

# Housing Effects Growth of Broilers, Tests Show

Do living quarters affect the growth rate and feed conversion rate of broilers? Yes, to some extent, according to USDA. Enough so, that it's a factor that shouldn't be overlooked in any critical test for the evaluation of broiler performance. But not enough to invite a near nervous breakdown for hundreds of broilers by intermingling sex and source of stock play a more important role in determining differences in growth and feed conversion.

This information helps fill the picture for supervisors and random sample tests and poultry breeding research who have wondered if broilers raised in 1 pen would perform differently in an-

critical evaluation of broiler performance requires testing that permits detection of genetic differences between stocks, without introducing additional differences (location effects). What are some of these possible differences? Whether or not houses are the sun, the kind of care the birds get, size and shape of houses, the type of flooring, and many other similar factors can add up to give a false picture of genetic differences in birds.

If these location or pen effects did exist in certain flocks, researchers and supervisors reasoned, it would be necessary to repeat samplings. However, if location effects didn't exist,

Bulk body weights by sex and source were taken at 8 weeks of age and individual body weights at 9 weeks. Feed consumption was recorded at 8 and 9 weeks of age. Mortality records were kept for all groups.

At 8 weeks, intermingled birds weighed slightly more than those reared separately. But at 9 weeks, the advantage was slightly in favor of birds reared separately. The weight disadvantage for the mixed group may have been due to social tension, which becomes noticeable through bossiness and pecking in males at about 8 weeks of age. Tensions would normally be greater when birds from several sources are reared together.

When body weight data for separately reared broilers was analyzed, substantial differences for source and sex showed up, but no real difference could be traced to location. At 9 weeks, meaningful differences in body weight could be traced to interaction of location and source, and highly meaningful differences were traced to the interaction of location, source, and sex. This indicates that broilers from the same source will perform differently in some locations than in others. Even birds of the same sex from the same sources will perform differently in different locations.

Differences were found in feed conversion due to source of the broilers, none due to location. And this was true

## Farm Women No. 7 Hear Miss Kirstein

Miss Nita Kirstein, an exchange student from Germany, gave an interesting and informative talk about the German school system at the April 9 meeting of the Society of Farm Women No. 7.

Hostess was Mrs. Samuel Wenger, of Leaman Place, While Mrs. Milton Esben-shade was co hostess.

Devotions were in charge of Miss Sally Wenger and roll call was answered by members telling an "Old Fashioned Remedy".

even though all the stock tested was from commercial broiler stock breeders and did not differ as much in growth rate as would be expected if non-commercial or dual purpose stock had been included.

The scientists concluded that under their conditions, location or pen effects aren't important if chicks from a given source are reared separately and if care is taken to maintain uniform housing conditions. But location effects must be considered when birds are intermingled.

Thus, not only is separate rearing advantageous from a standpoint of eliminating location effects, it's also preferable where feed conversion data is needed. Such data can't be obtained with intermingled rearing.

The society voted a contribution of \$10.00 to the Crippled Children's Fund and a collection totaling \$17, was taken for the Cancer Society Fund.

The next meeting, a food sale with donations being received for Christ's Home will be held at the home of Mrs. Clyde Benedict in Kinzers on May 9.



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Jacob K. Mast—potato farmer, grower of fine Angus and Hereford beef cattle, school board officer and song leader in the Mennonite church.



ons, in the Pennsylvania Dutch tradition, dot this picture and well maintained barn on the Mast farm in Penna.'s "Garden Spot of the World".

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K. Mast and his son, Paul, put 65 to 100 acres potatoes every Spring. Last year, something new was used exclusively to guard against potato blight. From every source came assurance that this was a wise move.

gh the Summer, things looked fine. The vines were green and healthy. No blight appeared. Harvest



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