

8-1932

## EC1459 Revised 1932 Questions and Answers on Poultry Management

J. R. Redditt

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Extension Circular 1459, Revised -32

August, 1932

## Questions and Answers on Poultry Management



The University of Nebraska Agricultural College Extension Service  
and United States Department of Agriculture Cooperating  
W. H. Brokaw, Director, Lincoln

## Questions and Answers on Poultry Management

BY J. R. REDDITT

1. **How may the number of dirty eggs be reduced?**
  - A. Clean nests, (do not allow hens to roost in nests), plenty of nests, (1 nest to 5 hens) clean, dry houses, clean graveled yards. Gather the eggs often.
2. **Do flocks do better confined or on range?**
  - A. Breeding flocks generally do better on range and commercial egg flocks do better confined. It is difficult to use the same flock for both purposes.
3. **Which are preferred for breeding, hens or pullets, and why?**
  - A. Hens. (1) Hens have generally had a rest and hatchability is higher. (2) Hens have been culled and poor layers removed, (3) Hens lay larger eggs, producing larger, stronger chicks.
4. **When should culling be done?**
  - A. All the time throughout the year. Whenever a poor layer shows up, take her out.
5. **What is the best way to break up broody hens?**
  - A. Take them off the nest as soon as noticed, confine in a lighted, wire or slat bottomed coop, and feed them well.
6. **When is the best time to select breeding stock?**
  - A. Two years in advance. First, select large eggs of proper size, color and shape. Second, at two months of age select and mark largest, fastest growing cockerels and pullets. Third, cull closely at the beginning of the first laying season. Fourth, put into the breeding flock only those hens that have survived this rigid all year culling.
7. **How may naked back chickens be eliminated?**
  - A. This is partially inherited, tho crowding is partially responsible. In order to control it, remove all young stock showing any slow feathering characteristics. It may take several years to eliminate this trouble.
8. **What is the simplest way to control lice?**
  - A. Nicotine sulfate put on the roost just before roosting time. (Directions for use printed on containers.) Sodium fluoride and blue ointment are also effective.
9. **What is a good spray for mites?**
  - A. Any good wood preservative. (Obtained from lumber yards.)
10. **Why is it so important to remove males when the breeding season is over?**
  - A. Male birds fertilize eggs and fertile eggs do not keep well. An infertile egg will not spoil nearly as rapidly as will fertile eggs.

11. What is the difference between high quality hatching eggs and high quality market eggs?
  - A. None, except hatching eggs must be fertile and best market eggs must not. Select relatively short round eggs.
12. How many feet of mash hopper space should be provided for 100 hens?
  - A. Twenty feet.
13. When should Leghorns be hatched to make them the best (a) breeders, (b) market egg producers?
  - A. (a) February and March. These will molt and rest after three or four months of production. (b) April and May. These should lay through the winter.
14. When should heavy breed hens be hatched to make the best (a) breeders, (b) market stock?
  - A. (a) As early as possible, February. (b) Same.
15. How may one know whether production costs are high or low?
  - A. Keeping complete cost account records.
16. Why are flocks of 50 or 500 hens recommended in Nebraska?
  - A. Eggs from small carelessly managed side-line flocks are usually inferior to the product of the larger commercial sized flock. Whenever a market surplus of any product fails to meet competition, it is usually at the mercy of the buyers. The cost of quality production from flocks under 500 is generally as much or more than can be realized from the sale of products. To reduce the cost, reduce the size of the flock to meet the home needs, or step it up to a size sufficient to justify labor saving equipment and efficient management in both production and marketing.
17. What are the causes of unhealthy flocks?
  - A. Management, weak stock, late hatching, crowding, filth, incomplete rations, lack of feed, lack of feeder space, dirty or unprotected feeders and waterers.
18. What is a good treatment for worms?
  - A. Try products of some reliable pharmaceutical company (ask your druggist for products of the firms making his drugs—prescription stock, not patent remedies.) Prevention through sanitation is easier, cheaper and more satisfactory. Any treatment to be effective must be followed with thorough sanitation.
19. For what poultry diseases are vaccines recommended?
  - A. Thus far, chicken pox is the only poultry disease controlled through vaccination.
20. Is blood testing for B. W. D. recommended? If so what method is used?
  - A. In hatchery breeding flocks, it is. In small farm flocks, it is doubtful. The quick method agglutination test using stained antigen is considered very satisfactory.
21. What disinfectants are recommended for use about the poultry plant?



- A. (a) Any of the phenol (carbolic acid) disinfectants may be used according to directions. (b) Chlorine disinfectants may be made from chlorinated lime. (Directions printed on containers. See Kansas Experiment Station Circular 130 on chlorine disinfectants.)
22. How may soil be kept clean and free of disease producing organisms?
- A. Sunshine, drainage, and cultivation will clean soil most satisfactorily.
23. What are the chief items of cost in poultry keeping?
- A. Feed, depreciation, replacement, interest on investment, and labor, with feed representing approximately one-half of the total cost.
24. What is the minimum cost of producing eggs from a flock of 100 hens laying (a) 60, (b) 50, (c) 40, (d) 30, and (e) 20 eggs a day? (Feed costs of July, 1932 at three-fourths of a cent per pound.)
- A. At 60, 50, 40, 30, and 20 eggs per day, the minimum cost per dozen should be about (a) 6  $\frac{3}{4}$  cents, (b) 8 cents, (c) 10 cents, (d) 13  $\frac{3}{4}$  cents, and (e) 20 cents.
25. Which of the above letter classes include the average flocks of Nebraska?
- A. Class "E".
26. How may Nebraska hens be made more profitable to the owners?
- A. Through proper housing, feeding and management. (Keep production high and costs low.)
27. How many more eggs would one need to obtain to justify an increase in the housing investment of from \$1.50 per hen to \$3.00 per hen?
- A. At 15 cents per dozen for eggs and 12% depreciation, it would require 15 more eggs per hen to cover this added cost.
28. What kind of litter is recommended for laying hens? How much?
- A. Generally whatever is available at lowest cost. Straw, hay, shavings, ground corn cobs, and sand have proved satisfactory. It is estimated that about one ton per 100 hens per year is sufficient.
29. How can chicks be marked so that their age and identity can be determined?
- A. By toe marks in the webs of the feet or numbered wing bands in the wings. Toe punching should be done at hatching time but wing banding may be done any time.
30. What is the average per cent of death loss of hens in Nebraska flocks?
- A. Cost account cooperators for the last few years report about 12 per cent annual loss.

Distributed in furtherance of cooperative agricultural extension work. Acts of May 8, 1914, and June 30, 1914. Extension Service of The University of Nebraska Agricultural College and U. S. Department of Agriculture cooperating. W. H. Brokaw, Director of Agricultural Extension Service.

(Revised 8-32-10M)