

POULTRY

DUAL-PURPOSE FOWL HOUSE

How to Construct Building for Keeping More Than One Breed and for Small Matings.

In many cases where a person wishes to keep more than one variety of fowls or have more than one mating of the same variety, it devolves upon him to construct such buildings as will best serve his purpose. If he only wishes to make small matings and has only a limited amount of space to devote to poultry, the continuous breeding house will probably appeal to him.

In a house of this kind it is found advisable to construct it of such dimensions as will allow pens about eight feet by eight feet and also have an alley about four feet wide which can be used with great convenience for cleaning, feeding and watering, says Farm, Stock and Home. Pens of this size will easily accommodate about eight or ten females and one male bird.

Each pen should also have a window of fair dimensions facing the south. Dropping boards, roosts and nests should all be made movable so that they can be the more easily cleaned and disinfected.

Good dimensions for such houses will be found to be five feet from sill to eaves in the rear or north side and



Dual-Purpose House.

seven feet from eaves to sill in front or south side and twelve feet wide. Any length can be used to contain any number of pens.

The walls of these buildings may be constructed to suit one's fancy, but a good substantial wall can be made by placing boards vertically between the sills, covering with a layer of tar-paper or other building paper and then a layer of drop-siding. This will be found to protect fowls well under ordinary conditions. Of course, the building may be lathed and plas-



Roosting Platform.

A—Dropping board. B—Roost support. C—Coat.

tered if desired. The roof can be made straight or broken, but the broken style will be found to give the best satisfaction. The front silt should be about five feet from eaves to peak, which will leave about nine feet for the rear silt on a building twelve feet wide. Any material may be used, but be sure that the roof is air-tight as it will keep the building warmer and also allow a better working of the ventilating system.

In the matter of nests one may indulge his fancy. There are so many patent nests, both with trap and without, that it would be no hard matter to get what one wants. However, the old soap box, with one side removed, still continues to be the favorite as it answers the purpose and Mrs. Hen doesn't seem to care whether it's patented or not.

If one has plenty of area in which to raise poultry he may desire to have colony houses instead of a continuous breeding house. In this case he will use small movable houses, probably about 10 by 16 in dimensions. There will be no need of an alley in a house of this kind. This building should accommodate from fifteen to twenty hens on free range. These houses may be placed at intervals on the space devoted to poultry and this system is generally conceded to be most successful.

Of course, one may construct the interior of these buildings to suit his fancy, but he should always bear in mind that at some time he will find it most convenient to have as many parts removable as is possible. The dropping boards may be placed on cleats and the roosts on loose standards. A strip 2 by 2 will be found to make a good roost and good standards may be made from a 10-inch board.

Guard Against Lice.

Just before the chicks are due to arrive, give the hen a good dusting with insect powder, even if she seems to be free from lice. Let the chicks stay in the nest with their mother for at least thirty-six hours and then place them in a suitable coop with her. Provide the floor of the coop with chaff or fine straw for the babies to walk on and scratch in. Give them light feeds at first of water, fine grit, hard boiled eggs and dry bread crumbs. Keep them dry and the hen will keep them warm.

Signs of Indigestion.

If a bird is noticed to be moping around and brooding with difficulty, look for signs of indigestion and take care of it at once.

Setting Winter Eggs.

When one sets, of course, desired, one may get them by making comfortable by the use of

POULTRY

SCALDING A FOWL PROPERLY

Any Aged Bird May Be Treated Without Injuring Its Quality If Handled in Right Way.

So great is the possibility of scalding the fowl improperly that dealers in some localities show an inclination to demand dry plucked fowls. As a means of overcoming this difficulty, C. K. Graham of Connecticut, who has spent a good deal of time in studying the subject, offers these suggestions: Any aged bird may be scalded without seriously injuring its quality if it is properly handled; but owing to the large number of poorly dressed scalded fowls, the marketmen place a premium of from 1 to 2 cents a pound on dry plucked stock.

Boiling water may be used, but care must be taken not to leave young birds in the water too long, or the skin will cook, while with old fowls a little more time may not do any harm. The head and shanks should be kept out of the water, as the scalding will discolor them and make them unightly. Immediately after the bird is taken from the scalding water it should be dipped into cold water to stop the cook, and, as poultrymen say, to "plump the bird."

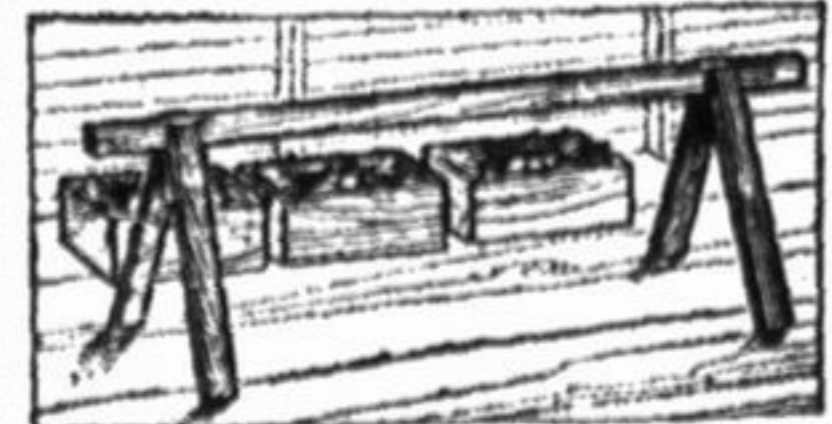
The bird should then be hung as for dry plucking, as no bird plucked on the lap or the table will have so good an appearance. If a scalded bird is exposed to a draught when being plucked or when cooling, the skin is likely to harden and become rough. It is because of these possibilities that dry plucking is recommended, as the condition of the skin to a great extent accounts for the high or low returns received.

MOVABLE ROOSTS AND NESTS

Nothing More Convenient in Cleaning Than Long Saw-Horse in Fight Against Little Parasites.

After trying all sorts and types of roosts and roost-poles, I am convinced that nothing is better than a long saw-horse, says a writer in the Farm, Mall and Breeze. A roost of this type, set on a smooth floor, and with removable nest boxes, makes it possible to keep the henhouse perfectly clean at all times. The main difficulty experienced in cleaning the house is the obstructions, these being usually the roosts and nests. If they can be taken out quickly and handily, and nothing left but a bare room with a smooth floor board, the work of cleaning becomes an easy task.

Once a week I give the henhouses



Movable Roosts and Nests.

a cleaning. The nest boxes are first taken out, the straw dumped and burned and the boxes themselves whitewashed and aired. Before being returned they are supplied with clean straw. Treatment of this sort is "death on bugs."

The saw-horse roosts undergo the same cleaning process, being taken out, brushed and whitewashed. The henhouse floor is then swept clean and the whole interior given a new sprinkle of whitewash. Should lice or mites be manifest, an additional treatment of chloride of lime is given, but this is seldom necessary.

POULTRY NOTES

There is profit in raising chickens when they are properly handled.

Dump the litter from the nests of tenor now and burn it just as soon as dumped.

Poultry wire tacked over a shallow box makes a good feeder for bran or a dry mash.

Hens over two years old are seldom good layers, and unless good as breeders should be disposed of.

For the first meal a hard-boiled egg mixed with dry bread crumbs is best. Stale bread soak in milk and squeezed dry is good.

The farmer can produce a pound of chicken as cheaply as he can a pound of beef, pork or mutton, and it always brings a better price.

Sell off the scrub chickens and have only one breed. This is especially so with the beginner. One breed at a time and perfect that.

Some varieties stand confinement better than others. Consider this when choosing a breed if you must keep them closely yarded.

If chickens raised in a brooder are not rendered weak and tender by too much heat, and not enough ventilation, they grow rapidly and make early layers.

All houses and nests should be clean for best results. Fight lice all the year around. There are some essentials in poultry that must be attended to. This is one of them.

The poultry business is yet in its infancy and offers a good living for those who take it up as a business, carefully looking into the conditions, such as breeds, markets, handling, etc.

MANAGEMENT OF THE HOTBED AND THE COLD FRAME AFTER PLANTING



Lettuce and Cauliflower Plants in 2 1/2 Inch Pots, Ready for Placing Outside.

By C. A. DURST, University of Illinois.

The most difficult task in hotbed work is in the management after planting. Skill is developed only by experience. The beds must be kept covered securely on nights and cold days when the temperature remains below freezing. They should be uncovered every morning as soon as the temperature is above freezing, and covered in the evening before that point is reached. During rainy weather boards, if used as covers, will turn the water if "lapped." During severe weather manure or straw is thrown over ordinary covers in addition.

The beds are aired during the warm part of pleasant days by placing supports under the sash. Care must be taken that no chilly winds are allowed to blow in upon the plants. Water should be applied only when needed, and then generously. It is a mistake to use only enough water to wet the surface.

Hotbeds are frequently troubled with damping-off, which is due to a fungus that attacks the plants at the surface of the soil and causes them to wilt and eventually to die. Its presence is usually an indication of improper management. The fungus is favored by moist atmosphere and high temperature. To avoid it the beds should be watered in the morning so the plants will go into the night dry. During spells of dark, cold weather the beds must be kept as dry as possible. Giving the beds too little air favors the disease. Plants made to grow too rapidly are most subject to it. Sometimes when an attack has started it may be quelled by loosening up the soil between the plants and applying some sand or sulphur and by changing the management. If plants are shifted to another bed they can usually be saved.

The whole idea in plant production is to keep them growing slowly but steadily. It is very easy to force them into a weak, rapid growth, but it is never good for the crop.

When the plants are about two inches high and have put out their first pair of true leaves they should be shifted to cold frames, where they



Tomato Plant in Four Inch Pot Ready For Planting in the Field.

may be given more room. Tomatoes, peppers and eggplants need two shifts and may be handled in pots, flats or in the open bed. Cabbage, cauliflower and lettuce need one shift only, and are handled admirably in small pots. Celery requires two shifts for best results. Shallow boxes are the best things for it. Beets will make an earlier crop if started in beds and transplanted than if started outside. They need no shifting, but should be thinned if thick. Sweet potatoes are never shifted.

It has become popular in the last few years to start onions in hotbeds. By having the plants the thickness of a lead pencil and transferring them to the open as early as the weather will allow, larger bulbs are obtained than by other methods. Prize Taker is the one variety particularly suited for this purpose. Onions are not easily handled in hotbeds, and grow slowly, consequently they must be planted early. They require no shifting.

Lettuce and radishes are often grown to maturity in hotbeds and cold frames, according to the season. Radishes are never shifted, and lettuce may or may not be. The head varieties do very well if started in hotbeds and shifted to cold frames, allowing about 40 by 12 inches for each plant.

Asparagus and rhubarb are also often forced in hotbeds in the spring after the roots have been stored in a dark, cool place during the winter. The roots are planted closely together and covered with soil. As the soil

is produced from stored-up food, no soil treatment or fertilizer will be of any benefit. Plants once used for forcing are no good for further use.

Besides receiving plants started in hotbeds, cold frames are often used for starting melons and cucumbers. Great differences in earliness of these crops are made because of it. As these plants do not transplant easily they must be grown in some receptacle from which they may be removed without injury to the root system. Dirt bands are probably the best and cheapest things for this work. They are practically like a quart berry box without the bottom and are made by manufacturers of strawberry box material. They are creased, folded (not tacked) and placed in the frames, where they hold each other in place. They are then filled with soil and the seeds planted. In this locality the seed should be planted about the last week in April. Not only is the crop made distinctly earlier by this method than when the seeds are planted in the open field, but a surer stand will result, and what is fully as important, the plants have a start when placed in the field and so can cope better with their common insect enemy, the striped cucumber beetle.

Cold frames are usually provided with glass or canvas during the early part of the season, and sometimes with boards or mats in addition. As the season advances these are gradually dispensed with in order that the plants may be "hardened-off" before transplanting to the open. This is accomplished by removing the sash, first on nice days only, then on warm nights also, and finally leaving them off in any kind of weather except when it is freezing. Preliminary setting in the field all plants should be heavily watered.

As is suggested by the things mentioned in this paper, there are many tricks and turns in hotbed and cold frame work. Experience and careful observation are, of course, the only things that will make a person expert, but fair success may be attained without much experience.

The question arises: "Does it pay?" Can one afford to bother with such things? It is true that radishes and lettuce for eating and plants for setting out may be bought, but the price is usually very high, and, besides, one often has difficulty in procuring what is desired. Besides furnishing the family needs, a hotbed will often supply a surplus of plants which can be disposed of at a good profit. But aside from the profit end, look at the other benefits—fresh, choice vegetables four or five weeks earlier than otherwise possible, the varieties you relish most, right from your own garden, available when you want them, and the product of your own effort.

Runs for Chickens.

To confine or not to confine the fowls is becoming quite an issue. The advocates of both systems present plausible theories to prove their contentions. To a certain extent both are right. The man with a farm and plenty of room for free range announces that fact. He claims his fowls are bigger boned, more rugged and the hens lay eggs of better fertility. The breeder on the city lot, who raises his young stock without rum or at the most small ones, and who keeps his fowls in continual confinement, meets all these arguments with ones just as plausible. There are certain advantages in both systems, but it is advisable to give fowls as much room as possible for continued success, and no poultry raiser ever turned away from yard room where it could be obtained. If in the city do not keep too many fowls. Give the few plenty of room, and in the long run they will do better.

To Have Experiment Field.

The farmers of Platt county are to have an experiment field which will be located at Enfield. Two hundred farmers in Enfield township alone have subscribed for that purpose. At Sidel in Vermilion county money has been raised for the purchase of an experiment field, but the university does not, as yet, have the deed for either of the fields.

Mistakes of Breeders.

A great many breeders seem to think if they possess a pure-bred boar the quality of the sows does not count for much. This is a sad mistake indeed, and the farmers cannot be too careful in selection of well-bred sows.

Pasturing Sheep.

People have abused their pastures by overstocking them, and then blame the sheep because the pastures came out poorly at the end of the season. By judicious management pastures are improved by stocking with sheep.

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