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EC1476 Figures and Facts about Nebraska Poultry Production

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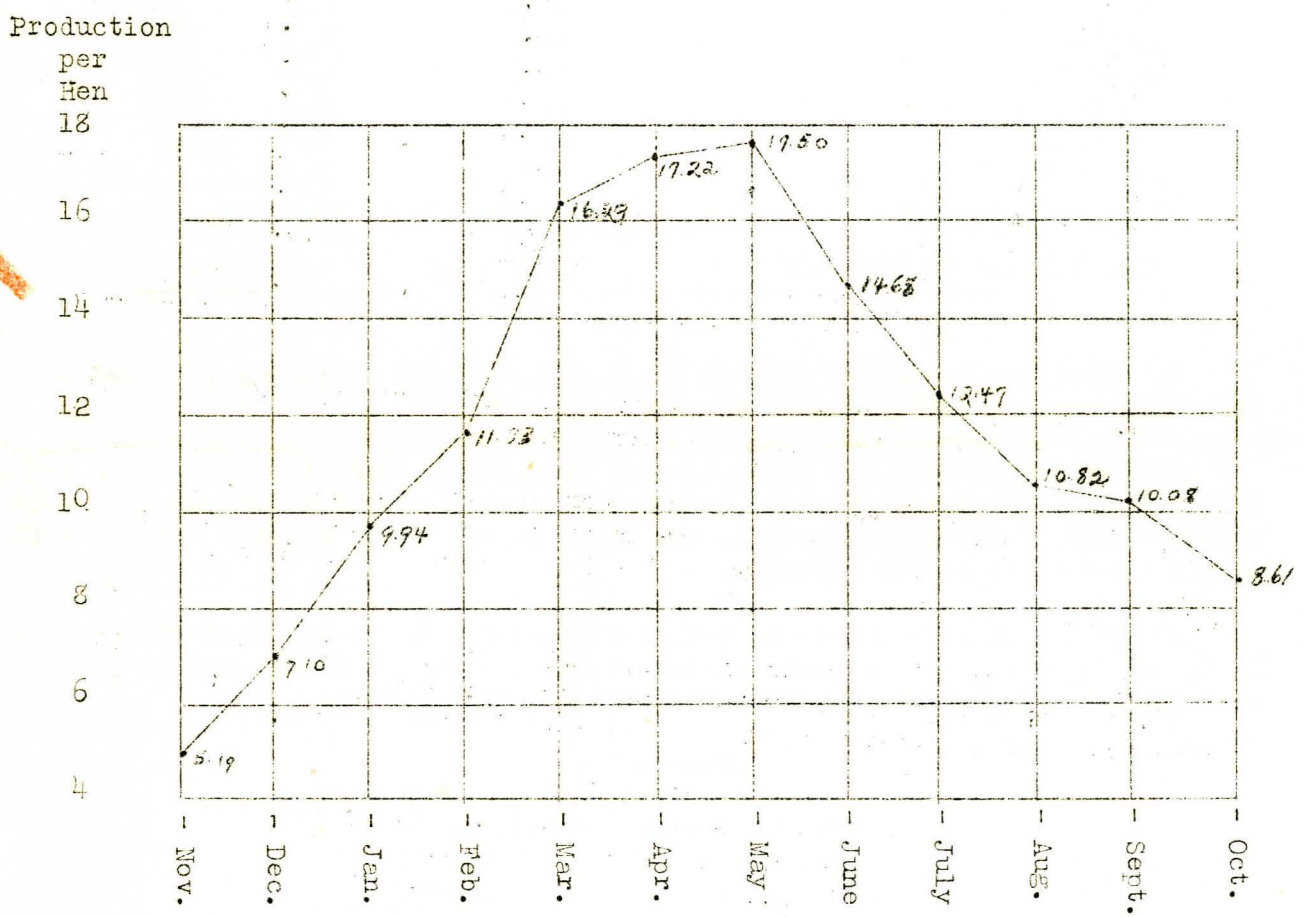
IN AGRICULTURE AND HOME ECONOMICS
U. of N. Agr. College & U. S. Dept. of Agr. Cooperating
W. H. Brokaw, Director, Lincoln

Extension
Circular
#1476

Figures and Facts about Nebraska Poultry Production

1. How many eggs per hen for each month are secured from Nebraska farm flocks where good culling and management practices are followed?

Date Taken from 1930-1934 Nebraska Cost Account Records
83 Farm Flocks-Average Production 141.73 Eggs



2. Can rehabilitation cases expect as good egg production during the spring months as reported by Cost Account cooperators?

Answer- Yes, if carefully selected hens are fed a laying mash. Even the poorer producing flocks usually lay well during April and May but to get an average production of 17 eggs per hen, it is necessary to supplement natural conditions with feed of the right kind and plenty of it.

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3. How much feed does it take to feed a hen per month?

Data Taken from 1934 Nebraska Flock Testing Records

Month	Heavies	Leghorns
January	8.7 lbs.	6.3 lbs.
February	7.4	6.2
March	8.4	7.1
April	8.1	6.8
May	6.5	6.3
June	6.3	5.9
July	5.2	5.4
August	4.0	5.3
September	7.4	6.4
October	7.4	5.8
November	8.0	6.0
December	8.6	6.3
TOTAL CONSUMPTION	87.0 lbs.	73.8 lbs.
AVE. MONTHLY CONSUMPTION	7.25 lbs.	6.15 lbs.

4. When the record on a flock of hens during one spring month shows no labor income what policy should be adopted?

Answer - Look into the cause of poor production. Are the hens being fed a full and complete ration that is reasonable in cost? Do the management practices coincide with those recommended by the State Department? Perhaps a rigid culling of the non-layers is the solution.

A home mixed laying mash is very satisfactory, if it contains vitamins A, B, G, and D; a variety of protein concentrates; 5 to 7½% fiber; and 16 to 19% protein. The following laying mash mixture is recommended.

Ration 10L

Yellow cornmeal	315 lbs.
Shorts or ground wheat	200
Bran	100
Alfalfa meal	200
Meat Scraps	75
Fish meal	75
Fine salt	10
Ground limestone	20
Cod Liver Oil	5
	1000 lbs.

Dry mash, fresh, clean water, and oyster shells or crushed limestone should be kept before the hens at all times. Feed about 10 to 14 pounds of scratch grain per 100 hens daily. One-fourth of the scratch grain may be fed in the morning. The remainder should be fed in hoppers about one hour before the birds go to roost. Providing access to all of the green, succulent feedstuffs the birds will eat is also an important factor.

Make provision for fresh air and clean the house as often as necessary. Cull out the non-producers. Large, coarse, beefy headed birds are generally poor producers. Yellow legged varieties with richly pigmented shanks and beaks are not layers. Fine feathers may make fine birds but those hens with worn, close fitting feathers are the ones that fill the egg basket.

5. How many eggs per month will a hen have to lay to pay for 7 pounds of feed costing $2.00, $2.25, $2.50 and $3.00 per Cwt.?

Eggs per Month per Hen	Pounds of Feed to Produce 1 Dozen Eggs	Feed Cost of Producing one Dozen Eggs when Feed is Valued at the Following Amounts.			
		$2.00	$2.25	$2.50	$3.00
1	84.0	$1.68	$1.89	$2.10	$2.52
2	42.0	.84	.945	1.05	1.26
3	28.0	.56	.63	.70	.84
4	21.0	.42	.4725	.525	.63
5	16.8	.336	.378	.42	.504
6	14.0	.28	.315	.35	.42
7	11.99	.239	.2698	.2997	.3597
8	11.6	.233	.261	.29	.348
9	8.75	.175	.1969	.2188	.2625
10	8.4	.168	.189	.21	.252
11	7.63	.153	.1717	.1908	.2289
12	7.0	.14	.1575	.175	.21
13	6.46	.129	.1454	.1615	.1938
14	5.9	.118	.1328	.1475	.177
15	5.6	.112	.126	.14	.169
16	5.25	.105	.1181	.1313	.1575
17	4.94	.098	.1109	.1215	.1482
18	4.6	.092	.1035	.115	.138
19	4.42	.088	.0995	.1105	.1326
20	4.2	.084	.0945	.105	.126

6. What is the practical method of feeding dry mashes to chickens to prevent feed wastage and which will keep the feed and water clean?

Answer - Inexpensive mash hoppers may be constructed from orange crates or apple boxes holding a day's supply of mash for 75 hens. Details of construction may be found in Nebraska Circular #1441. In the same circular are described feed and water stands which will prevent undue contamination and wastage of feed and water.

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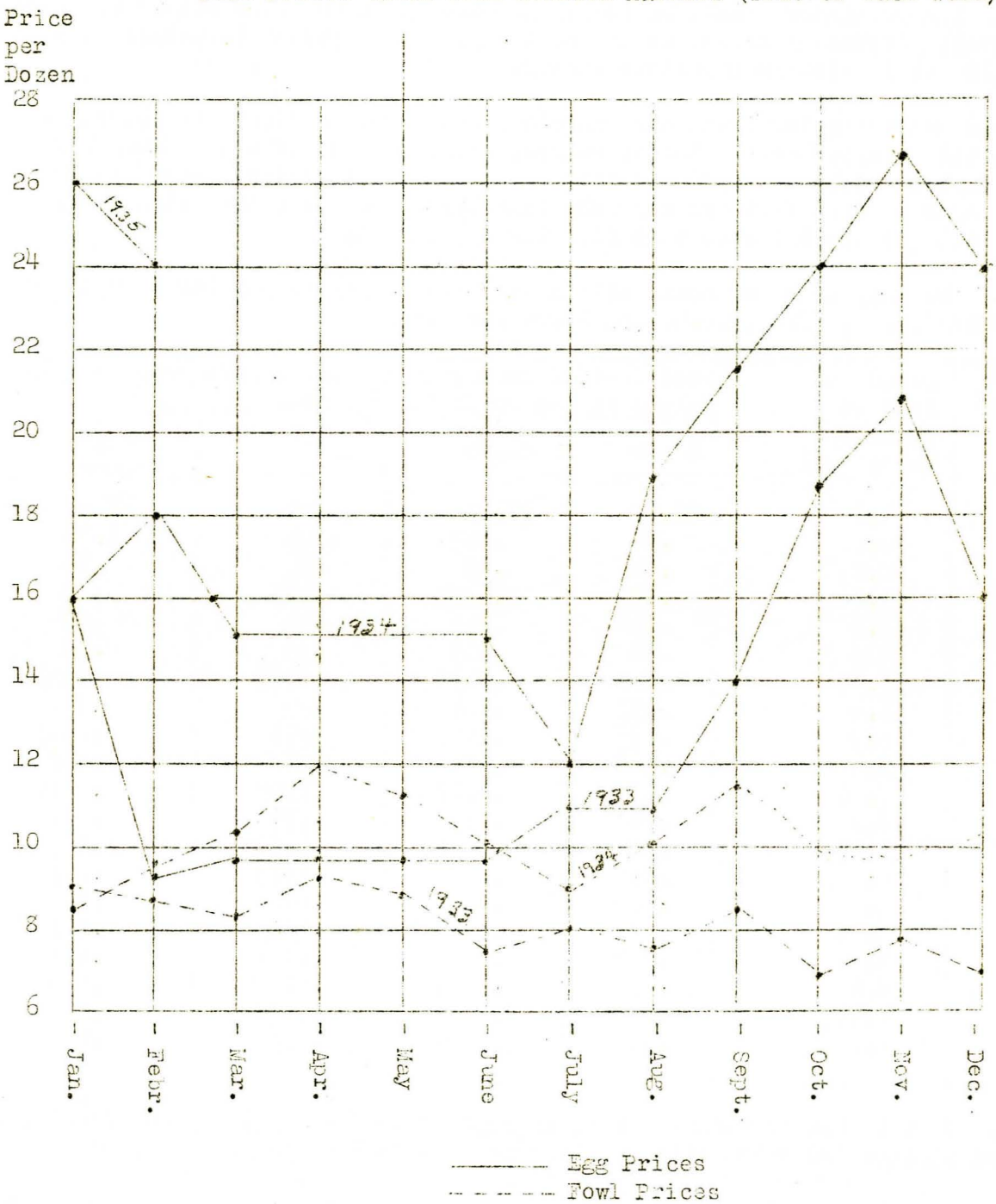
7. What tendency do market price charts show as the usual seasonal trend regarding prices of fowls and prices of eggs?

Egg Prices taken from Nebraska Cost Account Data
Fowl Prices taken from Lincoln Markets (Fri. of each week)



Generally there is a decline in egg prices from January to July and then a steady increase till November when the peak is reached. Top prices for fowls (old hens) are generally obtained in April and May and from then on a seasonal decline. Other market poultry have different peak months.

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8. How much skim milk is required daily by 50 hens before the meat proteins in a dry mash mixture may be eliminated?

Answer - According to information found in the Washington State College Experiment Station Bulletin #210 - "Feeding Experiments with Leghorns" - there was no advantage in feeding a laying mash containing meat meal and mill by-products when all the animal protein was supplied in the form of sour skim milk. The amount of sour skim milk required daily per 50 birds was 3 gallons according to this data.

Suggested ration to be used when sour milk is available in quantities is as follows:

2/3 wheat		1/2 wheat
	or	1/4 cracked corn
1/3 corn		1/4 oats or barley

Where milk is fed to replace the meat proteins no water should be given the birds. If there is not enough milk to last all day, provide water after all the milk has been consumed. Feed milk in earthenware, glass, porcelain, or wood containers. Charcoal tin containers may be used. Keep all milk containers scrupulously clean. Keep flies away as they are an intermediate host of the tapeworm.

Access to green feed must be allowed if this system of feeding is practiced. Alfalfa or bluegrass pasture is satisfactory. Fresh cut, green feed or alfalfa hay should be provided to confined birds.

9. What hazards need be considered when buying or moving laying hens during the spring months?

Answer - Buying hens during the spring months is ordinarily a poor policy. In the first place, the best hens are not for sale. In the second place, it is more difficult to distinguish the poor hen from the good as during the spring it is natural for a hen to lay. Most hens sold in the spring have been sold because they are poor layers, are persistent setters, or are in poor health.

Diseases are often spread by assembling hens from various sources.

Moving hens and changing rations often materially reduces production, at least temporarily.

10. What hazards should be avoided when chicks are brooded with hens?

Answer - Feed is wasted, chicks are outside in stormy weather, rats kill large numbers, greater danger of infestation with lice and mites and hens range chicks over ground contaminated with intestinal parasites and disease.

11. How much feed will a brood of 100 chicks need each week during the first 10 weeks, if given complete rations and no feed is wasted?

Taken from New Jersey Circular #316.

Feed Consumption of 100 Baby Chicks by Weeks

Age in Weeks	Amount of Feed Needed per Week	Value of Feed @ $2.50 per Cwt.	Total Feed Consumption	Weight of Chicks in Lbs.
1	9 lbs.	$0.225	9 lbs.	.15 lbs.
2	22	0.55	31	.24
3	35	0.875	66	.39
4	50	1.25	116	.58
5	65	1.625	181	.79
6	80	2.00	261	1.01
7	98	2.45	359	1.28
8	110	2.75	469	1.54
9	120	3.00	589	1.77
10	145	3.625	734	2.00

Leghorn cockerels should average two pounds at ten weeks. Heavy broilers should average slightly more at ten weeks.

12. At what weights are Leghorn cockerels usually sold and why?

Answer - Leghorn cockerels should be sold as soon as they reach a marketable weight. This is usually about $1\frac{3}{4}$ to 2 pounds. Leghorn cockerels reach this weight with the most economical feed consumption and are usually in fine marketable condition at this time. Waiting longer results in poorer quality flesh and a greater amount of feed consumed per unit of gain.

13. When full rations are not fed to chicks and slower growth results, what affect would this have on total feed consumption per pound of gain and also the quality of the cockerel marketed?

Answer - The cockerel stunted by improper feeding or lack of feed does not gain as rapidly nor as efficiently as one that is grown out as fast as possible. The first two pounds are the most economical insofar as feed consumption is concerned. The quality of the cockerel marketed is also affected insofar as the fleshing is concerned.

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