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6-27-1919

Outline of Object and Plan of the Nebraska National Egg Laying Contest

Nebraska Agricultural Experiment Station

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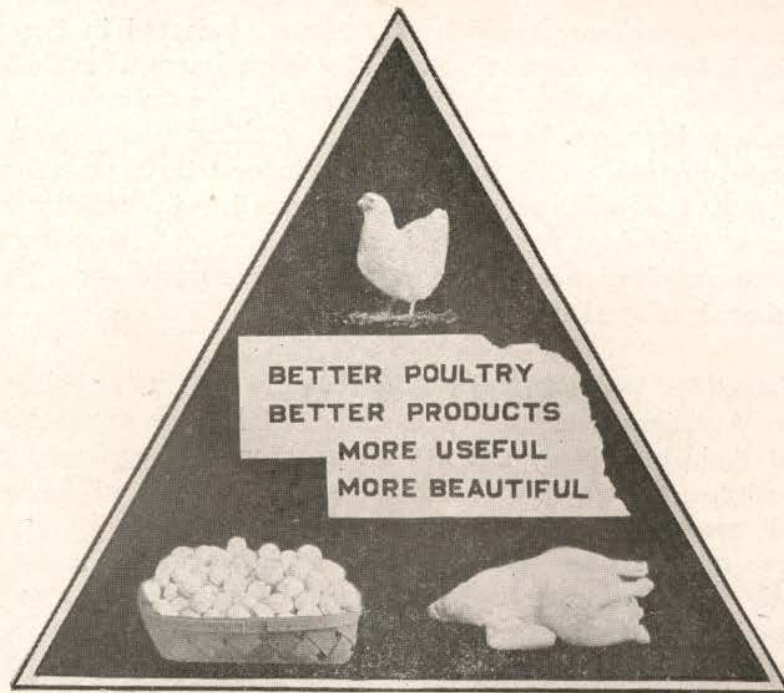


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OUTLINE
of
OBJECT AND PLAN
of the
Nebraska National Egg Laying Contest



NEBRASKA AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION

Lincoln

Nebraska National Egg Laying Contest

ADMINISTRATION

The Nebraska National Egg Laying Contest will be directed and administered by the Nebraska Agricultural Experiment Station at Lincoln, Nebraska. The Director of the Experiment Station and the members of the Department of Poultry Husbandry will constitute the Contest Staff.

Correspondence regarding the contest should be addressed to the Department of Poultry Husbandry, College of Agriculture, Lincoln, Neb.

OBJECT OF THE CONTEST

To promote the breeding of high laying strains of standard-bred poultry is the primary purpose of the Nebraska National Egg Laying and Breeding Contest. Data on the cost of egg production and on the problems of poultry breeding will also be secured.

EFFECT ON THE INDUSTRY

The healthy interest which is stimulated by well-managed egg laying contests is acknowledged by all those interested in the development of the industry. As a result of the experimental work of Pearl, Goodale and other investigators, in the study of inheritance of egg production, poultry breeders have a practical working theory on which to base breeding operations for improvement in egg laying ability. More attention must and will be paid to this quality in poultry breeding of the future. This does not mean, however, that less attention is going to be paid to standard qualities, for in fact these two qualities can be and are being developed in the same strains.

POULTRY BREEDERS INTEREST IN THE CONTEST

Poultry breeders recognize the value of having trapnest records of some of their best birds but not all breeders are equipped to carry on this work thru the whole year. Trapnesting requires regular attention and careful record keeping in order to be of greatest value. Poultry breeders are quick to see the advantage of having a place to which a few of their very best standard birds may be sent, for the purpose of securing an accurate trapnest record of their egg production.

While it seems best to call this project a Contest, yet the contest feature seems to us to be the least important part of the project. The breeder who makes an entry in the contest will learn that some of the birds in his entry have laid only 100 eggs, while others with the same care and management have produced perhaps 200 eggs. Constructive breeding for greater usefulness is possible when we have definite data on the actual production of each bird.

The advertising value to the breeder of having birds entered in the contest should also be considered. Monthly reports of the results of

the contest will be distributed widely and farm and poultry journals will give the results broad publicity.

LOCATION OF THE CONTEST

The Nebraska National Egg Laying Contest is to be located at Lincoln, Nebraska. A tract of five acres well located, and well adapted to poultry keeping is to be made available for the contest. The contest grounds are easily accessible by interurban and street railway service. Thousands of poultry raisers visit the University Farm at Lincoln each year and the location of the contest at this place will prove an additional attraction. The administrative offices of the contest are to be located in Rural Economic Hall near the contest grounds. The staff of the Department of Poultry Husbandry is responsible for the administration of the contest.

PLAN OF THE CONTEST

One hundred entries of ten standard-bred pullets each will be accepted for admission to the contest. Each breeder is urged to send the most typical and best colored birds of his variety that can be selected from his flock. Disqualified birds or birds of decidedly inferior standard quality are barred from competition. The management reserves the right to refuse any entry on these grounds.

The contest birds are to be housed in flocks of 200, birds of similar type and variety so far as possible being housed together. This arrangement will permit of a great saving of labor, housing expense and fencing and will give a most practical demonstration of what a flock of good standard-bred hens can do. The relative egg production of birds kept under the same conditions will be available and the best birds of each entry will be selected for breeding stock for the development of strains of better layers.

It is hoped that the contest will develop into an institution of permanent value to the poultry keepers of the State and Nation. A breeding project to be combined with the laying contest will form the basis for constructive breeding work. No obligation is assumed in agreeing to carry on the breeding project as outlined below but preference will be given to breeders who signify a willingness to carry out the breeding program as far as practically possible.

The following breeding program is suggested:

First Contest (1919-1920) Enter ten best standard pullets.

Second Contest (1920-1921) Enter ten best standard pullets.

Home work—Use two best hens from First Contest to mate to pedigreed cockerel to breed pullets for third contest.

Third Contest (1921-1922) Enter five pullets bred from each of two high hens of the First Contest.

Home work—Use best son of either one of high hens from First Contest to mate with two best hens from First or Second Contest to produce pullets for Fourth Contest.

Fourth Contest (1922-1923) Enter ten pullets sired by cockerel from high hens of the First Contest. These birds will then be grand daughters of the best hens in the First Contest.

Fifth Contest (1923-1924) Continue pedigree breeding as outlined, using males from high laying hens mated to highest laying hens as shown by the trapnest.

In the breeding program here suggested it is expected, of course, that vigor and vitality will be the first object of selection with standard qualities and high egg production next in consideration.

RULES, REGULATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

1. This contest shall be known as the Nebraska National Egg Laying Contest.
2. The contest shall be held at Lincoln, Nebraska, and the Department of Poultry Husbandry of the Nebraska Agricultural Experiment Station shall have complete charge of the administration. All records secured will become Experiment Station records and monthly reports will be issued giving a summary of the data. A more complete report of data on number of eggs laid, weight of eggs, labor, amount of feed consumed, broodiness, etc., will be issued at the conclusion of each contest.
3. The contest will begin on November 1 of each year and end on October 31 of the following year.
4. Ten standard-bred pullets will constitute an entry. Breeders may club together to make an entry but all birds of one entry must be of the same breed and variety.
5. Smith sealed leg bands will be sent to each breeder on receipt of entry fee. One band should be placed on the right leg of each pullet in the entry. To facilitate reading of the band number when bird is taken out of the trapnest, the band should be placed so as to be upside down when the bird is standing.
6. All birds must be shipped by express prepaid. Birds should be consigned so as to arrive by October 20th if possible. All birds must positively be on hand by October 31st.
7. The right to return inferior birds, birds suffering from contagious disease or lacking in natural vigor is reserved. Entry fee will be returned when this is done.
8. A fee of eighteen dollars (\$18.00) is required for each entry. Eight dollars (\$8.00) of this amount is to be paid at time of making entry and the balance before October 1 of each contest year.
9. At the end of each contest birds will be returned to their respective owners together with a certified egg record. The average weight of ten eggs laid by each hen and selected at random will also be given as well as the weight of the hen at the beginning of the contest.
10. All eggs laid during the contest are to become the property of the Department of Poultry Husbandry and the proceeds from their sale as market eggs will be applied to maintenance expense.
11. Every possible effort will be taken to avoid loss or injury to birds by frosting, fire, disease or other causes but the management will not be responsible for any losses which may occur.