A Weekly Page of Poultry Hints to You

Here Is a Department Full of Bright Ideas for Readers of the Home and Farm Magazine Section.

An interesting article in which Clara M. Nixon of Oregon Agricultural College continues her discussion of the feeding of young chickens.

A FEW grains seem to be essential, but a large variety of grains is not necessary in chick feeding.

Wheat is one of the best grain foods, and chicks do well if given wheat alone as a grain. It is usually cracked for the youngest chicks, though they will pick up small grains, like wheat screenings, after they are a few days old; especially if they are with the hen. Corn is another excellent food for chicks. A mixture of corn and wheat is good for chickens of all ages. Millet is not good, if fed in large proportion. The covering of the grains is very hard, and the seeds may collect in the digestive tract of the chicks, causing death. Oats are valuable food, but contain too large a proportion of husk for young chicks. Hulled oats, steel cut oats, or oat groats may be mixed with corn and wheat for the grain food. The hulled oats is the grain without the husk, and the others are the cut or broken hulled oats.

Commercial Chick Foods.

Commercial chick foods contain a larger variety of grains and often a lot of weed seeds. The latter are not particularly good food, and are expensive at the price paid. Many of the commercial grain mixtures contain a proportion of fine grit, which may be more cheaply purchased as grit than as chick food.

Cracked corn is usually one of the ingredients of commercial chick foods. Unless well cared for, this may become musty, rendering the entire mixture unfit to be fed. Home mixing makes it easier to avoid spoiled foods.

Cracked Grains.

Commercial chick foods cost about $2.50 per hundred weight, in quantity. Corn averages about $1.50 per hundred pounds (1.6 bu.) and is seldom more than $2.00 per hundred, even in smaller quantities. Wheat rarely costs over $1.50 per 100 pounds. A mixture of equal parts wheat and corn would cost $1.75 per hundred pounds. A mixture of three pounds wheat, two pounds corn and one pound oat groats would cost $1.91 per hundred weight. The former of these mixtures is 30 per cent cheaper than the commercial mixtures, and the latter 23 per cent. The saving of one-fourth to one-third on the cost of food is quite an item, and will easily pay for the mixing.

Usually the cracked grains may be purchased at any of the larger mills; if, however, they are not available, the only thing to do is to use what is at hand, as wheat screenings or small wheat, or else buy the prepared foods. If the latter course is followed, the food should be carefully examined, by taste, sight, and odor, to make sure it is good.

Methods of Feeding.

Both ground grain and grain of larger size seem necessary to the best growth of chicks. (R. 11, 13). The ground food is quickly digested, and furnishes the food elements without so great expense of energy in digestion. Cracked grain gives exercise and development to the digestive system, and remains longer in the crop. Chicks do not get so hungry in the night if their latest meal is of cracked grain. On the other hand, chicks fed only cracked grain grow less rapidly than others having ground food as well as cracked grain.

Ground food moistened with milk gives more return in growth of chicks than the same amount fed dry. Chicks do well, however, on a ration of cracked grain and dry mash, and the labor cost is less than for the moist mash. (R. 11, 13). This brings down the expense, if the chicks are reared in large numbers. Where chickens are raised by hens, moist mash is often preferred. Some poultrymen keep dry mash always before the chicks, however reared, and give one meal a day of moist mash. The chicks will usually eat more of the ground food if fed in this way, though the amount of moist mash should be limited. Chicks under one pound in weight are said to do better on moist mash, with grain, larger chickens growing better on dry mash.

Hand-Feeding or Hopper-Feeding.

The hopper or some such device is practically a necessity in dry feeding. Hopper-feeding takes less time than hand-feeding, and many consider that chicks raised on cracked grain and hopper-fed dry mash make quite as good mature fowls as those reared by the hand-feeding system (moist mash). With hopper feeding, it is possible to provide a constant supply of food which cannot be readily soiled by the chicks. For young chickens, hopper-feeding both grain and mash is not advisable. The chicks settle down by the brain hopper, and gorge themselves, taking too little exercise. This would probably be disastrous.

The safest method is to feed the dry mash (if used) in hoppers, hand-feeding the grain. Grit, charcoal, and fine cracked bone are hopper-fed; also beef scrap, if desired. Moist mash, if used, is necessarily hand-fed.

For growing stock on range, hopper-feeding works well. Labor is considerably reduced, and the birds grow finely.

Free Range or Confinement.

As a rule, the more good range which can be given young chickens the better; though unlimited range is not necessary until they are a few weeks old. If the yards are too small, the ground becomes filthy and may communicate disease. In small yards, the chicks get too little exercise, with resulting lack of muscular development; and greater care in feeding is necessary.

For young broods, a sufficiently large range, and one which makes it possible to protect the chicks from accident and marauders, is best. Grass cut moderately short, where shelter from the hot sun is provided, is about the right condition. An orchard is a fine place for them, if they can be protected from hawks, crows, etc.

The older chicks may range in a sunflower patch, corn field, orchard, wood lot, or any convenient place where they can find insects and shelter. If allowed about the barn yard or pig sty, they are in danger of being trodden upon by the farm animals or eaten by the pigs.

Farmers of Texas Tire of Prohibition Fad

FARMERS of Texas, always zealous advocates of "temperance," have had enough of "Prohibition." They have tried that fad to a finish—and they are done with it.

This attitude explains why the Farmers' Union of the Lone Star State has passed pointed and emphatic resolutions touching the present campaign. That organization has said in the plainest of language that the need of the people is "constructive legislation."

The expected has happened in this connection. The Farmers' Union has brought down on itself the explosive wrath of political preachers who talk "temperance," but who insist that "prohibition" and total "abstinence" are the only cure for the drink evil.

But the leaders of the Farmers' Union are amply able to take care of themselves in an argument of this kind. They have issued a letter in which they demand that politics be kept out of the pulpit, and in which farther they mix vitriol with their argument, thus:

"The religious preacher is the most capable servant, and the political preacher the sorriest master the world has ever known. Wherever power is placed in the hands of the latter, they invariably become intolerant, bigoted and vicious.

"A preacher who graduates from the pulpit into politics becomes a menace to good government. Likewise, a politician who occupies the pulpit debaunches the church and becomes a menace to religion.

"Political leaders may live 'wet' and vote 'dry,' and the low standard of statecraft is not offended—but when the church turns over the pulpit to office-seekers and their henchmen, true Christianity has received a crushing blow, and hypocrisy runs rampant in the altar, for it is written: 'Ye cannot serve two masters.'"

The Farmers' Union of Texas is fully justified in its stand. It is delivering an ultimatum to those alleged and mistaken reformers who make a business of confusing "temperance" and "prohibition."

The Century Dictionary defines the word "Temperance" as follows: "Moderation—the observance of moderation."

"Habitual moderation in regard to the indulgence of the natural appetites. Restrained or moderate indulgence. Abstinence from all violence or excess—from inordinate or unseasonable indulgence, or from the use or pursuit of anything injurious to moral or physical well-being.

"Sobriety and frugality—as temperance in eating and drinking. Temperance in the indulgence of joy or grief. Moderation in the use of alcoholic liquors as beverages."

It is evident that the Farmers' Union of a "prohibition" state knows from bitter experience the exact difference between "temperance" and "total abstinence."

They propose to have "temperance" and that is the reason why they have used language that admits of no misinterpretation in telling "political preachers" where they belong, and warning all such to keep out of the fight.

The leaders of the Farmers' Union propose to have their own way about it, too. They have built 10,000 churches in Texas. They have contributed $5,000,000 a year to religious organizations—and they demonstrate that 75 per cent of the preachers in the state are on the farmers' payroll.

The facts cited and the arguments adduced ought to be enough to drive home to every political preacher and mischief-maker in Texas the essential distinction between true "temperance" and "prohibition."—Seattle Times, May 24, 1914, Editorial Page 6.

Berry Growers Combine.

Nineteen berry growers met at Snohomish, Wash., recently and organized an association for the marketing of local farm products, including vegetables and small fruit.

Sixty other farmers are expected to join the association. The 19 members year and the other farmers should have as many more.

Rules and Recipes

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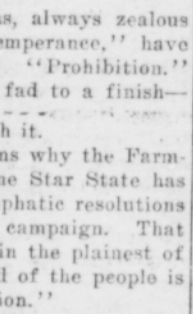

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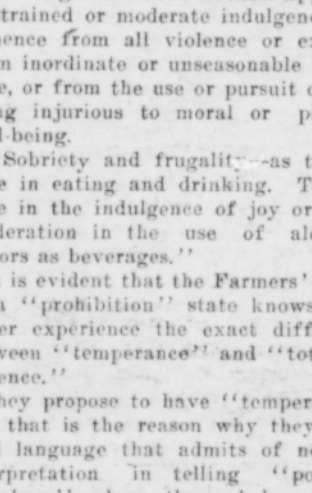

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