



RANGE RAISING seems to be best for starting egg producing pullets. Here James Garber, R2 Elizabethtown, refills his range feeders. He also has a range watering sys-

tem that allows him to handle a large number of birds with no outside help.

(LF Photo)

Started Pullet Raising Newest In Specialized Poultry Industry

by BOB BEST

One of the newest and currently hottest innovations in the already specialized poultry industry is the business of raising started pullets.

The practice came about as a result of the confined housing program now adopted as standard for the industry. Caged layers gave the little extra incentive to make this type of business a paying proposition.

The stress on a caged layer usually means that she will stay in the house for only one laying season. Present egg quality programs tend to encourage the frequent renewal of the laying flock.

NOW WHILE A man may have spectacular success with a laying flock he may not at the same time have the "touch" or the facilities to raise replacement pullets. Raising the modern highly bred egg producer is a sometimes exacting business.

Disease is probably the biggest drawback to raising replacement pullets. If you are trying to raise them yourself you must take extra precautions to keep the young birds away from facilities that have been contaminated by old birds.

And even at that many troublesome poultry diseases seem to be airborne and the pullets may become infected.

THE EGG PRODUCER can, by paying more for an equal number of birds, be assured of healthy young layers, either eight or 16 weeks old. Prices, naturally higher than chick prices, are not prohibitive.

In this area, a 16 week old bird may be had for \$1.70 a bird in the spring. As a comparison, it is reported that in California the price is \$1.80 a bird and, once again, our Southern poultry-

men are underselling by charging only \$1.45 to \$1.50 a bird.

These Georgia growers are raising replacements by using their brooder houses and turning out as many as 30,000 young layers in a batch.

IN THIS AREA, the average grower will handle only two or three thousand birds to a batch. Some New York state growers are raising more than this, but the market in that area will demand more replacements.

Growers in this area, like James Garber R1 Elizabethtown, generally grow birds of various strains to suit the needs of their customers. Garber, for example, grows Greider Carry, and other strains of Leghorns. He says that if a customer wants a certain strain of bird grown, he will try to supply his needs.

Thus far the started pullet business is not interated. The hatcheries do help the grower find a market for his birds, and in some cases the grower is accredited as a certified grower for a particular strain. But there is not any sort of interated procedure involved.

GARBER, WHOM we mentioned before, is in his fourth year of raising started pullets. He said that he likes to raise the birds rather than some other form of poultry enterprise.

And another reason that he likes raising them is that he rents a farm. "This way," he says, "I don't have a lot of money tied up in equipment and I don't have to worry about changing any buildings."

His equipment consists of about about four brooder houses, four double deck and half a dozen single deck range shelters, feeders and range waterers. He rents added brooder space as

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