

Agricultural Department

FARM POULTRY.

Poultry is worthy of more attention than the general run of farmers give it. Everyone keeps chickens. Many keep ducks, geese and turkeys, but of all who do, only a small per cent really study this branch of farming and get a fraction of the possible returns.

Hens need breeding for eggs as cows do for milk. The scrub hen is no more of a money-maker than the scrub cow. The hen is in need of a balanced ration the same as the cow. She gets it herself in summer but in winter she must be supplied by the farmer.

If you have been keeping track of the cash received from your poultry you will be aware of how many grocery and other bills have been paid by the neglected hen. If you will begin to study poultry and practice what you learn, you will see how much more money you have been getting. Every farmer should take a greater interest in farm poultry. Breed for eggs, feed for eggs, learn how to fatten the surplus. Poultry-raising is not to be laughed at.

Haven't time to fool with hens? Then turn that business over to the wife or daughter and give them the profits. Don't make them do the work and you pocket the cash. The laborer is worthy of her hire. She will soon have a new cloak, a new dress, etc., and you will be none the poorer for it. Good way for the girls to earn money for a piano, or music lessons, or satisfy some long cherished desire for self-improvement.

Thorough Breeds Best.

It may be claimed that the best hens in a common flock—those that produce eggs—are at least well bred. It is difficult to find a flock of hens that has not some Plymouth Rocks, Brahma, Leghorn or Wyandotte grades among them, and which accounts for an excellence that may be found. If scrubs will pay, how much better would hens that have been selected, do? Scrubs are creatures of accident, while pure breeds are the result of breeding. The poultry raiser who will do some thinking in the matter of breeding poultry and who will set out to accomplish an object would have better results than the one who allows his flock to increase without careful supervision. The ones who will give their scrubs attention will derive better results from them, and will be induced to improve; and if they are not willing to look after scrubs, they will not succeed with pure breeds.

Roosts and Nests.

Less consideration is given roosts and nests than any other part of the poultry house, and this is not right. With a desire to save labor roosts are nailed to the walls, and nests are so fastened as to become a part of the building in itself, and it is impossible to thoroughly clean the poultry house and rid it of vermin, for as long as there is a crack in which a louse can hide, there will be a rapid increase, for a single female lays enough eggs in a day to furnish foundation for a million in a week. The perches should be built so that they do not touch the walls at any place, for the red mites or lice that do the most harm do not stay on the fowls during the day, but hide in cracks and crannies during the day and at night seek their prey. If the perches do not touch walls they will have less opportunity to hide and if roosts are thoroughly wetted with kerosene once a week for a month or two little difficulty will be encountered with these lice. Kerosene is instant death to them and if roosts do not

touch walls they can't get away from it but will be compelled to stay and take their "medicine."

The instinct of self-preservation prompts the fowls to perch on the highest point they can reach when taking their quarters at night. They naturally desire to be above danger from below.

The perches should all be on a level, about eighteen inches above the floor, and so constructed as to be easily removed. By making roosts low and level, the fowls will not crowd each other, no injury will result from getting on and off, and no fight for preference of position will take place, to say nothing of superior ventilation, etc.

Nest boxes should be built to be readily cleaned and thoroughly disinfected, and removable to be taken out of doors. They should be in a darkened place. Nests should not be joined but separate (soap boxes are excellent), and compel hens to walk in rather than fly upon the nests from the top.

Roosts and nests should frequently be taken outside the building, and lightly brushed with kerosene, and burned. The fire will run over the surface without doing any harm. If properly constructed roosts and nests may be taken out and replaced in a few moments leaving an empty poultry house that can be easily cleaned.

A Few Cackles.

Hens will produce more eggs when given all the milk they can drink.

Eggs desired for long keeping should be kept infertile and in a cool place. Remember that eggs are not the outgrowth of accident but management.

Guineas are better insect destroyers than chickens and do not scratch as much.

It is doing the little things when they need to be done that counts in chicken raising.

Kill the sick hens, don't waste time with them. Bury them deep or burn their bodies. Better to lose a few sick hens than for disease to spread through all the flock.

THE BERRY GARDEN.

The farmer's berry garden should be decided upon now. Mature plants for the season, select your plants, order them early. One-quarter acre of good land, set with proper varieties and well cultivated, should produce from twenty to forty bushels of nice berries every day in season and a liberal supply canned, preserved or dried during the entire year. Plants for such a garden may be purchased direct from a reliable grower for \$10 or \$15 and should include the following varieties: Three hundred strawberry plants early, medium and late; one hundred blackberry plants, early and late; fifty black raspberry plants, early and late; fifty red raspberry plants, early and late; seventy-five currants, red and white, early and late; eighteen grapes, three varieties, early. Multiply this list by four for one acre, or by twenty for five acres, and you have the right proportion for a continuous supply of different varieties for market purposes.

Good berries may be grown on any soil, sand, clay, muck, loam, gravel or a combination of each, provided the same be highly fertilized, well drained and thoroughly cultivated. Early fruits are usually most desirable, and light soils with southern exposure are best adapted for that purpose. Light soils, however, require heavy fertilizing, more mulch in summer, and are more liable to injury by draught and produce lighter crops. Clay soil must be well drained. Such land is more

difficult to prepare, matures later crops and is not so favorable for winter protection. The ideal berry ground would be, first, a rich sandy loam with clay sub-soil; second, a dark loam or gravelly loam mixed with clay, and a clay sub-soil, all having a southerly or eastern slope.

Any of these mixed soils will make good berry gardens by applying good barnyard manure, which contains all the essential elements required. When such manure can not be obtained, then commercial fertilizers rich in nitrogen and potash should be supplied. Avoid low, flat land unless undermined; it is usually cold, late crops mature and are more subject to frosts. Avoid steep hillsides, as being more subject to drought and wash of soil by severe rains.

Very few farms are without suitable soil and location for a good berry garden, and that farmer who simply exists, year after year, without a good garden, has not learned the first principles of good living. Who should grow berries? First of all, farmers everywhere, for family use. Farmers must grow berries or do without. No one can grow them so cheaply as he. They may be produced ready for picking at two cents per quart. The farmer saves cost of picking, boxing, crating, freight, express and profit of growers. He gets them at first cost, fresh from the vines, and to the extent of his own family, has the best market in the world—a home market. He can select the best land and location on his farm and is sure of a profit with half a crop.

Farmers can never have ideal homes without the fruit garden. It teaches the lesson of intensified farming, and results in better tillage, larger crops, better stock and improved methods in every way. Good gardens and poor farms never kept company long. The growing of berries for family use is easily done. The growing of berries on a large scale and selling them requires considerable skill, and a special business tact. Only those who have good location, good market and a taste for the business should attempt it. Many small farmers so situated are making a success by commencing moderately and increasing acreage from season to season as experience warrants. Berries should be grown by owners of all village homes, and acreage property in city and village may be profitably used for that purpose. The market gardener selling his own products can often make an acre or two in berries very profitable.

Farm Fences.

The fence is to the farm what the clothes are to the man. It affords protection and gives a dressed appearance. An ill-kept fence is as sure to indicate the shiftlessness of the farmer as a shabby suit speaks for the tramp.

CEMENT

Cement is the great building material of the present day. It is used for everything—making sidewalks, posts, bridges, houses, barns, troughs, etc. Being obtained at a reasonable price it is rapidly supplanting other building material, not only in towns, but throughout the country. This is as it should be. It frees the purchaser from the necessity of buying light-priced lumber or even iron for construction purposes.

The invention of cement block machinery has made it possible for the farmer to make his own buildings from the very beginning. He first buys a block making machine, then the cement. During slack times he manufactures his blocks and is then ready for building when the time arrives. The right kind of a machine makes it easily possible to manufacture a building block that eventually becomes harder than stone and is practically indestructible by the elements. These machines make it possible to secure a variety of blocks and thereby enables the builder to put up an exceedingly attractive structure. Experience shows that exposure to the air results in increased solidity so

that any kind of a structure may be built. A few years ago a cement building was the exception. Now they are found everywhere and are giving great satisfaction.

Possibly the most satisfactory results are obtained from hollow concrete blocks. The use of cement blocks has given a great impetus to the manufacture of cement. Big plants are rapidly being erected all over the country and as a consequence, the price is only about one-half of what it was three or four years ago. There is an immense amount of material in the United States for the manufacture of cement and it only requires capital and a demand for the product to produce all that is necessary.

Special machines are made for fancy facings and other ornamental stone. These machines are so equipped that the different ornamental blocks can be secured by changing some of the parts. The manufacture of concrete posts is growing rapidly, as it is very difficult to get wooden posts at a reasonable figure. These posts when well made are handsome in appearance, frost proof, and get harder and stronger with age. They are practically indestructible. With wire fences and cement posts there is no danger from fire. Weeds and leaves can be burned along the fence row without injury.

ABOUT MILKING

Never allow the cows to miss even one milking. This would not be treating them right. When a cow is not

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