

1959

EC59-1414 Should the Wings Go?

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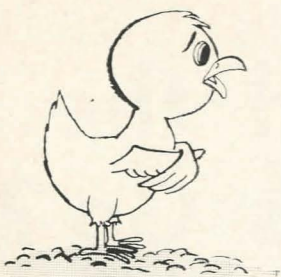


Should the Wings Go ?



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Should the Wings Go?

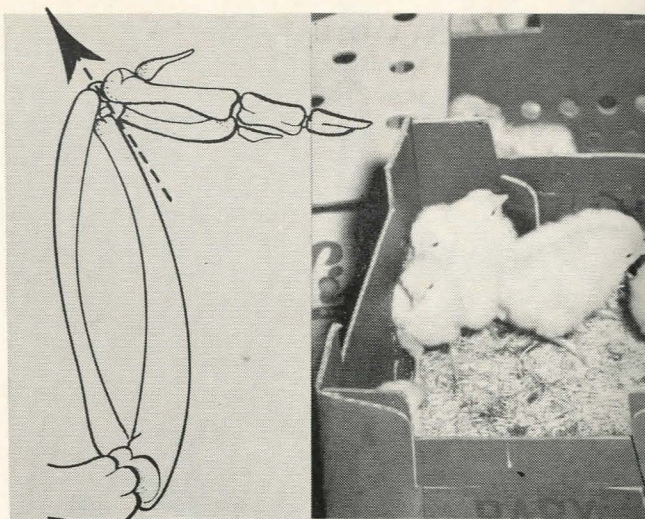


Fig. 2. Point of severance.

By John Skinner, Extension Poultryman

DEWINGING

The process of removing the outer joint of one wing on day-old baby chicks is one that often comes up for discussion. It is a situation that has both a pro and con aspect. This leaflet is intended to serve as:

1. A source of information relative to the procedure and equipment.
2. A reference for weighing the merits and limitations of this practice.

EQUIPMENT & PROCEDURE

The equipment first used for dewinging was a modification of an electric debeaker. This served the purpose but proved to be quite uncomfortable for the operator. Currently, the most used dewinging device consists of an electric resistance wire about four inches in length. (See Fig. 1).

The chick is held in one hand while one wing is outstretched with the other and drawn across the red-hot wire. This severs and cauterizes the point of severance indicated by the dotted lines in Figure 2.

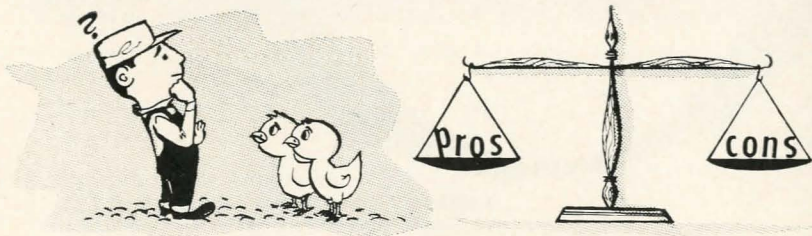




Fig. 1. Removing the outer joint of the wing of a day-old chick with a hot wire (electric resistance wire).

DEWINGING—PRO AND CON

| For Dewinging | Against Dewinging |
|--|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Eliminates flying. 2. Eliminates roosting in trees. 3. Saves labor in that birds are easier to catch and handle when vaccinating, culling, etc. 4. Birds are somewhat quieter. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Birds may refuse to use nests or roosts. 2. Birds may injure feet upon descent from nests or roosts. 3. Cut surface easily injured later in life. 4. Some mortality may result from shock or stress of the operation. |

From the above table it becomes quite evident that most of the advantages in dewinging apply to the period when the pullet is growing and the disadvantages appear mainly during the egg production period. Therefore, the person contemplating the dewinging of day-old pullet chicks should first determine the answers to the following questions.

1. Will dewinging be advantageous?
2. Will the operation prove beneficial when the birds are in the laying house?
3. Will dewinging handicap the birds in any way in my system of management?

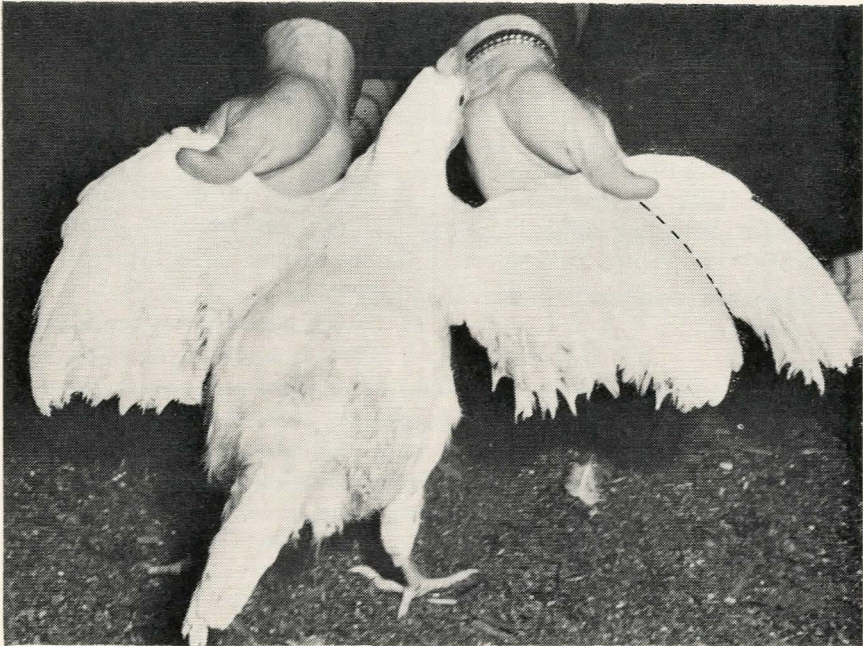
The answers to these questions will be the basis for deciding whether or not to dewing day-old chicks. Never dewing if it will limit

the necessary activities (getting to roosts, nests, etc.) of the adult bird. We have known of instances where dewinged birds refused to leave the floor to enter nests, drink from water troughs where the birds had to drink from perches and would not use elevated roosts provided for them.

The operation may be performed at any time up to two weeks of age. When it is necessary to prevent flying and the chicks are past two-weeks of age, wing-notching is the preferred method if permanent treatment is required. Otherwise, clipping of the main feathers on one wing will usually suffice until a complete molt takes place.

The process of pinioning is similar to the dewinging operation. This pinioning, however, is a term that is usually used when adult birds are dewinged and is most frequently used in connection with water-fowl or game birds being retained in captivity.

Nebraska hatcherymen report in 1959 that they are dewinging at day-old from six to eight per cent of the pullets they sell.



Dotted lines across wing of chicken shows area that is removed in dewinging operation.