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PHASES OF POULTRY WORK

(Range and Housing of Chicks)

by

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and Home Economics, South Dakota State College
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HOUSING

If a brooder house is used the chicks may be housed in it until time to put the pullets into winter quarters, providing the cockerels have been taken out. A brooder house 10 X 12 will accommodate 350 chicks, but that is not room enough for more than 35 to 40 pullets. Much loss is often due to overcrowded conditions.

A brooder house is usually not warm enough for winter quarters unless it was built with that idea in view. Neither is it deep enough to allow good ventilation without draft unless some new ventilating system can be found for this state. In a warmer climate it proves very satisfactory.

If small galvanized or wooden coops are used they usually become overcrowded by the time the chicks are six weeks old. The results of overcrowding during the summer months are some loss by disease and a large number of stunted chicks showing slow growth and poor vitality. This is just as true when chicks are housed in an overcrowded brooder house.

Overcrowded conditions can often be remedied by separating the cockerels from the pullets, especially if they are to be fattened and sold when they have reached the weight of one and a half to two pounds.

It is not advisable to house young chicks with grown fowls until they have passed the "tender" stage, as there is too much danger from lice, mites and disease.

RANGE

As soon as the chicks are old enough to leave the brooder--from six to eight weeks--they should be placed on free range with grass and shade if possible. If white diarrhoea, gape worms or the little round worms affected the chicks last year, place the coops on new range if possible for these diseases are not easily gotten rid of and will remain on the ground from one season to another. This is especially true of the worms. If there is tuberculosis in the old flock keep the young chicks from going over the same ground for they contract the disease easily.

- GREEN FEED:** Grass will furnish all of the green feed necessary during the summer if chicks are on free range.
- SHADE:** Shade is very necessary for chicks, especially if they are late hatched, for they are stunted by the hot, dry weather and are more liable to be affected by disease and worms, than if hatched early.
- GRIT:** Plenty of grit and charcoal should be within easy reach of chicks when on range unless sand or gravel is present in large enough quantities to make it unnecessary to furnish it extra.
- WATER:** Plenty of fresh water should be within easy reach of the growing chicks when on range.
- BROODER HOUSE:** If the brooder house is on skids or so arranged that it may be moved easily, fresh range may be had by moving the house forward about three times the length of the house.
- A grain field or orchard makes excellent range as there is usually an abundant supply of insects.