

Duck Eggs Are Gaining in Favor

(By L. A. Hart in Pacific Poultryman.)

MUCH has been said regarding duck eggs and their relative value compared with hens' eggs, so I trust what I have to say will at least gain the attention of those engaged in raising ducks of any variety. I have never engaged in raising ducks but have had the pleasure of placing the eggs on market for several poultrymen around Portland. There seems to have arisen the question whether there really is a market for duck eggs at the same price of hens' eggs.

The squab breeders of the Northwest used to depend on newspaper quotations as a basis for their selling price consequently they seldom realized over \$3 per dozen. Now it is different, squabs bring as high as \$6 per dozen, seldom less than \$4.50.

The Oregon Co-operative Squab Association is the result of squab raisers, both in Oregon and Washington. The duck raisers can accomplish much in the same way. The main point is to get the disinterested public to try a pure white duck egg, then the rest is easy.

The Beginning.

I am engaged in the butter and egg business (retail), and have a steady demand for fresh eggs. A year ago a friend of mine secured a pen of Pencilled Indian Runner ducks and by September they began to lay in earnest. He offered to furnish me with duck eggs if I could sell them. He was already supplying me with pure white Leghorn eggs, so all that was necessary to begin was to get the duck eggs and place them before my customers.

On the wholesale market they were cheaper by two cents per dozen, but I agreed to pay the same as for other eggs. I insisted on giving one duck egg with every eleven hen eggs. I then put an advance of five cents over other eggs and awaited results.

Demand Increases.

To my surprise I found an increased demand for eggs. Everybody's attention was attracted by their clean white appearance and uniform size. In the rush some of them were sold as just eggs. Then came repeated orders and more eggs had to be secured. I found other farmers who kept ducks.

I engaged their duck eggs at two cents above the market quotations. More customers came, for one satis-

fied customer would tell another. Now I have a steady demand for duck eggs and never have enough. It all came about for this reason. I am a fancy poultry man and believe in top prices for the farmer. So being engaged in business does not prevent me from co-operating with the producer, enabling him to secure a premium for his strictly fresh eggs.

More Nourishing.

A duck egg is not only larger than ordinary hen eggs but contains more nourishment. For baking they have no equal. I believe the best fried egg I ever tasted was a duck egg. Needless to say the common green egg will not satisfy. A white egg will attract attention every time. Indian Runners are very desirable as a white egg strain.

The egg farmer of today must be awake to a few important facts: First, he or she must gain the confidence of customers by demonstrating continually that the buyer can depend on what they say regarding their eggs being fresh. Second, never take a chance of mixing old eggs with new laid ones. To be certain, never market an egg over five days' old. Don't blame the customer for faults that you can remedy. Because you can't come to town over twice a month, or every time it rains hard, don't blame the trade.

Use Diplomacy.

To be successful in business of any kind do not try to convince by argument. Use diplomacy always. There are times when a customer is crooked, or more often misinformed; in such cases be sure you are right, then go ahead. Try to reason rather than be arbitrary. Having been behind the counter since twelve years of age, and having made many mistakes along the lines just mentioned, I know that customers are not customers any longer than they are treated squarely and politely.

Third, if in doubt never take advantage of the doubt. Better construct a candler from a cigar box by cutting a hole large enough to see through an egg, then place a tallow candle inside. Learn the difference in eggs 24 hours old and three days old. There is a difference and it shows in candling although they look the same when broken. Duck eggs are gaining favor every day. I can use more myself. Will some reliable duck raiser take notice?

Scratchings in the Poultry Yard

GREEN FEED.

IT has always been troublesome as well as expensive to secure a sufficient quantity of green feed for fowls. Green feed is necessary to promote the health of the birds and keep them in the best condition. To try to get eggs during the Winter months without some form of green food or vegetable would be like maintaining your work horses without feeding them hay.

Both would soon lose their vitality through digestive disturbances and be unable to do their work properly, which in a hen is to produce eggs. To purchase cabbage or some other vegetable and store it over Winter requires space and also quite an outlay. So the next best thing is to sprout oats for the Winter layers, and wheat or rye for the chicks in Spring or Summer. The oats can be sprouted in your cellar.

Coloring Plumage.

In the showroom the demand is for pure white plumage, free from brassiness or creaminess. This explains why some fanciers are so particular about protecting their birds from sunburn and also why certain of them are seemingly foolish in the matter of the ration used.

A friend of the writer noted throughout America for his ability to produce winning White Rocks and White Wyandottes is most decided in the belief that yellow corn imparts a creamy tint to the plumage, and his flock receives only white corn.—New York Press.

Utility vs. Fancy.

The utility vs. fancy bug seems to be getting some of the so-called utility advocates. Utility is surely the first thing to consider in any fowl that a profit is to be derived from. But those claiming it is impossible for a fowl to have fine shape and plumage and at the same time be a good utility fowl have no foundation in the face of the Missouri State laying contest, and hundreds of trapnest users who are high-grade breeders.—New York Herald.

KEEPING UP VIGOR.

BREEDERS that have the strongest stock will never use for any breeding a fowl that has at any time been sick. It is the one safe way to keep the vigor of the flock up.

In the care of fowls during the Fall nothing is more important than this question of placing the fowls in healthy condition in the Winter quarters, that are properly ventilated and kept clean, and the proper floor space given to each flock.

In the majority of cases too many fowls are housed together. From three to three and a half square feet floor space is not too much for the lighter breeds, while the heavier breeds should have from four to five. Many poultry-keepers have good results with less floor space to each fowl, but to the beginner plenty of room will be safest.

Feeding Methods.

Simple feeding methods pay best, and simple feed rations fit best into work of the farm. None of us would care to go back to the wet mashers of some years ago, which involve the labor of daily mixing and feeding.

I depend on the hopper plan of feeding, supplying all the ground grains and part of the scratch feed in this way. On the farm, with its many cares and duties, to adopt hopper feeding is to bring the labor cost down to the lowest limit of safety.

One of the simplest and best dry mash hoppers which I have ever used is made of an ordinary box, say 16 inches square and five inches deep. A lath frame, covered with two-inch mesh wire netting, fits loosely in this, resting directly on the mash. As the feed is eaten this frame drops down, permitting the birds to help themselves, but preventing them from wasting the material by scratching it out.—Baltimore American.

Fattening Turkeys.

Different methods are used in fattening turkeys, but the majority of growers prefer 2-year-old corn. Where there is not a very large supply of old corn it is safe to make an equal mixture of both old

and new. Some breeders prefer a mixture of two-thirds corn and one-third oats, and occasionally give a cornmeal mush feed.

It is said that turkeys will fatten more readily on Northern white flint corn, and the flesh will be of a finer quality. While fattening turkeys must not be cooped up. They must have their liberty, and if regularly given two meals a day they will not be inclined to roam. To pen them in a building or other inclosure will result in loss of appetite if not sickness.

During this confinement they soon tire of the food given them, will start to quarrel with other birds in the pen, become restless, and at killing time will not weigh as much as when they were first penned up. The turkey pines for associates; with them it is "liberty or death."—New York Sun.

Winter Precautions.

Before placing the fowls in the Winter quarters the poultry building should be thoroughly cleaned and well dried, for at this time of year, with the many sudden weather changes, a dry house is essential. Fall colds, chickenpox, etc., are checks to egg production, and the effect is more lasting than most poultry-keepers credit. Colds can be avoided by well-ventilated poultry quarters and plenty of housework.

Overcrowded quarters, especially in the Fall and early Winter, are the cause of many colds, often leading into roup, if not promptly checked. Chickenpox or sorehead, if appearing in the flock, should be promptly stamped out. It can only be successfully coped with by removing at once all fowls that show symptoms of the pox and treating separately.

To try to effect a cure by placing medicine in the drinking water, allowing the sick fowls to mingle with those that are well, is folly. Every sick fowl should be removed from the rest of the flock at once. It is seldom that any illness will attack a flock well raised and managed, and it is wise to keep any fowls that have been ill in a house by themselves until disposed of.—Philadelphia Record.

Blooded Poultry Stock Distributed to Farmers

THE experiment station of West Virginia announces for the second time the distribution of White Leghorn cockerels from experiment station farm flocks. These birds are selected from heavy laying strains and are worth several times the purchase price, yet they may be had for virtually the cost of crating and shipping.

The applicants for birds must be farmers living on farms in the state. All those who secure these cockerels must agree to keep no other male birds with their hens for two years unless the hens are penned separately during the breeding season. Fifty cents is the price asked for these cockerels and it must accompany the order. This just covers the cost of crating and delivering to the express agent. The express on the birds must be paid by the farmers to whom they are sent. Not more than three cockerels will be given to any one farmer and the purchasers of cockerels from the experiment station last year are not eligible to receive them this year.

These few suggestions and regulations with regard to the distribution of blooded cockerels are worthy of comment, because it shows that the people of West Virginia are alive to the possibilities of improving the flocks that are now on the farms of the state.

It is doubtful if one-tenth of the farmers of this country, and this is true of the Southern states as well as any others, realize the possibilities of their poultry. It is doubtful if these people manage their flocks in a way that would make it possible for them to realize anything like the degree of profit which should naturally be theirs. This does not mean that they should have more expensive or better equipment or more fancy houses, but it does mean they must give the poultry better and more common sense care.

The dairy cow and the hen go splendidly together. The former is a constant source of income, while the latter uses the by-product for the greatest profit. If handled with fair intelligence and given half a show, the hen will make a splendid little side line week in and week out throughout the entire year.

Fruit growers of Keesling, Washington, in their local association, have declared themselves in favor of pooling the entire fruit crop of the Spokane district as a marketing measure that will lead to greater uniformity in price and insure against loss to individuals.

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