

Poultry.

Feeding Fowls.

The rapid digestion of food in a fowl's stomach calls for an almost continuous supply of food. In a discussion of this question in the New York Times, that paper says: Regularity of supply is of the greatest importance when the consumption is so rapid. If the supply is not regular, there is a great loss. There is not only a waste of energy, but a waste of time in restoring this waste of power, and it is on this account that so many fowls merely live along and do not produce eggs as freely as is expected although the quantity of food is supposed to be quite liberal. The system of sending the fowls to roost with a full belly, and keeping them all day hungering and thirsting for food is to blame for much of the short-comings of the hens. The quantity of food required by an animal is estimated at about 3 per cent of the live weight daily. This merely supports life; all increase of weight, or any product whatever, must be supplied by an extra allowance, so that 20 hens, weighing 100 pounds, would need three pints of solid nutritious food daily to live and do no more. This is equal to three-twentieths of a pint for a hen. Two-twentieths, or one-tenth of a pint, or about one and one-half ounces of food, is then, required every day for the production of eggs, the total daily food requirements being one-fourth of a pint, and this is the established rule, from long experience, among poultry-keepers. One quart of corn or other grain for eight hens is the regular daily allowance, given in at least two meals, and it has been found that a flock of hens, when supplied with a constant provision of grain before them, will consume this quantity and no more, in addition to what small things in the shape of flies and other insects, grass, etc., they may pick up.

A Poultry House for Winter.

We are an advocate of chickens roosting out of doors during the summer months, but a good house for them is an absolute necessity in the winter, and those who are not provided with comfortable quarters for their poultry for this winter should begin to build at once. A good chicken house is of more importance than some people realize. It does not follow, because our climate is less cold than the East, that fens can roost on the fence or in the tree. During the rainy season they need shelter from the storm, and they will not lay without it. It will do very well to let them roost in the trees during the summer season, provided you keep a good dog to guard them, and they do not get strained or injured in flying down from high places. But it is not safe to allow the heaviest breeds of chickens, such as Brahms, Cochins, and Plymouth Rocks, to roost more than four feet high, and two feet is much better than four.

Build the house tight about the lower part so that it will be secure against intruders of all kinds, but give plenty of ventilation at the top; have portable nests and roosts, so that they can be taken out and cleansed as often as necessary.

Fattening Geese.

Geese, like other fowls, by proper management, may be easily fattened; it is well known that unless they are killed, and put into market, at their fattest period, they do not long hold flesh, and rapidly become lean. The French method in fattening these fowls consist in plucking the feathers from the belly; in giving them abundance of food and drink, and in cooping them up more closely than is practiced with common fowls; cleanliness and quietude, being above all things indispensable. The best time to begin fattening is in the month of November, or as soon as cold weather has fairly set in; if it is longer delayed, the pairing season begins, and prevents them from becoming fat. If you have not too many geese to fatten, a good way is to put them into a cask, with holes bored in it, through which they can thrust their heads to feed; and being naturally voracious, their love of food is greater than any desire for liberty, so that they fatten very rapidly. By this method, and fed on a smash made of buckwheat, barley, or Indian meal, with milk and boiled potatoes, they can be made ready for market in from three to four weeks.

The time is approaching when every breeder should see that his fowls are provided with green food for winter use. Fowls, as well as other animals require a certain amount of coarse and refuse matter to keep them free from constipation, indigestion and other kindred complaints. Before winter sets in, store away cabbage, turnips, rowen, onions and potatoes for the fowls.

There are points about hens' moulting that ought to be understood better than they now are. It takes them near three months to go entirely through the process. When this begins they are generally sent to market and unless the pullets are early, and begin to lay before

winter sets in, they will probably not begin laying before spring, and the egg crop will be short. A better way is, to feed the hens well when moulting, and as all do not moult at one time, some eggs may be obtained nearly, or quite all through that trying period. By a judicious mode of feeding, connected with a little stimulating food, we may bring them through and put them in a fix to lay and develop a good coat of new feathers before cold weather sets in. Thus the chances will be, that if properly housed, a supply of eggs will be had all winter. From this course may be gained two advantages; Eggs are had in the winter when they command the highest price and the hens will be the first to set in the spring just when the good house-wife or professional poultry keeper, is most anxious to have the hens do just that thing. Hens which have passed the ages of usefulness and those which put off moulting into cold weather, should be sold as soon as the facts are known. There is no profit in such; let them go.

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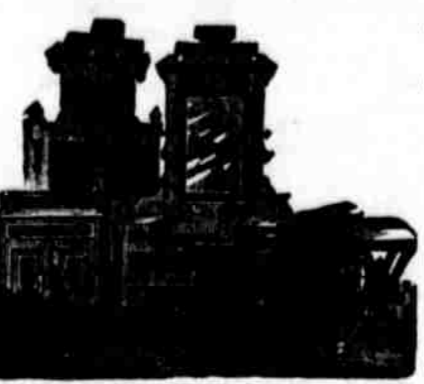
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