

Keep the Layers—Sell the Loafers

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Feed prices are higher than any time during the past few years. Poultry raisers should remove every bird from the flock that is not capable of laying at a high rate of production.

To produce eggs at a profit during the summer and early fall, production should be maintained at 60% or above. This requires constant and careful culling.

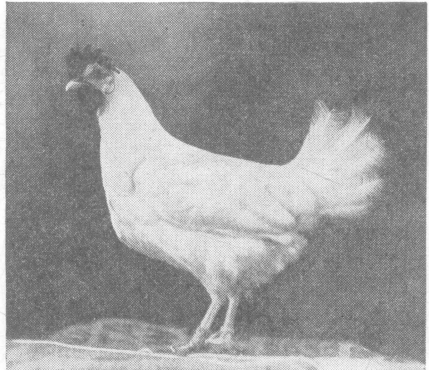
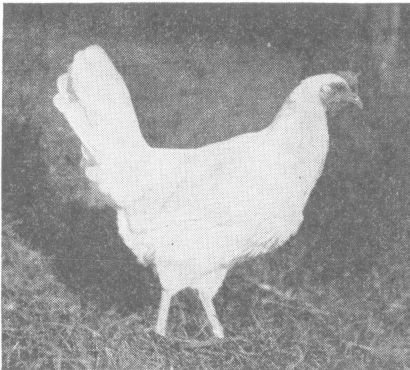
With the demand for meat, non-layers should be marketed. Sell birds that show "gray eye," typical of fowl paralysis; birds that are thin in flesh; and broody hens.

Cull throughout the year. During

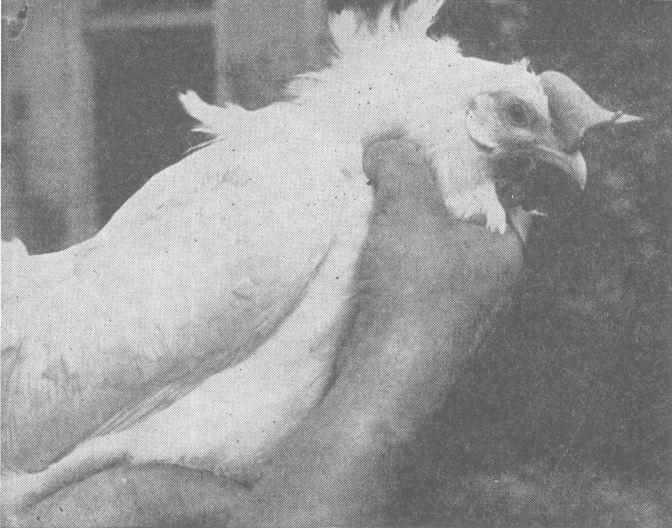
the summer and fall months, however, is the time when the entire flock should be carefully culled. Save only the best layers.

Cull at night by handling the bird on the roost. A flashlight or an electric bulb on an extension cord will enable the one doing the culling to observe the degree of yellow in beak, eyelids, earlobes, and shanks and to determine whether the bird is in laying condition.

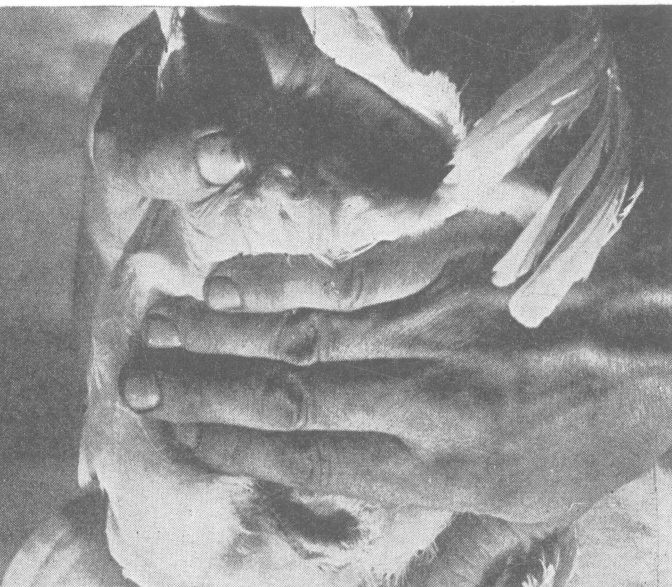
If the culling is done during the daylight, a wire corral or culling coop should be used to prevent undue excitement to the birds. A wire catching hook is most desirable.



Left bird shows a short, narrow body, a dull eye, and yellow in beak and shanks. She is a poor layer. The bird on the right, a good layer, has a long, wide body, a bright eye, and white beak and shanks.



Good Layers



HOW TO Good Layers *from*

◆ ◆

COMB

Large, red, glossy.

EYE

Bright.

BODY CAPA

More than two fingers spread between pin and keel bones.

HANDLING Q

Abdomen: soft, pliable, enlarged.

VENT

Large, moist, oblong

BEAK AND S

White.

Good layers do not molt until fall. The best layers molt and lay at the same time. The feathers are worn and ragged.

Keep the Late Molters ◆ S

TO TELL

from Poor Layers

◆ ◆
COMB

Small, pale, scaly.

EYE

Dull.

CAPACITY

Less than two fingers
spread between pin
and keel bones.

ING QUALITY

Abdomen: fatty,
hard, contracted.

VENT

Small, dry, round

AND SHANK

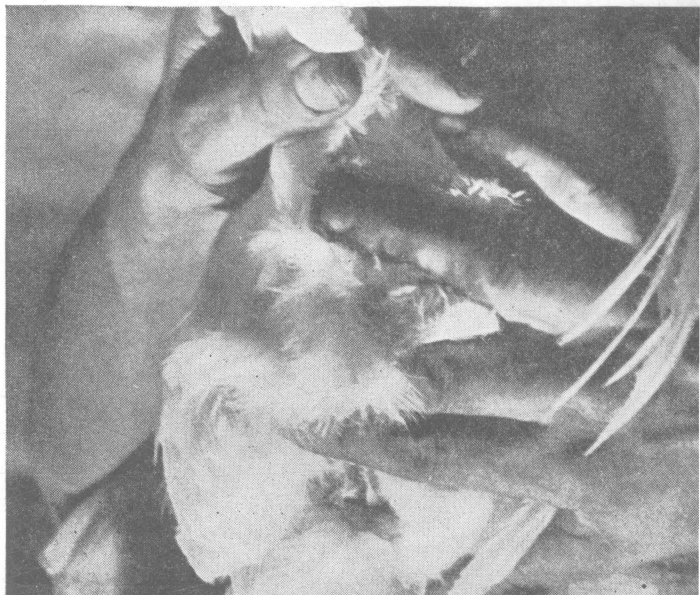
Yellow.

Poor layers molt
early and slowly.
They often show
many new feathers
by early summer.

❖ Sell the Early Molters



Poor Layers



Culling Chart

Judging for Present Production

CHARACTER	LAYING HEN	NON-LAYING HEN
Comb.....	Large, red, full, glossy.....	Small, pale, scaly
Eye.....	Bright	Dull
Vent.....	Large, dilated, oblong, moist.	Small, contracted, round, dry
Pubic bone spread	Two to five fingers spread...	Less than two fingers spread
Body capacity....	More than two fingers spread between keel and pubic bones	Less than two fingers spread between keel and pubic bones

Estimating Past Production

CHARACTER	LONG LAYING PERIOD	SHORT LAYING PERIOD
Vent.....	Bluish white	Flesh colored
Eyelids.....	Thin and edges white.....	Thick, yellow tinted
Eye.....	Prominent, keen, sparkling..	Listless, sunken
Earlobes.....	Enamel white	Yellow-tinted
Beak.....	Pearly white	Yellow-tinted
Face.....	Clean cut, sunken.....	Full, well fleshed
Shanks.....	White, flat, thin.....	Yellow, round, smooth
Plumage.....	Worn, soiled, lifeless, close- leathered	Signs of molting, loose feathered

Estimating Merits of Layers

CHARACTER	GOOD LAYERS	POOR LAYERS
Head.....	Broad, square	Crow-headed, round
Beak.....	Short	Long
Eye.....	Bright, bulging	Dull, sunken
Face.....	Lean, smooth	Meaty, wrinkled
Comb.....	Large, fine	Small, coarse
Breast.....	Full, broad	Shallow, narrow
Back.....	Broad, long	Narrow, pinched
Abdomen.....	Soft, pliable, dilated.....	Fatty, hard, contracted
Skin.....	Soft, thin, loose, silky.....	Thick, dry, underlaid with fat
Pubic bones.....	Tips thin, point straight out..	Tips thick, curved in
Keel.....	Slopes downward	Slopes upward
Capacity.....	Four to five fingers.....	Two fingers
Shanks.....	Lean, flat, fine scaled.....	Fat, round, coarse scaled
Molt.....	Late, rapid	Early, slow

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