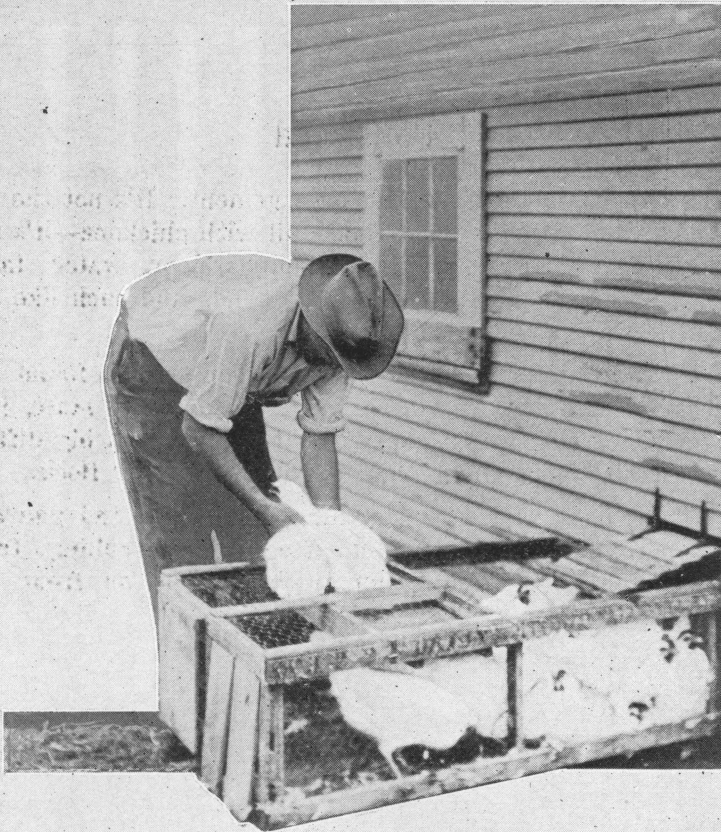


POULTRY YARD EQUIPMENT



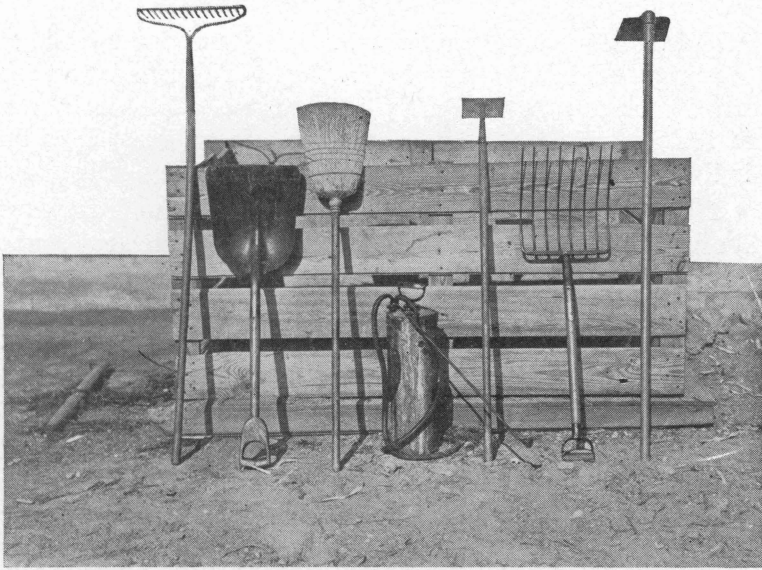
Issued By
The Extension Service
Agricultural & Mechanical College of Texas
and the U.S. Department of Agriculture
O. B. Martin, Director, College Station, Texas

Foreword

BAD LUCK is generally bad management. It's not the big things that make most folks fail with chickens—it's the little things. Not enough mash troughs, poor water facilities, lack of nests, dirty houses, no shade and such like are the little things that make bad luck.

This bulletin shows some simple equipment found on successful poultry farms here and there over the state, just inexpensive "chicken furniture" that will make a big difference in the management—and the luck—of your flock.

The furniture isn't everything, of course, and you can get other bulletins on housing, feeding, and culling, from your county or home demonstration agent or from the Extension Service, College Station, Texas.



Poultry Yard Equipment

By E. N. Holmgreen

Extension Poultry Husbandman

YOU CAN drive nails with a rock or the heel of your shoe, but it's a hard way of doing an easy job. Keeping chickens is year round work. A few tools of the trade will make the work much easier.

The sled is fine for moving manure (out to the garden where it belongs), hauling water, moving litter, mash troughs, feed, coops of chickens and a hundred other things on the farm. As the advertisements say, "Ask the man who owns one." The scraper to the right of the sprayer in the above picture is just the thing for scraping the dropping boards, cleaning roosts, troughs, and the like. Make it out of a worn-out hoe by simply heating and straightening out the neck. Don't overlook the big fork (any cotton seed handler has them), it's handy for moving dirty litter. A putty knife is a fine addition for scraping out corners and other small places.

Catching Coop Is A Time Saver

CULLING, worming, vaccinating, or otherwise handling a couple hundred hens is a terrible job if you have to chase them all around the house to catch them. It's such work that it's put off and put off and often left **undone**. Jobs like this that you never get around to are fine starters of **bad luck**.

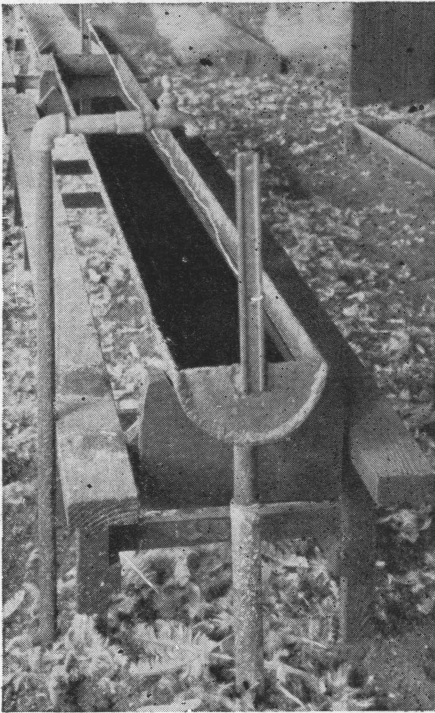
The simple little catching coop shown on the front cover will completely change the complexion of the work. Any sort of coop will do if it has a hole in one end to let the chickens in and another somewhere else to take them out. A handy way of fixing the door in the top where birds are removed is to stretch two flat strips of an old inner tube over the opening. Let one strip over-lap the other about two inches. Birds are easy to get out and the "door" always stays closed. Set the

catching coop against an opening in the corner of the house; then "seine" them into the coop with a 10-foot length of poultry wire.

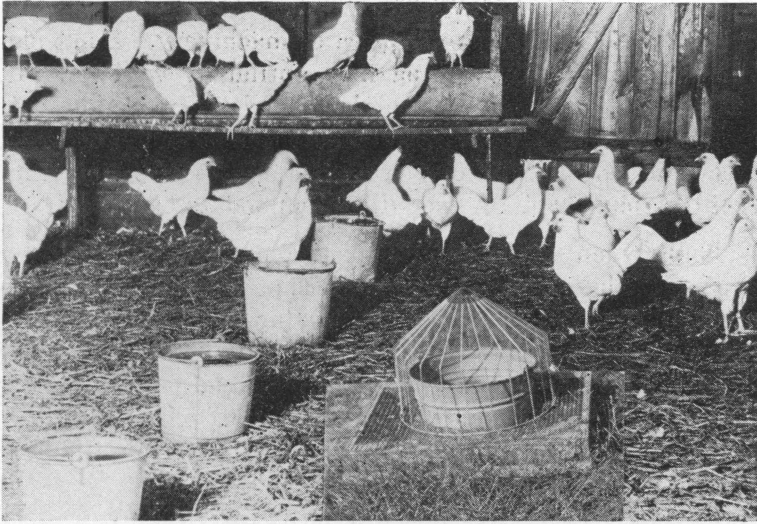
Make Water Handy

WHY BE STINGY with water when it's the cheapest thing chickens need? Eggs are two-thirds water, and hens can't make them very fast if forced to run to the barn lot or tank every time they want a drink. Water must be convenient **to the hen**.

If water is piped to the house, then some such handy system as shown at left will solve the problem. Note the wire over the center of



For running water.



the trough to keep chickens out. An automatic float instead of the faucet will help. With this system **don't** forget to arrange drainage for waste water. Pipe the waste **outside** the house. Run it into a hole dug 3 feet each way and filled with rocks. This lets the water soak down and does not leave wet, sloppy places to start disease. To help further, cover the hole with chicken netting.

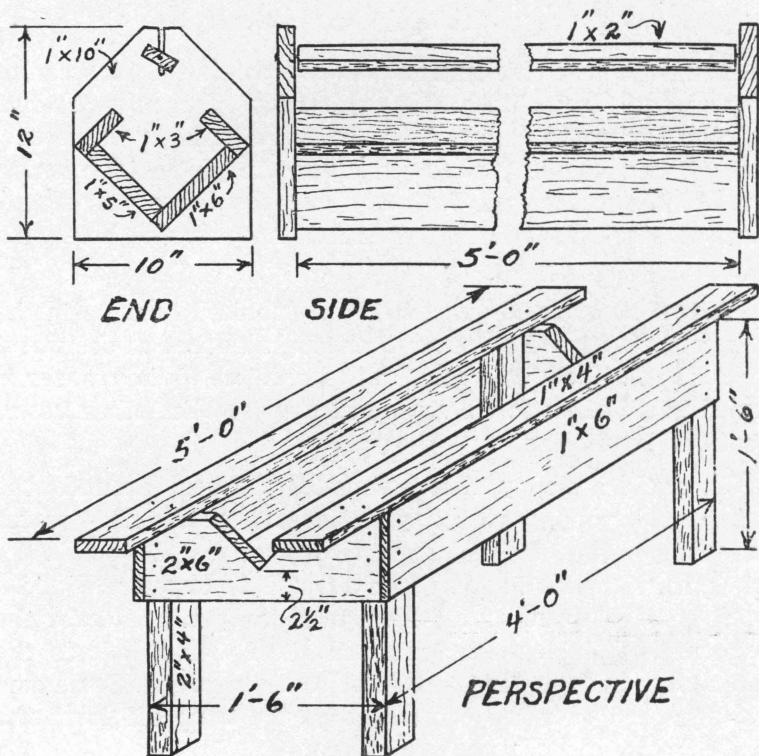
A row of 14 or 16-quart heavy galvanized buckets in the flock house is a good system. By using a bucket as the water vessel, it will likely be **washed** when refilled. When water is carried in a bucket to fill some other vessel, the **other** vessel is seldom kept clean.

To avoid a sloppy, disease-breeding floor around the bucket, set in a pan, protecting the hens from the dirty water that will slop into the pan by a wire covering. To do this get a tinsmith to make a square pan about 2 feet square. Build a square wooden frame to set down over the pan and cover the frame with $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch mesh hardware cloth. Cut a hole in the center large enough for the bucket to set through. Some sort of wire guard over the top will keep the hens off from the bucket. (Note inset in above picture).

Make Mash Troughs To Order

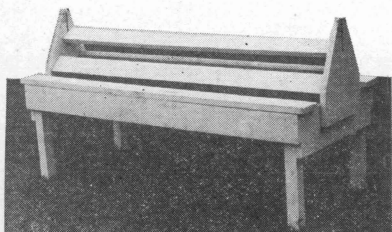
THE HEN is a **high** speed piece of machinery. Don't slow up egg laying by making her continually wait her turn at the feed trough. With the right feed the more she eats, the more eggs she will lay. Provide one foot of trough space for each 10 hens. Don't count both sides—a 5-foot trough has 5 feet of trough, not 10, and will accommodate 50 hens.

Poultrymen say the reel type trough illustrated below is a good one. The revolving reel—a piece of 1x2—keeps chickens out of the trough and flips off any birds that try to stand where droppings will dirty the feed. The reel has a nail in each end as an axle which fits into a slot in the end pieces. The reel lifts out making cleaning or refilling easy. The stand helps in the laying house by raising the trough away from the litter



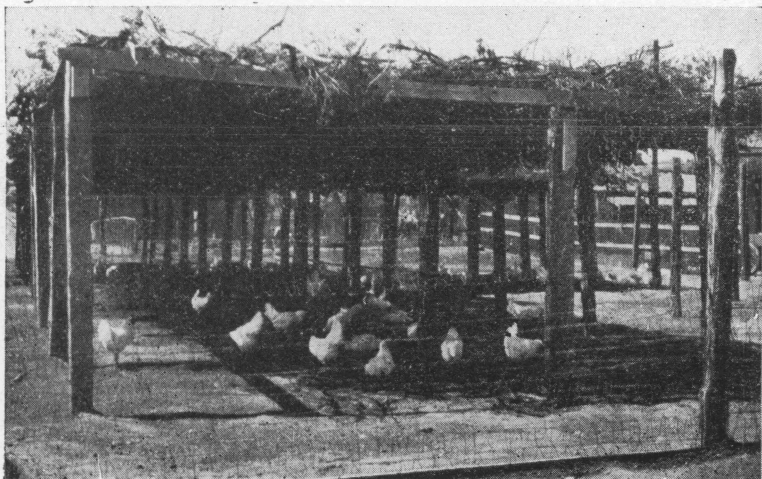
Reel type mash trough.

and dirt on the floor and also away from the hens that are not eating. For larger breeds move **the standing boards** further from the trough. For outside use remove the reel and fasten a "V" type cover as a top to keep out light rains.



Hens Must Have Shade

A CHICKEN'S normal temperature is 106 degrees. They **must** have shade in summer. The best way, of course, is to have some good shade trees on the flock range, but it takes **time** to grow trees. Meanwhile the wrong way is to let them find their own shade in little loafing groups under the wagon and barn and along the fence row. Give them a good big thatch shade with water and feed troughs under it to keep them **busy**. Build the shade about 6 feet off the ground. Low shade is hot and does little good.

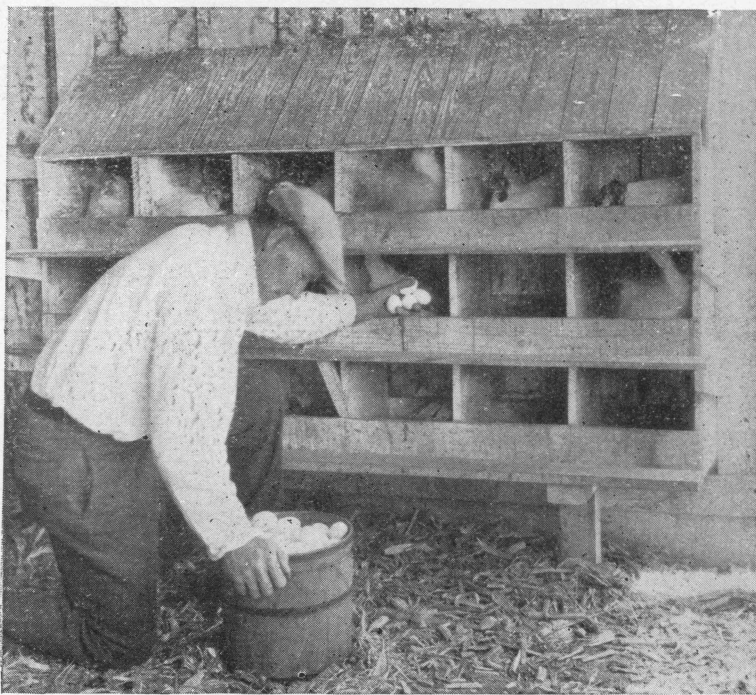


A good shade—easily built.

Have One Nest to Five Hens

NO ONE KNOWS why sixteen hens want to lay in the same nest when other nests are empty. They must be humored in this, however, by building them a good system of nests, one nest to each 5 hens. This will cut down the broken and dirty eggs and reduce pickouts and prolapses.

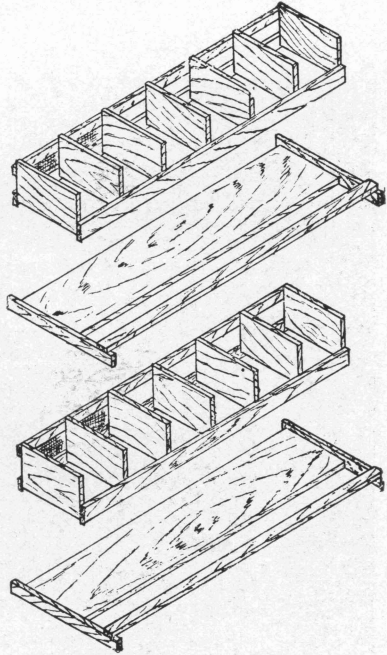
The picture below shows demountable nests placed out of the way on end walls or partitions. The diagram on the next page shows how the nests may be put up in sections to be easily demountable. This construction allows for variation in the number of nests by adding or lessening the number of tiers. Make nests 12 inches square and 14 inches high. A wire bottom instead of boards improves them for warmer section. In low production months, close up a tier or two.



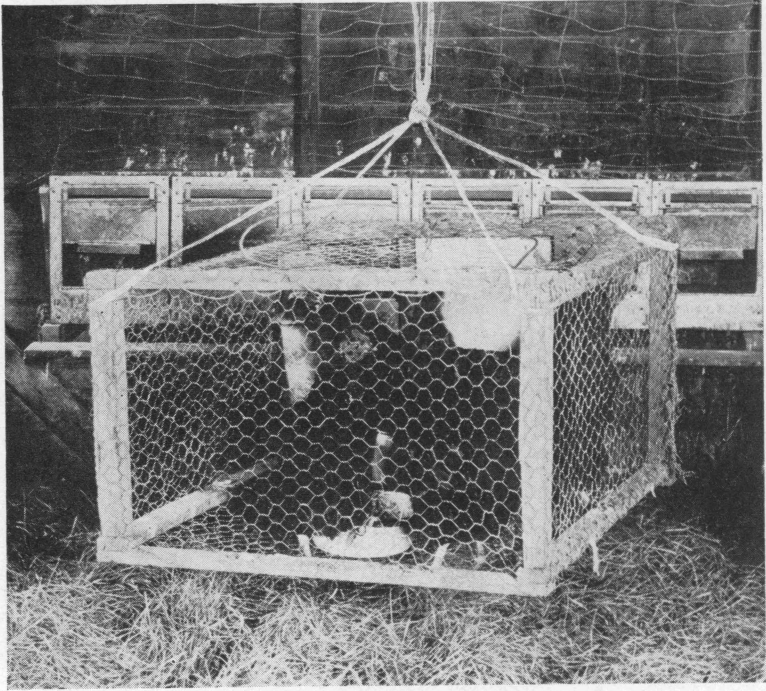
Hens will want to lay here.

Trap Nests

IF YOU WANT to trap nest, put on a good "front." Illustrated below is one style of trap nest front that easily goes on or off the regular nests. Such trap nest fronts are comparatively cheap, serviceable and work fine.



The front makes the trap nest.



A convenient broody coop.

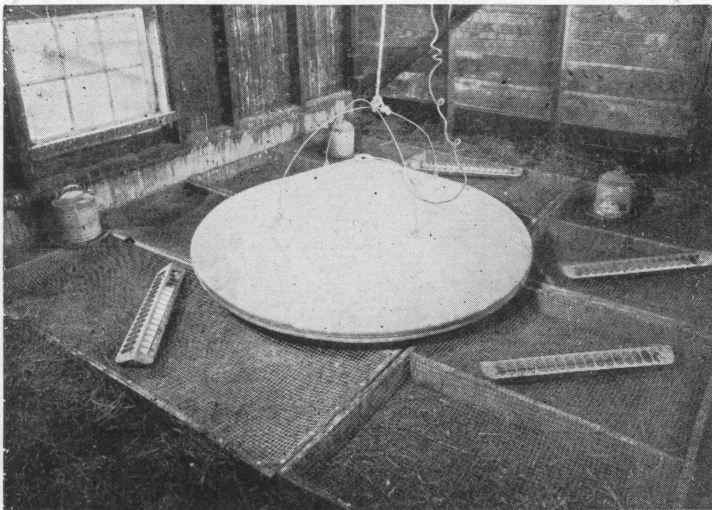
Don't Let A Hen Get Too Motherly

BROODY HENS don't lay eggs. Get them back to work by breaking them up quickly. If the broody coop is **conveniently** located, right in the flock house, it can be used promptly. If it's a hundred yards away under "that nice tree" it's tempting to wait until a whole handful of hens are broody before putting them up. A wire coop suspended with wires from the roof about a foot off the ground is just the thing. Put the "broodies" up immediately and **feed** them just like the layers but add a slight laxative.

It's Cleanliness That Counts In Brooder Houses

BROODER HOUSES ought to be cleaned daily, but poultrymen rarely do it **until** disease hits and then it's **too late**. Pecking around in the filth on the floor spreads disease. Don't run the **chance** of being careless. Fix a hardware cloth (hail screen) brooder house floor. This raised wire platform lets the droppings fall through where the chicks can't reach them.

Make the wire floor of $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch mesh hardware cloth nailed on frames of 1x4's set edgeways with cross pieces set 30 inches apart to prevent the wire from sagging. Make the frames in sections for easy handling. Set the section together leaving walkway around the edges. Put the hover, water and feed vessels on top of the wire. If a coal brooder is used, set it on a sand box of 1x4's the size of the base of the stove and make the floor frames fit around the sand box. Cover floor lightly with litter to prevent droppings from sticking. Clean once every week or 10 days for good sanitation.



Wire floor saves labor and chicks.



Build a set of roosts for the brooder house.

Fix Special Roosts For Chicks

TEACH THE CHICKS to roost while in the brooder house. If you don't, chicks which **want** and **ought** to be on roosts will be crowding on the floor. Rigging up brooder house roosts each year is a job very easy to neglect. Fix up some moveable permanent roosts as shown above and have the job done for five years or so. The size of the set of roosts depends on size and shape of brooder house. Make the width of roosts exactly that of the netting to be used, as pointed out in the picture. When frame is made, cover with 1-inch mesh chicken wire then put roosts on top. After this is done, turn frame upside down and tack the mesh wire to under side of roosts to prevent sagging.

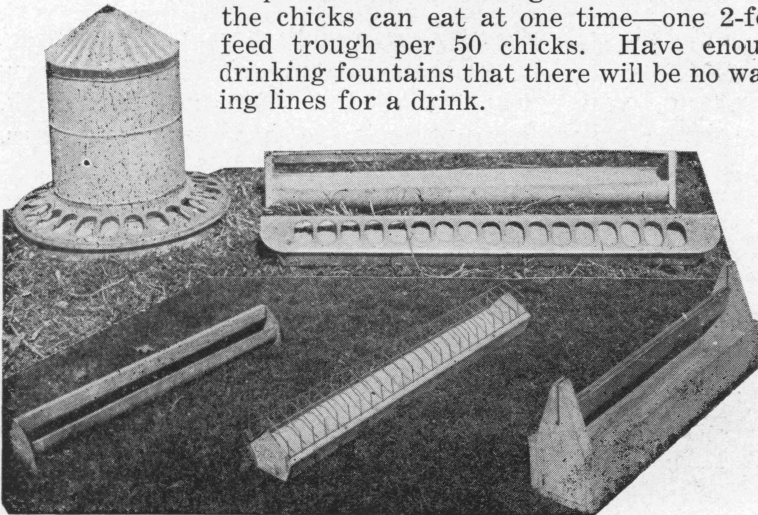


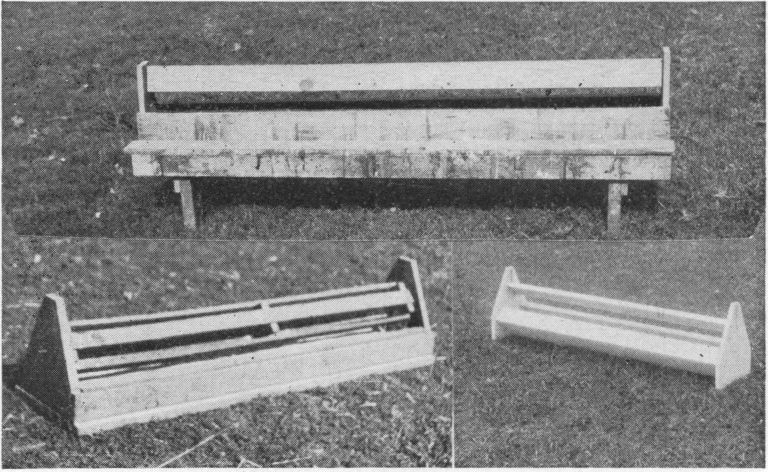
Summer range shelter, clean ground and green feed make healthy pullets.



Don't Skimp On Feeders And Waterers

HERE ARE a few styles in baby chick feeders and watering devices—take your choice but have **enough** of them and keep them **clean**. “Enough” means that half the chicks can eat at one time—one 2-foot feed trough per 50 chicks. Have enough drinking fountains that there will be no waiting lines for a drink.

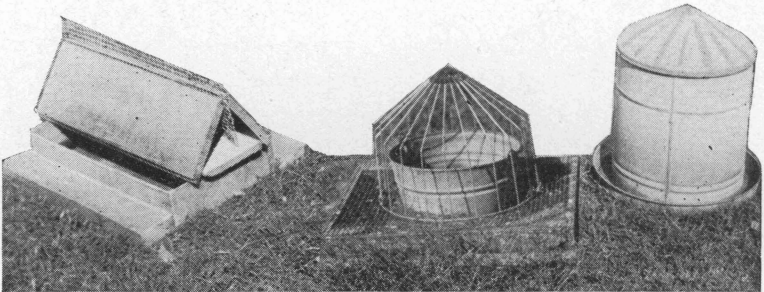


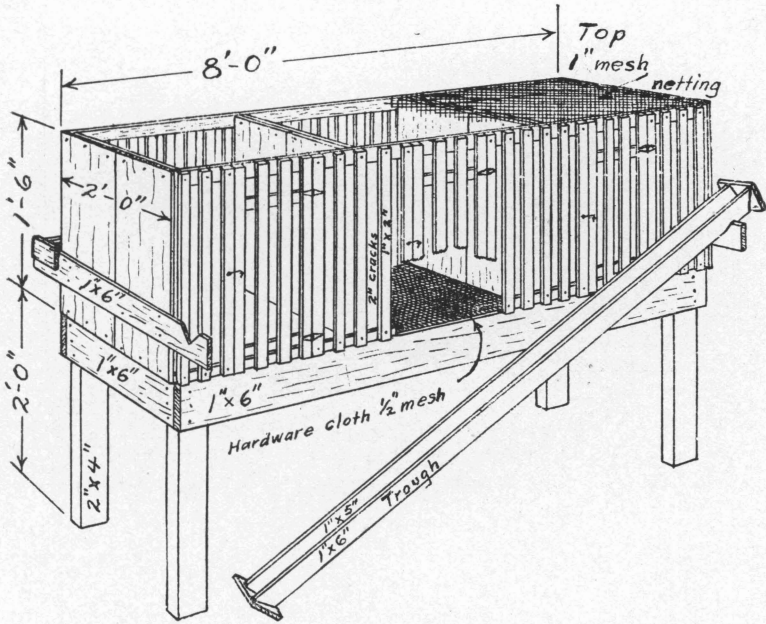


For Half Grown Stuff

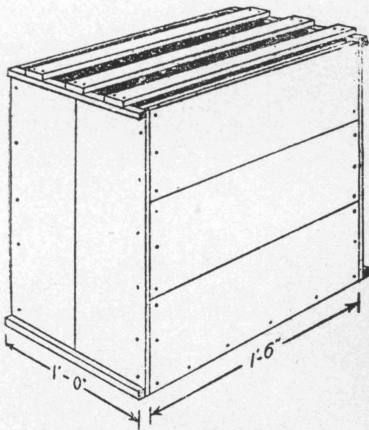
POOR PULLETS never pay profits. Keep them **growing** with plenty of feed and water in feeders and waterers designed for **their** size. Make the reel on the feeders adjustable (raise or lower) to suit the size of birds. The hen size feeder will do without the stand. Allow one foot of trough for 15 pullets.

Put the feeders in the shade and move them a few feet twice per week. Chickens don't like hot water in summer any more than people, nor do they like to "walk a mile" for a drink. Give them plenty of clean water in the shade near the feeders.





A handy fattening coop.



Make shipping coops light.



Oat sprouter.

Cooperative Extension Work in Agriculture and Home Economics, Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas and United States Department of Agriculture Cooperating.
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