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EC1486 Equipment for Turkeys on Range

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Equipment for TURKEYS *on* RANGE



EXTENSION SERVICE • COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE
UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA • Lincoln • E.C. 1486

Equipment for

J.

THE PURPOSE of this circular is to present in picture form some of the labor-saving, health-protecting equipment used in Nebraska after turkeys are moved to range. Some equipment used for turkey breeding flocks is also illustrated.

Turkeys consume large amounts of forage. To furnish them an abundance of tender green feeds throughout the season is economical feeding. The system of ranging turkeys in stubble fields protects the health of the flock and adds fertility to the field.

During the fall months, cane provides green feed, shade, and wind protection for turkeys that are maturing. When shelter sheds and feed troughs are moved to the edge of the cane field, turkeys will first consume the lower leaves and edible weeds. To encourage turkeys to work deeper into the cane, feed troughs and waterers are moved farther into the fields. A few rows of tall-growing cane planted on the inside edges of the field will serve as a barrier to discourage flying the fence.



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The funnel is used to fill the barrel. The upper cap is screwed on to make an air-tight fit. The water will then flow into the bucket until the end of the pipe is covered. Chief objection to this is that only a few turkeys can drink at a time, and the water becomes quite warm during hot weather.



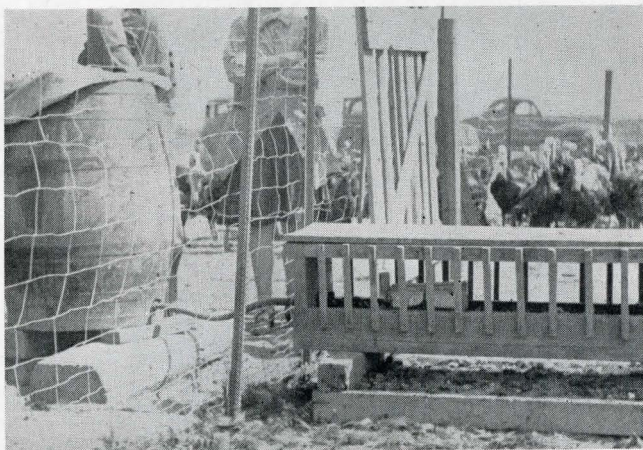
A tank wagon is a cc to range. The length upon the size of the trough discourages t trough.

Turkeys on Range

Claybaugh



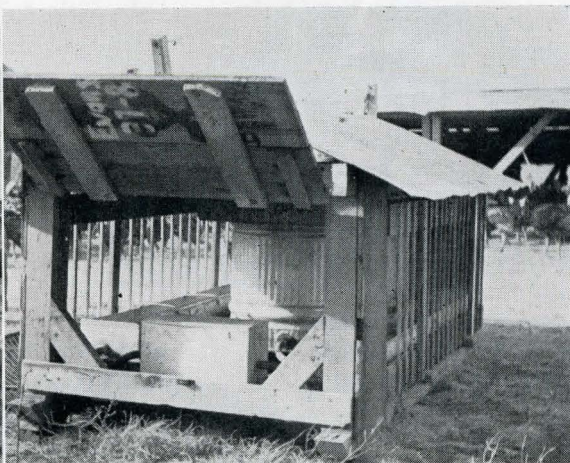
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Driving a sand point
each time the range
...nes an easier method
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Placing both the barrel and the watering trough on skids provides an easy way of moving them. Less dirt gets into the trough when it is elevated and covered. Fastening several thicknesses of inner tubing to the board used as the float, so that this rubber cushion presses against the pipe leading from the barrel, is a common way of shutting off the flow of water into the trough.



...n method of hauling water
the trough needed depends
A reel fastened above the
s from crossing over the



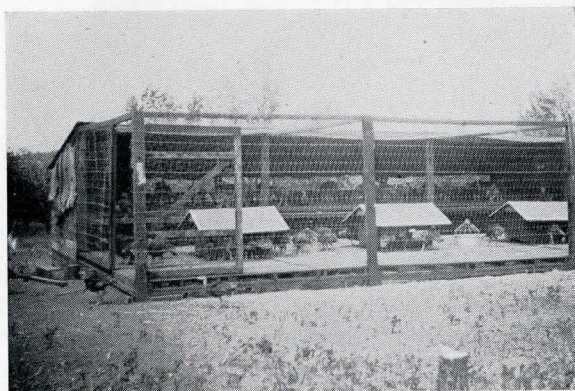
A stock tank on skids, and covered to keep the water clean, is the reservoir. Metal troughs with floats are under cover. Turkeys drink by reaching their heads between the lath of the sides. The iron grid covers water that might spill.



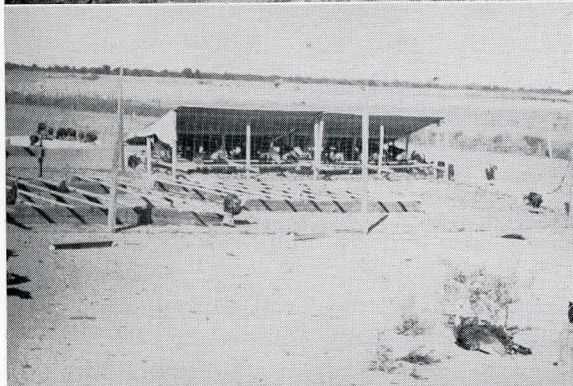
Grain stubble fields provide clean range, green fields, and some grain.



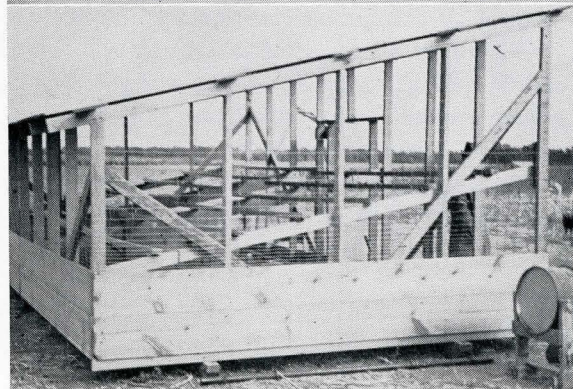
Alfalfa and brome grass provide excellent feed. The stand is injured less when shelters are on the edges of adjoining fields.



A shelter shed and wire-covered slat floor night corral used for small groups of turkeys. During the day the turkeys may be driven to outside range. A shed 8 feet wide and 30 feet long with roosts provides one foot of roosting space for each of 120 mature birds. With a slat floor 12' x 30' the corral and shed contain 60 square feet or 5 square feet per bird for 120 turkeys.



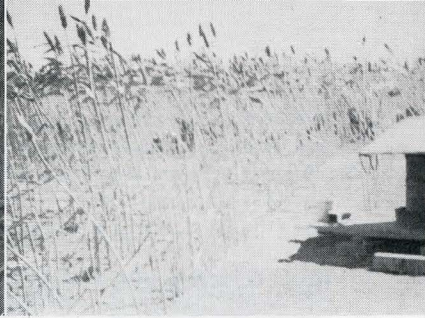
Nailing a 2" x 4" to the edge of a 2" x 12" plank proved satisfactory for a low roost for turkey on range. When turkeys stamped from the roosts, there are less bruised turkeys where the roosts are low. Some shade and protection from the wind is needed during hot weather for turkeys on range.



Two ordinary, shed-roof type of turkey shelters are usually placed facing each other to provide the maximum amount of shade for turkeys. Corrugated tin roofs are often used for such sheds. When two such sheds face each other the turkeys are better protected from rain when the roosts slope opposite the slope of the roof.

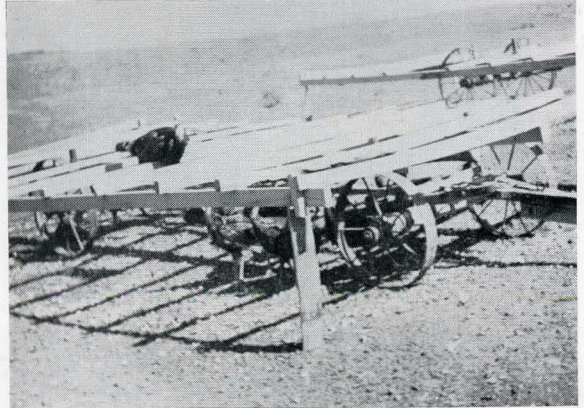


When green feed is scarce, turkeys will eat the green leaves from a milo field before eating the grain.

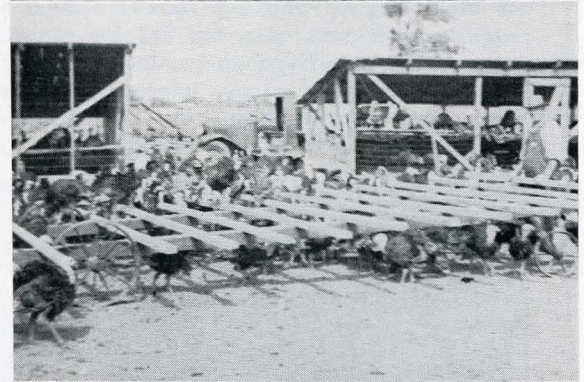


Atlas sorghum provides the turkeys shade, cover, and green feed during the fall.

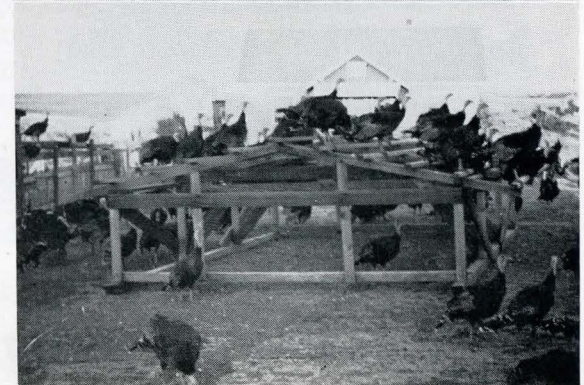
Roosts made on low-wheel wagon trucks are easy to move, as several wagons can be trailed at one time. The posts, with 2" x 4" supports, were necessary to keep roosts from tipping. Additional roosts may be added by leaning 4" x 4" supports from the side rails to the ground. Such roosts slide on top of wagon for moving.



A low roost that is easy to move was made by using wheels from heavy plows and hay sweeps. Two 4" x 6" x 20' mounted on these wheels made the framework for 14 roosts. Such roosts are added as birds mature and outgrow the roosts provided in the sheds. Uncovered roosts are more popular where natural shade is provided at the edge of the range.



Where a night corral is placed near the house, and turkeys have natural shade on the day range, these open, uncovered roosts have been popular. Turkeys often stampede during the night. An entire flock seems to leave the roosts at one time after a danger signal has been sounded. There is less danger of broken bones and bruises where roosts are low to the ground and at some distance from the fences or objects into which the flock might fly.





Three turkey shelter sheds had been moved together to make an enclosed shed for young turkeys when first moved from the brooder houses to range. The sheds can be separated later if desired.

Artificial shade is more important than roosts where turkeys range over stubble fields during the hotter part of the summer. Shelters are moved but a short distance each week. If moved early in the morning the feeders and waterers should be moved first and the turkeys thus encouraged to move to the new location with the first shelter.

During hot weather, turkeys stay close to the shade, feed, and water, and no fences are needed when turkeys are placed on stubble fields away from farm buildings. Frequent moves protect turkeys from disease and spread the fertilizer more evenly over fields. A policy of ranging 500 or 1,000 turkeys over 40 acres of grain stubble each year will rebuild soil fertility on many neglected farms.

Screen-covered platforms beneath feed troughs prevent turkeys from eating feed from the ground.



One type of revolving reel which prevents turkeys from roosting on top of feed trough. The trough is raised as turkeys mature.

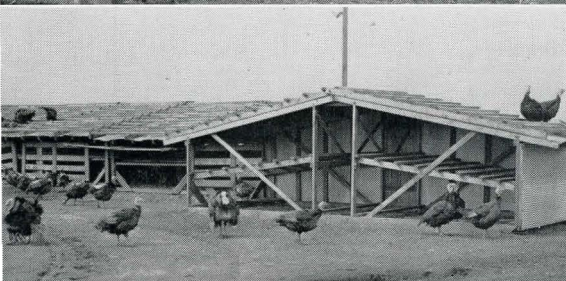




A barn into which a large flock of turkeys might be driven during fall storms has protected many flocks. This 50' x 150' barn is divided into four pens and accommodates 1,000 breeder hens.



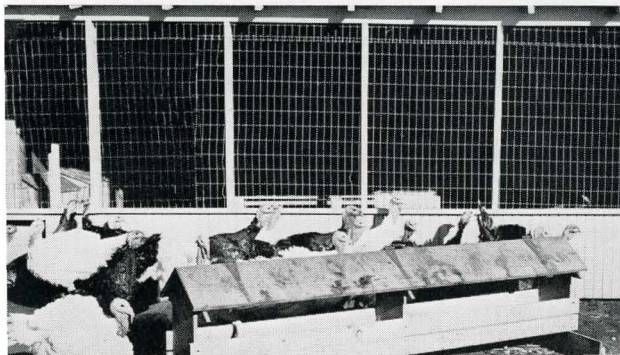
Interior view of corner of large barn used for turkey breeders. Roosts, nests, and broody coops are shown. Many barns may be remodeled into winter quarters for turkey breeding flocks. Caring for breeding stock that is well housed involves much less labor during disagreeable winter storms than when more open sheds are used. By having artificial lights and the consumption of mash regulated, turkeys may be made to produce eggs during January and February.



Twenty-two sheds were placed against each other to make winter protection for 1,250 turkey hens. Each shed is 8' x 20' with 4-foot side studdings and top of ridge 6 feet. Roof, back and the two ends are covered with corrugated sheet metal.

The covered feed trough used at the University of Nebraska for growing turkeys. The upper board on the side can be adjusted.

A rain-proof cover protects the feed. Grain is taken out at the back with a scoop or bucket.



Arrangement of Crops for Pasture

Tender green feed can be supplied by strip-farming various crops. The crops which furnish a constant supply of green feed throughout the season vary with the time turkeys go to range, as well as with the location of the farm in the state.

The following diagram suggests a program for providing tender green feeds for turkeys from the time they are moved to open range until killing frosts.

Cane or corn in rows for better fall cover and wind protection.

—4 acres of cane or a larger field of corn—

Sudan grass.

—6 acres—

Grain stubble field where a wheat or oats crop has been harvested. Roosts and night corrals are moved along edges of stubble. During the day, turkeys are encouraged to range over alfalfa or sudan grass by moving feed troughs and waterers toward the edge of the stubble.

—40 acres—

The soil building value of a flock of 2,000 turkeys on this tract is one of the less considered incomes from raising turkeys.

Alfalfa field.

—10 acres—

Size of fields as suggested in the above plan is for a flock of 2,000 turkeys.

In sections where rape does well, the rape seed can be sown at the time oats are planted. Planting several rows of cane along the fence hinders turkeys from flying the fence during the fall, and furnishes forage that is greatly relished.