Planning boosts poultry profits

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Department of Agriculture
AMAZING as it may seem, the time and labour expended in the ordinary every­day chores on a poultry farm carrying 1,000 birds can be reduced five times by adopting modern efficiency methods. This will appeal to poultry farmers in this State who know that low labour costs are closely linked to high profits.

That such a saving of time and labour is possible was conclusively proved in a series of practical tests conducted by L. M. Hurd of the New York Agricultural College, Cornell, U.S.A. He found that it could be achieved with little additional expense simply by planning the farm successfully and following a few simple rules.

The recommendations made by Mr. Hurd in his Extension Poultry Farm Service Letter are substantially the same as those which are advocated by the Poultry Branch of our own Department of Agriculture. The Department's recommendations are as follows:—

Have large laying sheds to reduce the opening and closing of many doors; to reduce the number of waterers and the number of places to gather eggs and to make for easier clearing. One house can accommodate as many as 800 birds providing three square feet per bird (semi-intensive) or four square feet per bird (intensive) is allowed.

Have an automatic water supply and an efficient method of draining containers.

Have community type nests near the door, to save travel in gathering eggs. The habits of hens are largely what you make them. They will come to you or you can go to them. The nest should be kept reasonably dark but must have adequate ventilation on hot days. White sawdust will be found excellent nesting material.

Have egg room nearby, to reduce travel and encourage more frequent gathering of eggs without too much extra work. To ensure good quality eggs they should be collected three times daily and be stored in a cool, non-draughty place.

Provide handy disposal methods, to make the job of removing droppings and litter easier and less time-consuming. Use the deep litter system to reduce the number of cleanings.

Combine as many operations as possible. There is a wide variation in the number of things that are done by different poultrymen on each trip through the laying shed, and in the number of trips that are made to do the jobs.

Have buildings and work areas close together to reduce travel.

Provide for circular travels to eliminate backtracking.

Use gravity to move feed and supplies, e.g., have feed shed at a higher level than the sheds and use feed bins and self-feeders.

Provide suitable paths, alleys and doorways that are sufficiently wide, level and smooth for carts.

Locate tools and supplies at the place where the work is done.

Combine jobs and carry them out to a system.

Plan to complete one operation where another begins.

Reduce trips by handling maximum practical loads.

Work at reasonable speed—avoid wasting energy.

All dry mash feeding in self-feeders or open troughs reduces the number of feedings and ensures that birds have food available at all times.

Try these time and labour-saving ideas on YOUR property. You will find them well worth any small initial cost incurred in changing over from the old methods. The "proof of the pudding" will soon be evident in more leisure hours and/or a greater output per man.
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