which is the earmark of genius, to produce eggs in quantity during the off season of egg production; and these things the majority of poultry keepers are not going to bestow on so insignificant a creature as a chicken. So there will always be "nothing doing" in the majority of flocks at this season, and incidentally there will always be a golden harvest to be reaped by the small minority of farmers and other poultry keepers who realize that money and effort are not thrown away in the breeding and care of fowls.

"But," says another farmer, "I put a good bit of money in chicks last spring and they have had a whole lot of care, and have got away with a lot of high priced feed; some of them are more than six months old, and nary an egg nor a prospect of one in sight."

We happen to be familiar with this case, and it is typical of many others. Some two hundred odd chicks of uncertain Leghorn stock and of different ages, were bought; part were placed with hens, fifty or so with a hen, and part were brooded in boxes. All were kept in an inclosure where there are a number of the old fowls. An epidemic of vermin broke out two or three times and was subdued by a whitewash and insect powder but was not eradicated by persistent treatment. Though the feeding, together with the general care, was not regular or of the best, it was so much better than had ever before been given on that farm to chickens that naturally much was expected of the chickens in return.

At present there are quite a bunch of pullets and some cockerals running and roosting all together, and though of different sizes and ages, and a few among them are very fair birds; but none among them have had the steady and vigorous growth necessary to the production of the October and November layers. At the best it will be along in January and February before there will be a regular laying for even the most forward of the lot.

The gilt-edged egg is not secured without effort plus a knowledge of the right methods. Had our farmer in the above case put his money and labor in a fewer and better chicks and fed them well and regularly and kept them free from insects, and yarded them according to age and vigor; in short, kept them growing every minute of their chickhood, they would now be returning him a nice profit on his investment and work instead of being a dead expense till the price of eggs begin to drop toward spring.

No weakly or stunted pullets, nor even an organically strong one which has not had regular or systematic feeding and care from the egg up, is going to lay in October and November. If eggs were easy of production during this time it would not be the season of maximum prices. As with everything else in price, to get the best results from poultry we must give it our best efforts.

The pullets for fall and winter laying should not be allowed with the general flock or with fowls of different ages. Those to begin laying the last of September should be separated in August and yarded in comfortable quarters. Any change must be made considerable time before the pullets begin to lay; for though they are not greatly affected by such things in the natural laying season, even a change of roosting quarters in the fall and winter will often check laying for weeks. The writer once moved a flock of pullets just starting to lay

to a ranch seven miles distance on the 19th of October. They were moved at night and with the greatest care but, whereas, there were forty eggs laid the day of moving, there were only a few scattering eggs laid thereafter until along in the month of January. Many people look upon the animal as a sort of automaton without any special nerves or feeling. In reality, the animal economy is much the same whether it belongs to the human, beast, or bird, and a laying hen often has more cause to complain of her 'nerves' than the fine lady. Anything that frighten her or makes her uncomfortable or dissatisfied, checks egg production. Harsh or rough treatment by the caretaker, children and dogs dashing through the yards or chasing the fowls, or the

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