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AGRICULTURAL AND MECHANICAL COLLEGE  
IN COOPERATION WITH  
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**HELPFUL HINTS FOR POULTRY RAISERS**

BY A. F. ROLF\*

*Poultry Husbandman, Oklahoma A and M.*

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**SELECTION OF POULTRY**

One of the first problems that comes to the beginner is the selection of a breed. It is very important that a proper selection be made, and this requires careful study and consideration. No one but you yourself can tell just what is the best breed for you.

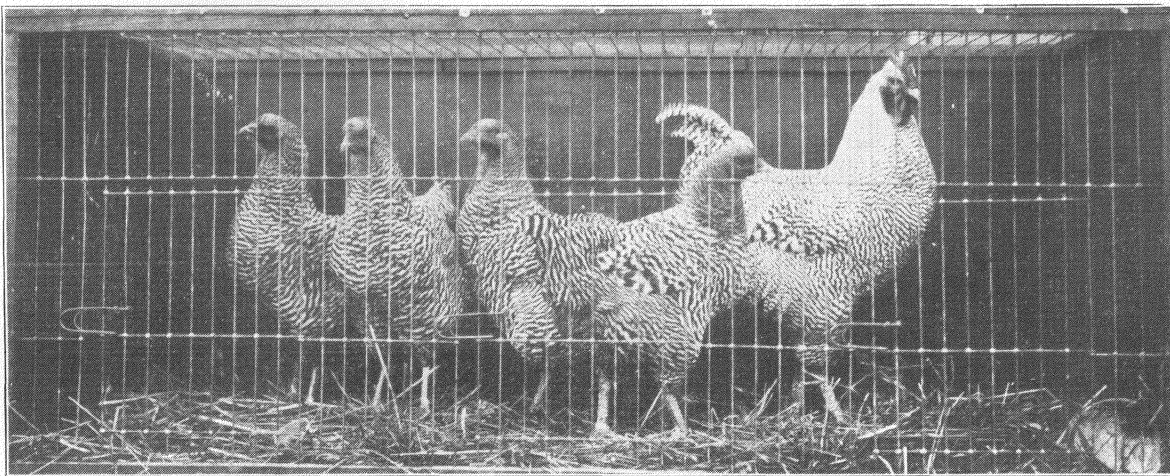
The commercial poultryman classifies the various breeds from a purely utility standpoint. This classification has three main divisions:

1. The Egg Type.
2. The Meat Type.
3. The Dual Purpose Type.

The Egg Type of fowl are small, active birds, good rangers and foragers, do not show a broody tendency, and therefore cannot be used for hatching and brooding. All the breeds of this type will lay a large number of white-shelled eggs, but they are not always good winter layers. This division includes the Leghorns, Minorcas, Andalusians, Anconas and Campines. It might be mentioned that it will be found very hard to get a uniform good color on the Campines, Anconas and Andalusians, as well as some of the varieties of Minorcas and Leghorns. If you like to strive for such results, any of these will be all right, but if you want to keep the uniform color with less work, it can be more easily secured with the White, Black or Buff Leghorns and the Black or White Minorcas. It is worthy of note that practically all of the large, successful egg farms use the Single Comb White Leghorn.

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\*A. F. Rolf, formerly in charge of poultry at this institution, resigned Nov. 15, 1914.



#### PEN OF BARRED PLYMOUTH ROCKS

Owned by Oklahoma Agricultural College, purchased from breeder, Mr. C. H. Latham, Lancaster, Massachusetts  
The Plymouth Rocks "are very popular and, being active and good rangers by nature, they make good breeds for average farm  
poultry work". They are a General Purpose fowl

The Meat Type of fowl, as the name indicates, are those birds with particularly large, well fleshed bodies. Under this type we find the Brahmans, Cochins, Dorkings and Cornish, and sometimes the Langshans, Orpingtons and Sussex are also included. These birds are generally inclined to be very sluggish and inactive, thus not making very good birds for the general farm where they must hustle for a part of their living. Their egg production is smaller than many of the other breeds, but they make exceptionally good birds where large sized market carcasses are desired. They have a strong broody tendency and make excellent mothers.

The Dual Purpose type of fowl have been developed to include, so far as possible, the best points of both the Egg Type and Meat Type. The chief representatives of this type are the Plymouth Rock, Wyandotte, Rhode Island Red, and sometimes the Langshans, Orpingtons and Sussex are also included. These birds will produce a good number of eggs, especially in winter, and have a fairly large, well-fleshed body. They are active enough so that they make good rangers and will forage a great deal of their own living. They make good sitters and mothers. Everything considered, this is the type of fowl best suited to the average conditions on the Oklahoma farm. To those who desire a more complete description of the breeds we would say that a bulletin on "Breeds of Poultry" can be secured free by writing the United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. Complete descriptions of the Standard requirements can only be secured from the American Standard of Perfection. This book, which costs \$2.00, can be obtained from Mr. S. T. Campbell, secretary American Poultry Association, Mansfield, Ohio. It contains complete detailed description of the Standard requirements of all breeds (most of the breeds are illustrated), and we would advise every one who ever shows any chickens or sells breeding stock or eggs for hatching to secure a copy of this book.

### VITALITY AND VIGOR

The selection of the proper breed is very important, but more important still is the securing of the right strain of birds and then breeding to maintain their vigor and vitality and other desired points.

In securing stock remember that it pays to get the best there is for your purpose. Buy from some breeder who has made a success along the same lines of work you will follow. It costs more to raise the best birds, selected for a given purpose, than it does to raise ordinary market stock, so you must be prepared to pay a fair price for your purchases.

If we do not separate the weak hens from our flock we get a large number of infertile eggs, weak, spraddled-legged chicks, a large number of dead chicks in the shell, and some chicks that will die when a few days old. It is the eggs from the strong, vigorous hens that give us fertile eggs and strong, sturdy chicks. The basis for selecting the strong from the weak is as follows: The physically strong bird is very active, stands squarely on its legs, with its knee joints set well apart; is the first bird to get off the perch in the morning and the last to get on the roost at night; the deep, thick, compact body with a large, heavy fluff indicates greater vigor than the more

slender, long-jointed, more delicate sort of body of the same variety. A fowl of strong vitality has a short, broad, deep head; a strong, well curved beak; a long body with width carried the entire length; short, heavy, plump thighs and shanks; toenails well worn. The fowl of low vitality will have a longer, thinner head; flattened beak; less prominent eye; longer, thinner neck; more slender body; long, thin thighs and shanks, and toenails not well worn.

We must start culling out the weak chicks as soon as hatched. Whenever you see a chick which is sick or not growing properly, mark it so that it will never be used as a breeder, but send it to the market as soon as it is in condition. Never use a bird in the breeding pen which has ever been sick. By observing these rules you will greatly decrease disease and death and greatly increase the efficiency of your flock.

### **POULTRY HOUSES**

A full discussion of Poultry Housing is contained in a bulletin which can be obtained free by writing to the Oklahoma Experiment Station, Stillwater, Oklahoma.

### **FEEDING POULTRY**

The ideal poultry ration contains grains, green food, animal food, mineral matter and pure, fresh water. The exact proportion of the mixture is not so important as to see that the birds get all the above elements in as great a variety as possible.

In feeding the breeding hens, the following has proven very good for Oklahoma conditions, although this mixture might be changed a great deal as occasion demanded. The grain food is composed of 3 pounds cracked corn, 2 pounds whole wheat and 1 pound oats. This mixture is fed in the litter morning and night. The largest meal is given at night so that the fowls will go to bed with full crops. The grain food is scattered on the floor in a litter of straw and the birds are forced to scratch and work it out, thus giving them a large amount of valuable exercise. For breeding hens better results have been obtained when a dry mash is to remain before the fowls from noon until the time the evening meal is given. The dry mash is made up in the following proportions: Two pounds corn chop finely ground, 2 pounds mill run, 1 pound of commercial beef scraps.

### **FEEDING YOUNG CHICKS**

A young chick when it is hatched has enough food within its body, within the yolk sack, to last it for seventy-two hours. It is best to give the chick nothing except a little sand and water for the first forty-eight hours. The next twenty-four hours it can be given a little bran, breadcrumbs or something of this kind. If we start the chick off carefully and allow its digestive system to get into proper working order there is less danger of bowel trouble. From the very first we should give the chick all of the grit and charcoal that it wants. In order to get the chick to eat the charcoal it is sometimes necessary to mix a little in the mash or feed. The more va-

riety of feed that we can give the chick during the first three weeks the better will be its start. The following ration makes an excellent homemade chick food: Three pounds kafir, 2 pounds wheat, 1\* pound pinhead oats, ½ pound grit. (The grains should be finely cracked and sifted.) In a small, shallow tray give the following mash: Four pounds mill run, 1 pound beef scrap. After the chicks get fairly well started and growing nicely the grit can be omitted from the ration and the grains coarsely cracked and sifted instead of finely cracked. For the growing chicks we can substitute the following mash: Eight pounds mill run, 4 pounds corn meal, 3 pounds beef scrap. The main object in feeding young chicks is to keep them healthy, strong and vigorous and growing every day. Give the chickens all of the sour milk they will drink whenever it can be obtained.

### POULTRY DISEASES

It does not pay to doctor sick chickens as a general rule. A chicken which is once sick is never again fit for breeding purposes, but should be marketed. Its market value is so small that one cannot afford to spend much time or money in trying to cure diseases. One should rather do everything possible to prevent disease by—

1. Using only strong, vigorous breeding stock.
2. Give them proper houses and shelter.
3. Feeding properly as outlined in this paper.
4. Observing strict sanitation or cleanliness.

Not only should the houses be kept clean and sanitary, but you should also watch out for moldy or musty grain, impure drinking water and other sources of filth. Be sure there are no carcasses around the premises, such as dead chickens, rats, snakes, etc. It is a good plan to thoroughly clean out the birds themselves about once a month. Dissolve epsom salts in warm water at the rate of one pound to each hundred adult birds. Use the solution to mix enough wet mash so that the birds will clean it all up in five or ten minutes.

Sometimes when a number of birds can be treated at the same time with reasonable surety of a cure, treatment may be given. For those who may wish to treat diseases we give the following brief notes on some common diseases:

**Roup.**—A bird that has the roup will have a foul smelling discharge at the nostrils, will be dumpish, generally show diarrhoea, and as the disease progresses one or both sides of the face often show large swellings which cause the eyes to bulge. If the bird has reached the stage where the swellings appear it is useless to treat it. Kill it immediately and then burn it or bury it deep. If taken at first the following treatment is good: Isolate all sick birds. Put enough potassium permanganate in all drinking water to turn it a deep red color; wash head, face and mouth of affected birds with

\*NOTE.—Pinhead oats are oats which have been hulled and finely cracked. They can be obtained through any dealer in poultry feeds.

2% solution of boracic acid. With a medicine dropper or small oil can force the boracic acid solution through the nostrils and into the slit in the roof of the mouth. Keep birds in a warm, dry place and repeat this treatment daily until cured. Give the birds easily digested wet mash, using about one teaspoonful of red pepper to two quarts of mash. When the bird is cured market it. Disinfect all houses and yards thoroughly.

**Sorehead or Chickenpox.**—This is recognized by the sores which appear on the comb, wattles, face and eyes. Soak all sores with warm, soapy water, and scrape off all crusts or scabs. Wash the raw, bleeding surfaces with a solution of creolin or kreso and then dust them with iodoform. Repeat this treatment in twenty-four hours and then anoint daily with carbolated vaseline until cured.

**Limberneck.**—A bird which loses control of its head and neck, or has a constant twisting, turning and jerking motion in its neck is said to have limberneck. This is caused by poisoning, due either to decaying meat or to mineral poisons, such as rat poison or spraying mixtures. Search the premises carefully and remove the cause. Give each affected bird a teaspoonful of castor oil and 10 drops of turpentine. Repeat this dose twice or three times at intervals of twelve hours. Give birds all the skimmed milk they will drink. If this does not effect a cure the case is too far advanced for treatment.

## INSECT ENEMIES

The birds should at all times be kept free from lice, mites and other insects. The following treatments may be used:

**Red Mite.**—The little mite, commonly called the red mite, does as much harm as any of the others, but its manner of infesting the fowl is different from the louse. It attacks them only at night and remains on the roosts and in crevices in the daytime. In treating the mite we do not apply our treatment to the fowl, but to the house. Clean out every part of the house, roosts and nests, and then with a strong disinfecting solution go over the roosts, dropping boards and nests, being careful to reach every nook, crevice and corner, and leave no part of the house untouched. A good solution to use is 1 part of crude carbolic acid to 3 parts of kerosene.

**Body Lice.**—Body lice on hens may be treated by louse powders or dips. The dips used may be any of the cattle or stock dips in weak solutions, but the use of any dip is not without danger. It is better to dust thoroughly with a good powder, either a commercial powder or a home-made mixture, made as follows: Take 3 parts of gasoline and 1 part of crude carbolic acid or kreso and, after thoroughly mixing, stir in all the plaster paris or cement necessary to absorb the liquid. Let the powder dry and then pass it through a small-mesh screen to remove all lumps. Put in tight cans until used.

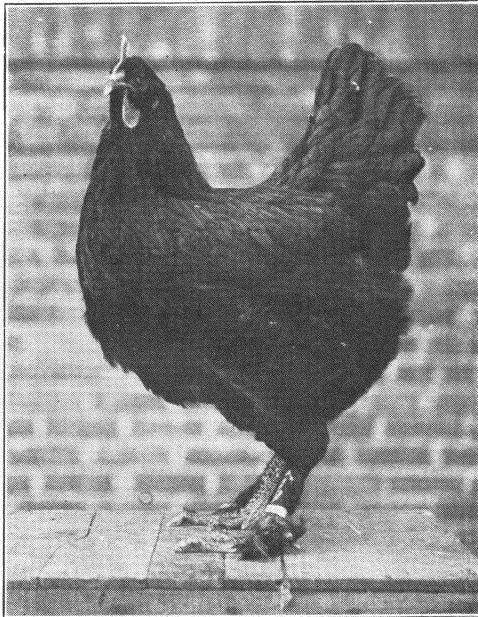
**Stick-Tight Flea.**—The stick-tight flea is a little flea that fastens itself in the comb, wattles and earlobes of the birds. The flea may be gotten rid of by treating each bird with either kerosene or carbolized vaseline.

To rid the house and premises of these fleas it will be necessary to thoroughly wet them with a strong disinfectant, such as a 10% solution of kreso or zenoleum. One of the places which must be reached is in under the sills, or any other place where the wood comes in contact with the ground.

**Blue Bugs.**—The only way to rid the birds of blue bugs is to use a dip such as a 2% to 5% of kreso. Use the same treatment around the house and premises as for the stick-tight fleas.

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Much information may be derived from the bulletins which may be obtained free by addressing Poultry Department, Oklahoma Experiment Sta-



BLACK LANGSHAN PULLET

Bred and owned by Oklahoma Agricultural College  
"The Langshans are, perhaps, the most popular of the  
Asiatic class", or Meat Type of fowl

tion, Stillwater, Oklahoma; also United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.

A good poultry paper is also a great help, and we can recommend the following as being especially adapted to Oklahoma conditions:

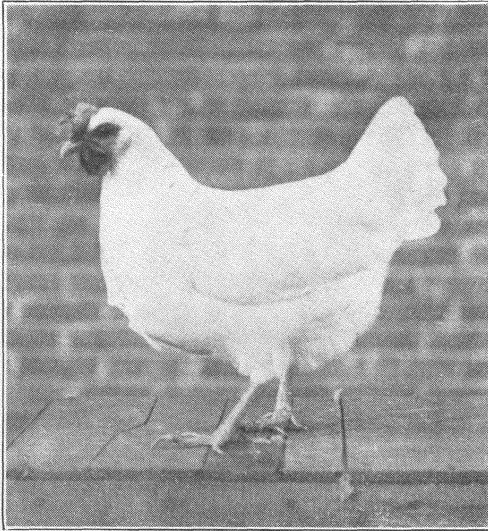
“OK” Poultry Journal, Mounds, Oklahoma.

Poultry Culture, Topeka, Kansas,

Useful Poultry Journal, Mountain Grove, Missouri,

The Southern Poultryman, Dallas, Texas.

There are also several good books on poultry raising, and lists of such books can be obtained from any of the papers listed above.



S. C. WHITE LEGHORN PULLET

Bred and owned by Oklahoma Agricultural College. The Leghorns "are very active, make good rangers and foragers, are noted for their production of large numbers of white-shelled eggs, and their non-sitting characteristics". The most prominent Egg Type of fowl