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FEEDING THE FARM FLOCK FOR EGG PRODUCTION

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COLORADO AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE
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FEEDING THE FARM FLOCK FOR EGG PRODUCTION

By O. C. KRUM, Poultry Specialist

The bulk of the eggs produced in Colorado comes from farm flocks. The average production over the State is not over seventy eggs a bird for the year and too great a proportion of these are laid during the summer months. As a result we are heavy importers of high-priced eggs in winter and exporters of cheap eggs in summer.

Better stock, reasonably well housed and, in particular, better feeding will increase winter egg-production on the farm and make the flock a very profitable sideline.

NEEDS OF THE LAYING HEN

Mineral.—Oyster shell has been found to be the best source of lime for egg shells. Nothing that a hen picks up about the farm takes the place of this shell and a shortage of it has been proved to result in a serious reduction in the number of eggs laid.

Water.—Two-thirds of the egg is water. Keep it before them in a clean, cool but unfrozen condition from morning till night, otherwise the hens will not drink enough to make a good production.

Fat.—The yolks of eggs are nearly pure fat which is supplied by most of our common grains. Too much fat makes overfat hens and fewer eggs.

Protein.—There is not sufficient protein in common grains to make up the whites of the eggs. If this material is lacking they lay less eggs and turn the excess yolks into body fat. Meat, peas and skimmilk or buttermilk are the usual sources of protein. Meat can be put in the mash or milk or scraps of cooked meat can be kept before them in a separate container.

Green Feeds.—During the winter green feed is needed as an appetizer and laxative and to supply vitamins, a shortage of which results in poor health. Cabbage and sprouted grains are particularly valuable in this respect and milk in addition helps.

Grit.—Except where there is plenty of gravel about the size of a pea the hens must be supplied with grit the year around. The gravel will need to be collected and kept under cover during the winter months.

Hull.—Some hull such as is supplied by oats, barley, cane or bran is needed to prevent constipation. Hens cannot digest hull, however, and too much in the ration will cause starvation.

Ground Feeds.—A method of feeding which will save labor is the use of dry mash, kept before the hens all the time. The

ground grains are more easily digested and better production is secured with than without them.

Exercise.—The true object of the whole grains or scratch feed is to induce exercise which is necessary for health and to prevent heavy breeds from getting overfat. Do not overfeed on grain in the morning. Force them to dig it out of a deep, dry, clean litter.

Poisons.—Hens are often poisoned with rye, salt, spoiled meat, spoiled canned vegetables, mouldy feed, frozen greens and plain filth. When hens are fed properly they not only produce better but are in healthier condition and less susceptible to disease.

RATIONS FOR FARM EGG PRODUCTION

Ration No. 1

Scratch:

200 pounds cracked corn
200 pounds wheat
100 pounds oats or barley

Mash:

200 pounds ground wheat or
200 pounds mill run (50 percent shorts) or
100 pounds wheat bran and
100 pounds wheat middlings
100 pounds corn meal or chop
100 pounds ground oats or ground barley
100 pounds meat meal or beef scraps or
2000 pounds skim milk (16 quarts a day for 100 hens) or
50 pounds meat meal and
1000 pounds skim milk (8 quarts a day for 100 hens).

Ration No. 2

Scratch:

100 pounds wheat
100 pounds brewing barley (a good grade with hulls)

Mash:

100 pounds ground oats or barley
200 pounds ground wheat or
100 pounds wheat bran and
100 pounds wheat middlings
200 pounds ground peas
60 pounds meat meal or beef scraps or
1200 pounds skim milk (9 quarts a day for 100 hens)

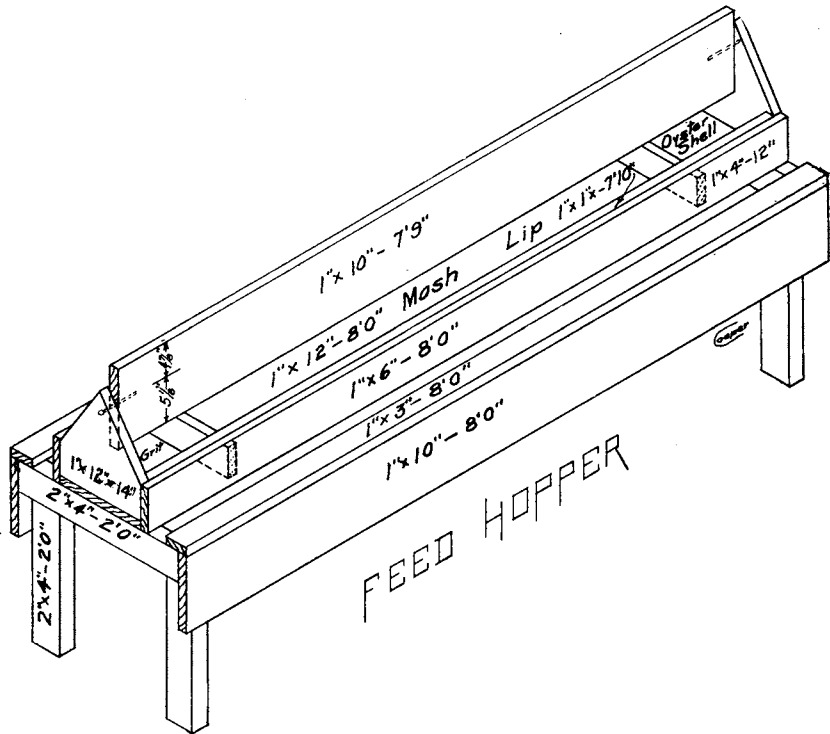
METHOD OF FEEDING

Keep the mash, water, grit and oyster shells before them all day.

Feed scratch grains in the morning at the rate of one and one-half quarts to 100 hens in summer and two quarts in winter. Feed all they will clean up in an hour at night.

Give green feeds at noon when fresh green grass cannot be obtained by the hens. Feed table scraps at noon. Do not cook potatoes or other root crops or grains for hens. Feed them raw.

Hens should be kept away from waste grains and stacks during the forenoon and forced to eat mash and table scraps.



Dry mash saves labor and increases production

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