

MANITOBA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
WINNIPEG, CANADA

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## SUMMER EGG PRODUCTION

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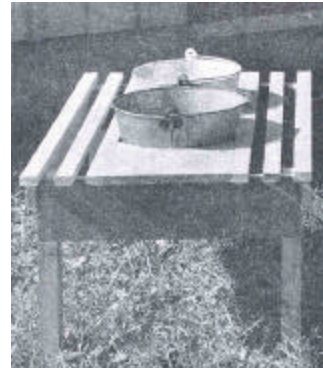
Poultry Club Members follow culling demonstration with interest

### ***Eggs Needed Now!***

Egg consumption in Canada has reached a new high peak. Yet Canada has agreed to supply Great Britain with 63 million dozen eggs during 1943. There are more hens on farms than ever before, but unless egg production is maintained at a high level throughout the summer Canada will fall short on egg requirements. We have the hens—can we produce the eggs? Contrary to popular opinion, it is often more difficult to maintain satisfactory production in warm weather than during the winter.

### ***Water Most Important***

An egg is two-thirds water. Laying hens require a constant supply of clean water, fresh every day. If hens lack water for even an hour, or if they must go out into the hot sunshine to get it, egg production will suffer. A large drinking vessel will solve this problem, or a stand may be needed to keep the container from upsetting when half empty. Water helps to cool the body in addition to forming part of the egg. Water is most essential in egg production.



*A suitable water stand*

### ***Summer Laying Rations***

A simple feeding system is essential during the busy summer. The continuous feeding of dry mash, in a self feeder, is recommended for summer egg production. Whole grain, some mineral, and green feed are needed to complete the laying ration. If an abundant supply of skim milk is available, the farm will provide practically the summer ration. Otherwise, the use of commercial protein concentrates or balancers, to mix with crushed grains, is essential in making a suitable dry mash. With dry mash before the hens at all times, egg production is stimulated, although the birds do not over-eat. Whole grain may then be limited to the evening meal – what the birds will clean up before going to roost. Some may prefer to give grain in the morning as well, but the amount should be limited, to encourage mash consumption. Hens tend to become over-fat when fed only whole grain.

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By authority of Hon. D.L. Campbell,  
Minister of Agriculture and Immigration

## FEEDING METHOD 1

Whole grain - 10 lbs. daily per 100 hens

Dry Mash - Commercial laying concentrate or balancer, mixed with crush grains according to the manufacturer's instructions.

Oyster shell and gravel, or limestone grit

Limited pasture

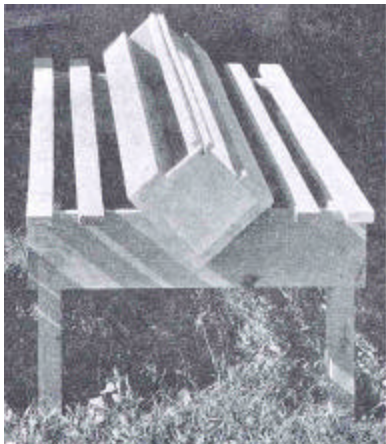
Water to drink

## FEEDING METHOD 2

When two gallons of skim milk are provided seven days per week for 100 hens, cut the proportion of concentrate in the dry mash in half.

Provide whole grain, minerals, water etc., as in Method 1; also a little bonemeal in a separate hopper.

Use wheat and oats, or wheat and barley, or all three, for dry mash and as whole grain, for either feeding method. Corn and millet may be included when available. Grains need not be finely ground for dry mash. Good quality grains are desirable. Avoid mouldy foods. Variety in grains is preferable.



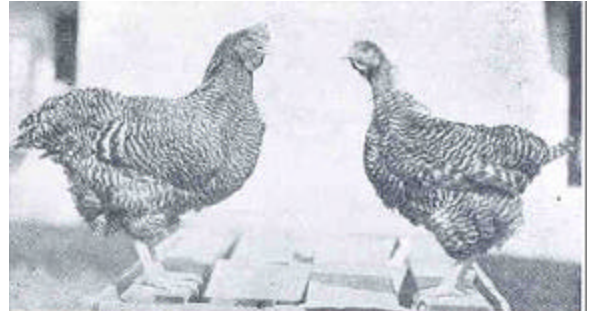
Dry Mash Hopper - Suitable for 50 hens. Length 60". Use 1" x 6" x 6" pieces for ends of trough  
Note revolving reel at top.

Photo courtesy Dominion Experimental Farms.

### Summer Ventilation

Hot weather places a handicap on laying hens. Appetites are dulled. The birds do not rest properly when panting on the roosts at night. Heat prostration and deaths may occur, in addition to lowered egg production. There are several ways of relieving this situation.

1. Reduce over-crowding of pen and roosts by disposing of the roosters and by culling non-laying hens.
2. Provide additional roosting space.
3. Provide cross-ventilation, especially in houses 18 feet wide or more. Some pens have removable windows on the north wall beneath the dropping boards.
4. A straw loft or an insulated ceiling is most helpful in preventing extremes of temperature during both summer and winter. There should be ample openings in the gable ends above the loft to draw off the warm air.



LEFT- Laying Hen. RIGHT- Non-laying Hen.

### Lice and Mites

[ The section on lice and mites from the 1943 publication of "Summer Egg Production" has not been reproduced in this 2002 reprint. Some of the recommended treatments from 1943 do not meet modern food safety protocols. ]

### More Grade "A" Eggs Required

Egg quality is of major importance in poultry production. Higher egg prices this season provide an incentive to improve methods of flock management and handling of eggs. As no "C" grade eggs, and only a limited number of "B's" can be used for export **Canada needs the maximum number of Grade "A" eggs now.** The following suggestions are offered to help in producing high quality eggs.

1. PRODUCE INFERTILE EGGS. Sell or can old roosters; the hens lay just as well without them. Eggs grade higher in hot weather if not fertile.
2. AVOID DARK HEAVY YOLKS. Feed plenty of dry mash continuously, so that hens do not need to scavenge. Barnyard pickings, dirty water, and most weeds, tend to produce off-grade yolks and bad flavors.
3. KEEP NESTS WELL BEDDED. Change straw or chaff frequently, both in the nests and on the

floor. Do not let broody hens sleep in the nests overnight.

4. GATHER EGGS OFTEN. At least three times daily, or more frequently on very hot days.
5. COOL EGGS IMMEDIATELY. Give eggs the same care as you would milk and cream. Remove animal heat at once by placing eggs in an open basket in a cool cellar or ice-house.

When cooled, pack eggs in case small end down.

6. MARKET THE EGGS FREQUENTLY in order to get the best possible grades.

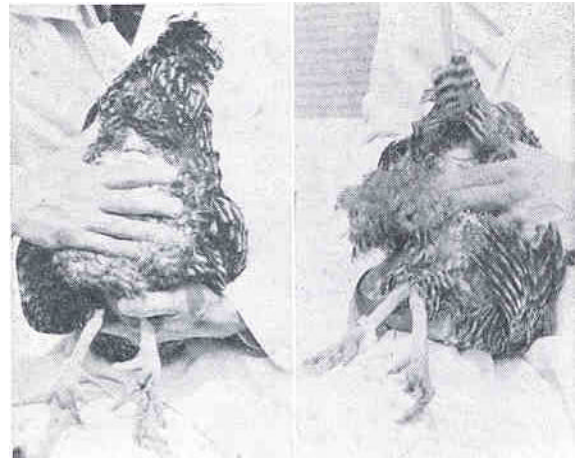
### **Summer Culling of Hens**

Following the spring season of heavy production, some hens take a rest. When production drops to 50%, roughly one hen in five has stopped laying. If the flock is being fed for egg production, hens that stop laying in June, July or early August should be marketed. These early "quitters" may rest all summer and fall. Hens that tend to lay all summer, moult quickly in the fall and should be retained



SPACE BETWEEN PUBIC BONES

LEFT- Three fingers- indicates heavy production.  
RIGHT- One finger - hen not laying.



SPACE BETWEEN KEEL BONE AND PUBIC BONES  
LEFT- Full deep abdomen- hen will lay for some time.  
RIGHT- Narrow space, shrunken abdomen- not laying

### **Culling Chart**

<i>Laying Hen</i>	<i>Character</i>	<i>Non-Laying Hen</i>
Large, red, waxy, smooth Dry, brittle, broken Well spread (either side of vent) Full, soft, pliable Bleached or white Bleached after heavy laying Alert but friendly	COMB FEATHERS PUBIC BONES  ABDOMEN BEAK LEGS TEMPERMENT	Small, pale, shrivelled, scaly Pin feathers or else new feathers Close together  Shrunken, may hard with fat Yellow Yellow Wild and scary, or dull and sickly

Do not use this chart in selecting pullets in the fall. Runts and unthrifty or deformed birds, should be discarded, whether pullets or hens.