CC56-133 Poultry Profit Pointers: Quality Eggs

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Poultry Profit Pointers

Quality Eggs

EXTENSION SERVICE
UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE
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COOPERATING
W. V. LAMBERT, DIRECTOR
QUALITY EGGS

by Elvin C. Schultz

CONSUMERS WANT GOOD EGGS

Consumers are learning that eggs are a protective food, high in nutritive value, and essential in a good diet. As a result, they are buying more eggs. At the same time, housewives are becoming more egg-quality conscious. They are demanding better eggs. It is essential, therefore, that every egg producer take particular care of the eggs he produces and markets.

QUALITY CONSERVATION STARTS ON THE FARM

The hens do their best to lay high quality eggs. It is up to every poultryman to conserve this quality. The suggestions contained in this folder can be put into practice immediately. They are practical and easy to follow. They will help supply consumers with good eggs—the kind everyone likes to eat.

LAYING STOCK IS IMPORTANT

The laying hen is an important factor in producing top-grade eggs. Select stock which has been bred to produce eggs with these desirable qualities:

1. Large egg size which is reached soon after maturity.
2. Good shell texture which persists throughout the year.
3. Firm, thick egg-white which holds up well under handling.
Check these qualities with your hatcheryman because these factors are largely inherited and developed through selective breeding.

**FEED A BALANCE RATION**

Feed is another important factor in producing high-quality eggs. A good hen deserves good feed. Follow a feeding program recommended by your agricultural college or feed suppliers that will insure good shell texture and eggs of high nutritional value.

Confine layers to the laying house where they will be close to feed hoppers and waterers. Provide plenty of shell-making material, such as, limestone, oystershell and grit.

**PRODUCE CLEAN EGGS**

Manure and other dirt on the shell of an egg is not attractive to the housewife. She hesitates to put dirty eggs in her refrigerator. Furthermore, this dirt carries bacteria that enter the interior of the egg through the shell pores and cause spoilage. To produce clean eggs, follow these instructions:

1. Provide at least one nest for each five hens to prevent crowding and egg breaking.
2. Use clean, sanitary nests.
3. Do not permit birds to roost in nests at night. Dirty nests soil egg shells.
4. Cover dropping boards or pits with wire to prevent hens from tracking manure into the nests and on the eggs.
5. Allow at least 3 square feet of floor space for light breeds and 4 square feet for heavy breeds.
6. Keep litter reasonably clean and dry so that the birds will have clean feet when they go into the nests.
7. Have clean hands when gathering the eggs.
8. Keep broody hens out of the nests.
9. Confine layers to the house, at least until the afternoon.

CLEAN SOILED EGGS

Clean all soiled eggs before marketing time. Fine sandpaper, emery cloth, or steel wool will remove most dirt spots. Eggs washed properly in a detergent-sanitizer has proved very satisfactory.

COOL EGGS PROMPTLY

Eggs are a perishable food. They must be kept at a low temperature from the time they are laid until they reach the consumer. To maintain egg quality:

1. Gather eggs three or four times daily.
2. Use ventilated baskets or perforated pails.
3. Place eggs immediately in coolest place on farm. A clean, well ventilated cellar room, free from odors, is desirable.
4. Keep the egg room below 60° F. if possible.
5. Keep the room fairly moist by sprinkling the floor and walls or hanging up clean wet bags.
6. Do not pack eggs until they are thoroughly cooled. Pre-cool the cases, fillers, and flats.
7. Use a thermometer to check egg room temperature.

PACK EGGS CAREFULLY

Eggs properly packed will ship better, will look better, and will sell better.

It pays to:
1. Pack eggs in standard 15 or 30 dozen egg cases. If second-hand wooden cases are used, be sure they are clean and sound. Renail if necessary.
2. Use clean, firm fillers and flats.
3. Pack eggs with small end down.
4. Place long eggs and very large eggs in the top layer near the center partition.
5. Withhold from market cracked, thin-shelled or badly stained eggs.

MARKET EGGS OFTEN

Select the market which offers the greatest incentive to produce the highest quality eggs. Give quality eggs the care they deserve.
1. Market eggs at least twice a week.
2. Sell your eggs on the grade... it pays you most for quality.
3. Protect eggs from extreme temperatures.
4. Avoid rough handling.

Much of the information in this circular was provided by the P.E.N.B.

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