

POULTRY DEPARTMENT.

All communications and inquiries should be addressed to
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What Is It?

Editor Poultry Department:

I would like to know if you could give me any advice in regard to little chickens having swollen and inflamed legs. What caused it, and what is a good remedy? Please answer in Florida Agriculturist. C. T. C.

We can form no idea from the description. Have never known such a case. We pass it on to our readers. If any of you have had any experience, we should be glad to hear from you.—Editor.

Care of Incubator Chicks.

Hatching the chicks is only the beginning. The care of the chicks after they are hatched is serious business. A poultryman, in South Florida, writing to the Florida Poultry and Agricultural Journal as follows:

A great many people attempt things which they are not able to do, and perhaps I run some risk of being included in this class, when I try to tell others how to care for little chicks; because the breed, the conditions, and individuals, are all so very different. I will give our way however, and hope it may help some one. For the past three years, we have raised from 1,000 to 1,200 little chicks each season; and have had good success with them. We keep nothing but standard bred White Leghorns. The little chicks are allowed to remain in the nursery of the incubator until 24 hours old, at which time they are removed to the brooders. The brooders having been previously cleaned, whitewashed and heated to a temperature of 90 degrees. Fifty chicks to a brooder is enough. We cover the brooder floor well with clean, dry sand. On top of this we put about two inches of cut clover hay for them to scratch in. The most critical and the most important period of the chick's life is the first two weeks of its existence, and it is most essential that during this period it receives proper care. Upon the care given it, depends whether the chicks will develop into fine healthy birds or runts. So many people assume that feed is the all important question during this period, but this is undoubtedly a mistake. Nine out of every ten people who visit you, will ask the first thing, what do you feed? The feed question is quite important, but no more so than providing dry, clean, warm and properly ventilated homes for the chicks. We do not allow them out in the wet grass, and should a heavy rain come up, or even a shower, we are careful to see that every one is inside. The brooder should be cleaned every few days. The chicks love to scratch in clean chaff. We do not give the first feed until the chicks are 36 hours old, and then we give them small quantities of some good brand of prepared chick food; composed of a variety of ground grain. If the chick food contains grit, we do not supply it until the chicks are about three weeks old. Fresh, clean water is supplied daily. Dry bran and a good grade of beef scrap, are given

in hoppers after the chicks are four days old; it is replenished as fast as eaten up. After they are three or four weeks old, we mix equal parts of wheat, cracked corn, and the chick food together, and feed this in hoppers if the chicks are on free range. Do not attempt this if the chicks are confined to small, bare yards, but on free range it will give good results. As to heat, we gradually reduce the temperature of the brooder so that by the end of three weeks, the chicks require but little, if any artificial heat except when the nights are very cold, at which time we give them a little heat. We always use outdoor brooders, which are moved frequently so that the chicks at all times have a fresh run.

When two months old, they are removed to colony houses, where they are given a large free range. By following these methods, we lose but few chicks, and they grow from the start, and mature early into fine, thrifty fowls. Take a number of good poultry journals, and let this one head your list, and you will succeed.

A Farmer on Artificial Incubation.

The following on the use of incubators is from the Michigan Farmer:

It has been the writer's fortune to look to poultry as one of the most important farm adjuncts. Important because personal experience leads me to say that when rightly handled no farm stock has ever yielded as satisfactory returns as has a flock of business hens. Incubators and brooders have been my sole reliance for nine years and during that time my success with chicks has averaged far better on an increasing scale than it ever did before on a comparatively small scale.

I have used a number of different styles of incubators and have noted carefully the varying success of many other operators using a great variety of machines. Of all those that I have known who have tried to solve the problems of artificial incubation, comparatively few have succeeded in making it a go. In my judgment that failure is primarily due to one of two general causes. First, it goes without saying that we cannot all be poultry keepers. One of the first principles here is adaptability on the part of the operator. It matters not how devoted a person may be to this subject if he is not able to keep himself in harmony with the fowls under his care and make himself a ready student of their vital needs he will meet with but indifferent success. So also if he has a fitness for this work, but is naturally careless and slovenly, the chicks will be a disappointment. The cause, however, that is at the base of the great majority of failures is the use of cheap and practically worthless machines; also too much fuss over details. The number of persons who are fussing hopelessly year after year with machines wrong from first principles is surprising. The importance of using strictly first-class incubators cannot be overestimated. The right kind of a machine well managed can often be made to pay for itself in a single season. Aside from the work of tending lamps, turning and handling eggs, my machine scarcely takes two minutes per day.

The location of the incubator is a most important item. A reasonably

dry cellar is an ideal location, although if the dining room has a reasonably uniform temperature I know from experience that in it good results are likely.

There are three fundamental requisites to be considered in this artificial system. They are moisture, ventilation and temperature. The moisture problem has been the stumbling block for many. In the incubator ventilation and moisture are most intimately associated. The amount of air that circulates freely over the eggs and passes off at the bottom of the egg chamber determines the per cent of moisture. From all the chicks that die from extremes of this kind probably nine-tenths are drowned by excessive moisture. A chicken just before hatching should have at least one-fifth of the total contents of the egg occupied by the air cell. It must be remembered that all eggs are naturally supplied with enough moisture under normal conditions; consequently we have almost entirely done away with moisture in the machines. Indeed I think that as a rule when moisture has been used it has done more harm than good. If the ventilator cannot be regulated to suit the rate of evaporation this point may need modifying.

Where chicks, through some mismanagement, are too weak to get away from the shells promptly, a little moisture at the pipping stage may help more of them out. It prevents the strippings from drying fast to the slow-hatching weakling and thus cement the poor chick fast to the shell. However, such methods to save weak chicks are unsatisfactory, for as a rule it does not pay to save them. A good plan for the novice to follow is to set a hen under normal conditions at the same time the incubator is started, then the two can be compared as the hatch progresses.

The next most vital point is temperature. After a good many trials I suspect this point is often exaggerated. A temperature over 105 is positively dangerous but the other extreme is of less consequence. The temperature of eggs under a hen setting under normal conditions ranges from 90 degrees or lower up to 103 degrees. This last year I secured the best results where the temperature in one machine was purposely varied between the limits just mentioned. The test was made for the entire season and the machine just mentioned led by a good margin. It is important that part of each day the temperature of every egg be raised to the normal point but from one season's tests I suspect mathematical accuracy is not necessarily conducive to the best results.

Another item to consider is uniformly medium sized eggs of the same color. White eggs evaporate more rapidly than dark ones and for best results should be used alone. Lastly, do not fuss with the machine, for vigorous germs, normal temperature and normal ventilation should bring good results.

A Safe Way to Pack Eggs.

A correspondent of Farm and Home tells a good way, as she thinks, to pack eggs for carrying to market:

Put a newspaper in the bottom of a box or basket, place upon this a layer of eggs packed as closely together as possible, so there will be no

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Caponizing is easy—soon learned. Complete outfit with free instructions postpaid \$2.50.
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100 pounds crushed Oyster Shells.....\$.75
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E. O. PAINTER FERTILIZER CO.
Jacksonville, Fla.

HENS' TEETH GROUND OYSTER SHELLS

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E. O. PAINTER FERTILIZING CO.
Jacksonville, Fla.

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If your fowls are troubled with lice or chiggers send \$1.25 and get 100 pounds of tobacco dust and sprinkle it in your coop. The tobacco is guaranteed to be unbleached. Send 3 cent stamp for sample.—E. O. Painter Fertilizer Co., Jacksonville, Fla.

room for them to roll around. Place two thicknesses of newspaper over this layer of eggs, and upon this paper another layer of eggs, and so continue. Upon the top, or last layer of eggs, place a covering of a little more weight—a lap robe or an old shawl will answer this purpose. In this way I have filled large clothes baskets with eggs, and taken them in a lumber wagon, over rough roads, to a market six miles distant, without breaking an egg. This method of packing eggs is much superior to packing in oats, bran, etc. Try it and you will be convinced.

Poultry Life In America tells how to pack eggs for shipment when wanted for hatching at the end of the journey:

When you pack eggs for hatching do a good honest job of it, and pack them so that they will not get scrambled enroute. The nicest packing that the writer ever saw done, was where an hundred eggs were packed in half of a common egg crate. On the bottom was excelsior to break the jar, then a pasteboard, on top of which was spread a layer of cotton; then each egg was carefully wrapped in paper, and put in the section, which section was then filled full of the cotton batting, and so on till the layers were all filled, as they needed to go. The top was then filled in with newspaper. It is easily believed that 85 out of 100 of the eggs hatched, even though they had traveled half way across the continent.

E. O. Painter Fertilizer Co.,
Jacksonville, Fla.,

Will you kindly send me prices of your fertilizers for this year. I have used yours and no others, for the last three years and wish for no better. I wish to get 4 tons for the first application and more in June.

A. W. Hardee.
Rockledge, Fla., Jan. 16, 1905.