



CONTROLLED HUMIDITY AND TEMPERATURE in the egg room keep the quality of eggs high at the Earl Metzler farm, Manheim R1. Metzler, left, helps Mel Groff, truck driver for Hess Brothers, load some of the 45 cases per week produced by the young poultryman —L. F. Photo

Metzler

(From page 1)

He rented space on the corner of a commercial property on the southern edge of Manheim and opened for business.

At first business was not quite what Metzler had expected. He had been selling about 100 dozen per week from the refrigerator beside the barn, and sales downtown were considerably lower.

Metzler did some advertising and began giving away a dozen free eggs per week. He would write a message on a post card, tape on the purchase price of the eggs and enclose it in one of the cartons in the machine. He asked the winner of the free eggs to return the card with a comment.

"I believe every card has been returned," he said. "One lady said she had been afraid to buy eggs from the vender because she thought they wouldn't be fresh." Metzler said, but after she finally tried a dozen, she complimented the producer on the freshness and quality of the eggs.

With constant attention and service to the machine, the quality of the eggs maintained and no eggs are in the vender more than a few days. Many of the original customers, who appreciated the freshness and quality, have brought new customers, and the volume has had a steady increase.

At present, the volume of eggs at the vending machine

took over operation of the place in 1952

"The chicken house was here, and I wanted to see some chickens in it," is the way Metzler explains his beginning in the poultry business.

He raised 300 to 400 layers per year for several years, but came to realize that he would have to increase the size of his flock if he hoped to make a profitable operation of it. He knew he would have to have a much greater volume to make automatic feeding and watering practical.

In 1958 he built the present house and installed bulk feed handling equipment, pressure water system and an air conditioned egg room.

This year he raised from baby chicks and housed 3,500 layers. I never had so many hens in the house before, he said.

It is not hard to believe he has not had as many hens in the house before when you stop to consider they populate the floor at the rate of one hen to every two square feet

But the heavy concentration does not appear to have hurt production at all. The hens on the top floor of the double decker house came into production in July and were housed on July 25

has just about reached the 100 dozen per week mark and many of the neighbors who formerly bought at the farm continue to come to the egg room for their eggs.

Metzler, who feeds 47 head of steers, got into the poultry business almost by accident.

He moved his family to the home farm in 1949 and



FEED AND WATER ARE MOVED into this layer house by machinery. Eggs are gathered in baskets on the trolley which runs on an overhead track. No carrying is necessary in the entire operation. Eggs are washed, graded, candled and put in cases to be stored in the refrigerated egg room until picked up twice each week by the egg dealer's truck. —L. F. Photo



HAPPY AND HEALTHY PULLETS live on 2 square feet of floor space each in this pen at the farm of Earl Metzler, Manheim R1. Activity at the nesting boxes gives testimony of the 80 percent production in the flock during the month of November. A radio in the pen helped quiet young birds and helped them adapt to new surroundings when they came in off the range. —L. F. Photo

During October they averaged the period was 91 per cent. ed a whopping 81 per cent. Many poultrymen would production. In November suppose the mortality prob they did almost as well as av- lem would naturally be great eraging 80 per cent. The with such a heavy concentra- high single day peak during (Turn to page 7)



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