

## Making Money On the Farm

### XI.—Poultry Feeding

By C. V. GREGORY,  
Author of "Home Course in Modern  
Agriculture"

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**T**HERE are four main objects in feeding poultry—to maintain life, to cause growth, to produce eggs and to fatten. A large share of the feed given to any animal goes to maintain life. It is only when a fowl receives an excess over that amount that it can grow, produce eggs or lay on fat. Thus it will be seen that it pays to feed liberally. The wider the margin over the maintenance ration up to the amount the bird is able to use the greater will be the profit.

On the farm fowls will pick up most of their food, at least through the summer time. Yet even then they



FIG. XXI—FEEDING THE CHICKENS.

must be given some food, especially of the kinds that they are not able to find for themselves. The most plentiful food on the average farm and the one that the birds are most likely to get is corn. Corn is a heating food and is not suited for laying hens or growing chickens if fed alone. Some oats can be used for the older fowls, but this feed is not suited for young chickens unless ground. Oats are an especially good food for laying hens. One of the best grain feeds is wheat. It is usually too expensive to be fed very extensively, but it may often be used for part of the ration. Wheat, either whole or cracked, makes a splendid feed for young chicks. A mixture of wheat and oats grown together makes an excellent feed for all kinds of stock as well as poultry. Milling byproducts, such as shorts, bran and oilmeal, can be mixed in small quantities with the other feeds and fed to advantage.

#### Succulent Food Necessary.

One of the greatest needs of poultry in winter is some kind of succulent feed. This can be provided by storing away a quantity of cabbage, turnips, mangels and pumpkins. These can be chopped up during the winter and fed with other feeds or given alone. The fowls will relish them very much and make a liberal response at the egg basket. If there is a silo on the place some silage may be fed to the fowls to advantage. It is cheap and appetizing. Clover and alfalfa hay chopped fine in a feed cutter make good roughage. If soaked in hot water before feeding the hens will eat large amounts. Either bran or cut alfalfa may be mixed in the mash feeds in the proportion of one-quarter to three-quarters of the grain.

#### Value of Animal Food.

When allowed free range fowls obtain large amounts of animal food in the form of insects. Some feed of this kind is essential if the best results are to be secured. Beef scrap is a packing house byproduct that can be purchased at a reasonable price. It is a very valuable feed for growing chickens and laying hens. The most common animal food on the farm is skim milk. This is a valuable feed for all classes of fowls. At the Virginia Experiment station it was found that skim milk is worth a dollar a hundred as a food for laying hens. Buttermilk is also a good feed. If you have many laying hens and can get plenty of fresh bones from the butcher it will pay to get a bone cutter and make liberal use of cut bone as a food. It is high in protein and also contains a large amount of the mineral foods so badly needed by the laying hens.

Mineral foods form an important part of the ration. Of the dry matter of the egg 35.6 per cent is composed of mineral matter. Crushed oyster or clam shells, plaster and slaked lime are the best sources of minerals. Fowls also need grit to assist in grinding their food. A pile of sharp sand in the poultry yard is one of the best means of supplying this. Charcoal is a good preventive of intestinal troubles. A box of it should be kept where they can get at it at all times. A little salt mixed with this charcoal is beneficial.

#### Feeding Young Chicks.

There are three especially important feeding problems that confront the poultry raiser—feeding young chicks, feeding for egg production and fattening. The greatest source of loss in poultry raising is improper feeding of young chickens. The newly hatched chicks should not receive any feed at all until they are forty-eight hours old.

Crumbs of dry or toasted bread make good feed for the first few days. They may be moistened with a little milk or fed dry. Chicks will do better if most of their food is given in a dry form. One of the most common mistakes made in feeding chickens is in giving too much. They should never be fed more soft food than they will eat up clean in fifteen or twenty minutes. Dry grain scattered in straw or cut clover will, of course, last longer. Plenty of pure water, grit and charcoal should be provided. Any scheme that will compel the chicks to exert themselves in getting at their food will be beneficial to their health. The less they are permitted to bolt their food the less liable to digestive troubles will they become.

The breadcrumbs may continue to form a considerable part of the ration for two or three weeks. Hard boiled eggs chopped fine and mixed with the crumbs are good if not fed in too large amounts. Oatmeal is one of the best grain foods, but is too expensive to feed extensively. Crushed corn or wheat is a good feed to scatter in the litter. By the time the chicks are three weeks old grain can replace the breadcrumbs entirely. About a week later a little beef scrap can be added to the ration. Skim milk can be given from the time they are a week old. The best way to feed skim milk is to let it sour until it becomes curdy. Then pour off the whey and feed the curd fresh or dried. It is greatly liked by chicks in either form. The chicks should be fed three times a day and often if they are not allowed to run out. As they grow older the oats may be cut down in amount and the cheaper grains fed more liberally.

#### Feeding For Egg Production.

If winter eggs are desired it is important that the hens and pullets be fed in such a way as to stimulate egg production. The animal food part of the ration, which is very important, may consist of either beef scrap or dried curd. This should be put in a self feeding hopper, where the hens can get to it at all times. Hoppers containing charcoal, grit and oyster shells should also be provided and kept full. Fresh water is important and should be supplied plentifully. Automatic fountains are the best means of watering when the weather is not too cold. In cold weather water should be given in troughs at least twice a day. This matter of giving laying fowls a proper amount of water is not as well attended to as it should be.

The breakfast for the laying hens may consist of shelled corn scattered in the litter in the scratching shed. This will keep the hens scratching all the forenoon and will give them the exercise which they need to keep healthy and in laying condition. At noon a dry feed of mixed oats and wheat can be scattered in the straw. This keeps the hens scratching two or three hours longer. The main feed of the day is given at night in the form of a mash. A mash consisting of one part bran or cut clover or alfalfa, one part ground corn, one part ground oats and one part middlings is very good, although there are many other mixtures that can be used. In cold weather the mash should be fed warm. After eating the mash the hens will go to roost warm and comfortable and with full crops—conditions which favor a high egg yield.



FIG. XXII—CAPON READY FOR MARKET.

able to give much high priced feed at this season of the year. The charcoal and grit should be fed all the year round.

#### Fattening.

It is the common practice to let the chickens run until toward fall, when the cockerels are caught and sold without any special preparation for market. At the usual fall prices the cockerels yield a fair profit. This profit can be greatly increased by fattening them for a few weeks before marketing. A bunch of twenty or thirty can be shut in a yard together and fed a grain mixture consisting of two parts corn and one part shorts. They will gain rapidly on such feed and in two or three weeks will be ready to be marketed with a considerable increase both in price and weight.

Where a special market for high class poultry can be obtained it pays to crate fatten. This is done by confining the birds in slatted crates, tiered up under a shed. They are fed some such a mash as ground oats, two parts; ground barley, one part; and ground corn one part, mixed with skim milk. This is fed in troughs three times a day, giving the chickens all they will clean up in thirty minutes. From one to two pounds can be put on each one in three weeks, and the quality of the meat is greatly improved at the same time, enough to double the price if a high class market can be secured. A still higher quality of meat can be obtained if the chicks are castrated when they are three or four months old.

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By Order of Committee,  
S. L. Thomas  
Conrad Schlatter  
Henry Eikenberry  
Thomas Wiles  
J. M. Meisinger  
B. S. Ramsey, Sec'y.  
R. B. Windham, Chairman.

#### Editor's Notice.

If the heeler who handed in a slip of paper marked, "How much did Salome?" will bring himself and a stout hemp rope to the office to-night we will supply the necessary chandelier.—Yale Record.

#### Fact.

Ambitious young men who contemplate a change from bookkeeping should bear in mind the fact that there is likewise an upkeep connected with a poultry farm.—Indianapolis News.

#### "Showed" Him How.

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## Want Column

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## A. L. TIDD LAWYER

References:  
Bank of Eagle, Eagle.  
Nehawka Bank, Nehawka.  
Bank of Murdock, Murdock.  
First Nat'l bank, Greenwood.  
State bank of Murray, Murray.  
First Nat'l bank, Plattsmouth.

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