

Square Foot Per Bird Said Good As 3.5 Sq. Feet

PROGRESS REPORT—NO. 41 Pennsylvania Agriculture Experiment Station The Pennsylvania State University University Park, Pa.

With only one square foot of floor space per bird, the 2700 White Leghorn layers in the experimental solar poultry house at Penn State are laying as consistently high as those with the recommended 3½ square feet per bird.

Dr. G. O. Bressler, in charge of the studies, reports that the birds hatched last May, then reared on range last summer and housed in late October averaged 77 per cent production in January. Then, in February egg production rose to 80 per cent, with a peak of 83 per cent, as the birds took turns in the battery of individual wall nests in the house.

Bettors Earlier Tests

Actually, this performance is better than three years ago when the solar house was used in studies that gave the layers 1.9 square feet of floor space per bird, Dr. Bressler says.

This year's arrangement of the interior of the solar house has a few slight modifications over last year's studies when the one-square-foot-per-bird was tried for the first time. Two narrower droppings pits extended the length of the building instead of one wide pit, but mechanical cleaning of the pits continues, same as last year.

Sawdust Used for Litter

Over each of the pits extended four tiers of feeders with four tiers of roosts, and one tier with water. Sawdust is used for the litter which has been maintained in a dry condition regardless of rainy cold weather and high humidity outside. A pressurized ventilating system also aids in maintaining low humidity in the crowded house. Temperature is maintained at 55 degrees F.

Mortality and culling combined has been maintained at a rate of 1½ per cent per month, Dr. Bressler says, a comfortably low ratio considering the number of birds in this year's studies. All operations except egg gathering are automatically operated, the same as last year's experiments, he explained.

Egg Production In January over State Declines

HARRISBURG—For the first time in nearly five years, egg production on Pennsylvania farms this January dropped below the output for the same month of the previous year, Dr. William L. Henning, State Secretary of Agriculture, announced today.

Over a period of 57 months—since April 1951—egg production in the State was record high for each succeeding month until January 1956 when it declined 1.6 per cent from January of last year, he declared following Federal-State surveys.

January output totaled 316 million compared with 321 million for the same month last year. Dr. Henning said the number of layers at 19,354,000 was down 192,000 from a year earlier.

Dr. Henning explained that egg production this January showed a decline due largely to fewer additions to laying flocks and retention of more older birds during 1955.

Poultry farmers during January began buying more flock replacement chicks. During that month chick production in the State totaled 7,603,000 or 46 per cent above the January 1955 hatch. A near-record hatch was indicated for February.

Farmers on February 15 were averaging a return of 46 cents a dozen for eggs, down nine cents from January 15, but three cents a dozen more than in February 1955, the survey showed.

Pullets Thrive in Close Quarters



One square foot per bird was allotted this year to 2,730 pullets housed in the Solar Laying House at the Pennsylvania State University Agricultural Experiment Station. High egg production, 75 to 83 per cent in winter months, indicates that they did not object to close neighbors. This is the fifth year of use of the Solar House in which the birds are roosted, fed and watered over droppings pits fitted with mechanical cleaners. Large insulated glass windows facing due south capture heat from the sun. Thorough insulation and thermostatically controlled, pressurized inlet ventilation keep winter temperatures around 55 degrees and the litter dust dry. (See accompanying story).

CUTTING REMARK

A certain minister, while preaching said that every blade of grass was a sermon. The next day he was busying himself by mowing his lawn when a parishioner passing shouted, "That's right, reverend, cut your sermons short."

PUBLIC SALE HELD

At a public sale held recently on the Isaac Riehl farm, Green Tree, two tractors sold for \$1,555 and \$1,310. Other prices included: bale elevator, \$294; side rake, \$255; transplanter, \$223; egg washer, \$80; and egg grader, \$77.50.

Bee Diseases Newest Field of Wonder Drugs

PROGRESS REPORT—No. 12 Pennsylvania Agriculture Experiment Station The Pennsylvania State University University Park, Pa.

Use of antibiotics for diseases of bees is the latest application of the modern "wonder drugs"

Prof. E. J. Anderson heads the apiary research at the Pennsylvania Agriculture Experiment Station and he reports "promising results" in using terramycin for control of one of the most serious diseases of bees—American Foulbrood. The terramycin was mixed with powdered sugar in several proportions and dusted between the supers of the hives

Prof. Anderson finds the terramycin "as effective, and in several cases, more effective" than sulfathiazole which previously had been used to control the costly disease. The new material has several advantages over the sulfaz product in that it is more easily applied, less honey must be removed from the hive, and bees have not shown resistance to the materials.

Terramycin was used on those colonies which showed evidence of foulbrood and in each instance

JUICY GRAPEFRUIT HAS SMOOTH SKIN

Looking for a juicy grapefruit. Then choose one that has a smooth, thin skin, advises Elsie Bamesberger, extension consumer information specialist of the Pennsylvania State University.

Grapefruit with a coarse skin or one that is puffy or spongy isn't a good buy.

This season's crop is large and boasts of quality. Use the sparkling freshness of grapefruit as a contrast to heavy winter meals. Broiled grapefruit adds a zestful finish to a dinner.

IT HAPPENED IN KANSAS

The horse ambled along for a short distance and then stopped. This procedure was repeated several times. A curious bystander approached the farmer and asked kindly, "Is your horse sick?"

"Nope," answered the farmer: "he's so afraid I'll say 'whoa' and he won't hear me, that he stops every once in a while to listen."

three doses, about two weeks apart, in the spring plus several later in the season, seemed to be sufficient to control the disease, he reports. In addition, Anderson is trying occasional dusting of the terramycin as a disease-preventive but that additional testing is needed to determine its value.

During the coming season, Prof. Anderson plans to test a number of the newer antibiotics for use against bee diseases.

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