

● **Started**
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the individual characteristics are great; thus the strain purchase decision is made on reputation and random sample tests.

In the desirable attempt to put-out a high quality started pullet, many different management systems and practices have been devised. What the optimum combination of management practices is for the various available strains, under all conditions of rearing and egg production, has not been determined.

The influx of out-of-state pullets was brought about mainly by the widespread incidence in the major pullet-rearing areas of Marek's Disease, Herpes form of Avian Leucosis. It would appear that it is not compatible to raise started pullets in the general area where large numbers of broilers are being raised. This observation is beginning to be apparent in other states also. The disease situation is also serious with the broiler grower, incidentally.

"Importing" started pullets from other areas less affected with the disease has temporarily helped the situation. However, it is getting increasingly difficult to secure dependable pullets of good quality in all respects, that lay well and most important — live. It is surprising that there appears to be no morbidity and the survivors lay real well. What we cannot live with is the high death losses.

This economic drain, due to the out-of-state purchases of started pullets, is of fairly recent origin, five years, but is one that the Poultry Extension Service feels should reverse itself in Pennsylvania. Representatives of the started pullet industry have been meeting to discuss and

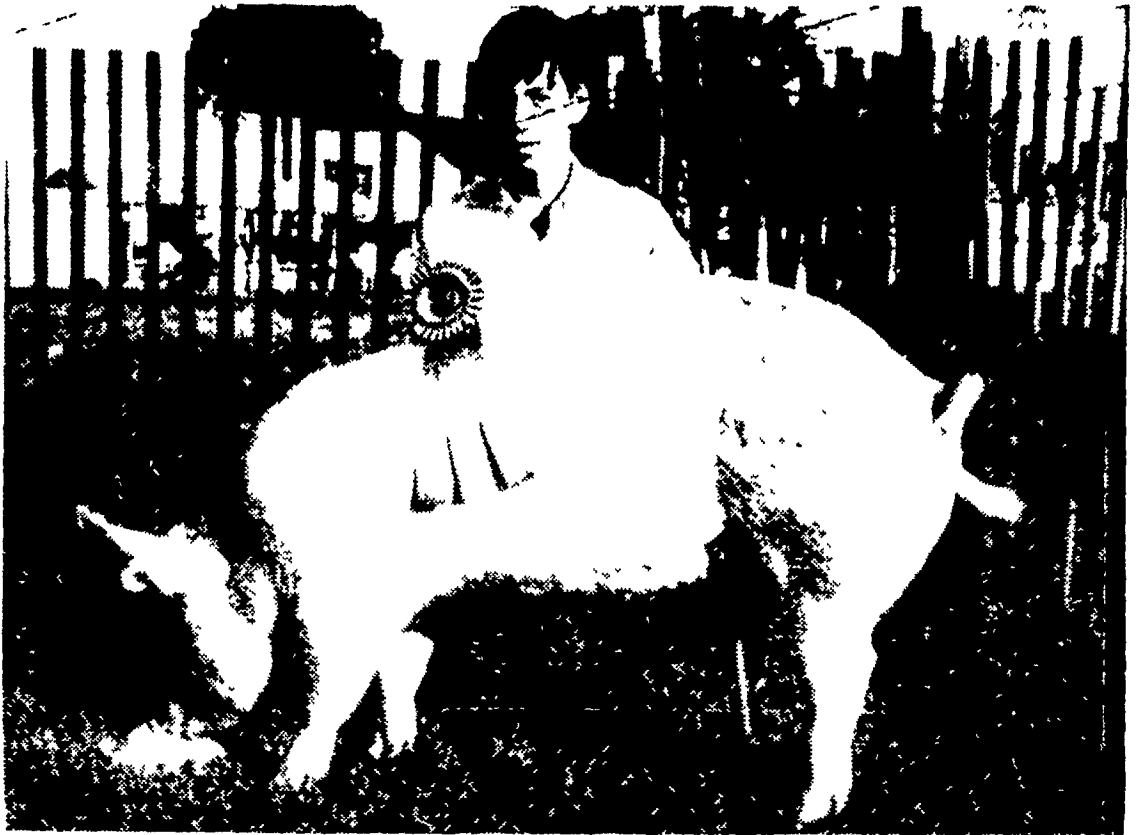
to ascertain a course of action relative to the situation. Reversing the "import" situation may or may not be desirable, depending on the circumstances. An "imported" pullet, in itself, is not undesirable if she fulfills accepted egg production qualifications; as, in the final analysis, what is important is that Pennsylvania egg producers have a dependable pullet that will return a reasonable income.

It appears that some of these out-of-state pullet production areas are increasingly experiencing some and even more of the disease difficulties that plagued Pennsylvania. This would mean that in the not-too-distant future, and the time might arrive rather quickly, Pennsylvania perhaps should raise her own started pullets.

Against that time, pullet growers past, present and future would do well to keep up on all relative managerial and health control developments having to do with started pullets. Some of the pullet growers have already indicated an interest in an educational program, on a regular basis, to keep up with developments. The first of these meetings was the symposia held October 7 and one planned for November 5 at the Lancaster Farm & Home Center.

The started pullet discussion group indicated that it would not be desirable to "promote", as such, the rearing of started pullets by everyone in Pennsylvania. But, by keeping the industry constantly aware of all developments and progress in started pullet technology, working together on field studies and shared experiences, the time would come when certain individuals and corporations might want to make the personal decision to raise their own pullets

Manheim Fair Winners



DANIEL BRANDT, Manheim R4, shows his champion crossbred gilt that was champion at the Manheim Fair.

Daniel is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Harry K. Brandt.
L. F. Photo

It was determined that the trend would come, and that the Pennsylvania industry should be ready.

We can learn to live with Marek's Disease, until such time that a cure is perfected. But it also appears that we can develop our management practices, so that we can compete economical-

ly with the out-of-state pullets — and still not sacrifice quality. It has been shown by pullet growers in the southern states that when all poultry diseases except Marek's Disease are effectively controlled, this dreaded disease of poultry is not a serious threat. High pullet losses occur primarily when Marek's Disease is

concurrent in a flock along with another disease.

The pullet health control program must be designed to deal with all types of disease regardless of cause. The principles of health management are very closely associated with general management such as isolation practices, sanitation procedures, all in — all out program, bird disposal practices, parasite control and systems of ventilation and housing utilized.

In the absence of temporary parental immunity passed to the chick, chickens are most susceptible to infection at an early age. Their resistance to disease steadily increases from one day of age to maturity. Therefore, it is logical to provide extra protection to the chicks or build up resistance to a disease challenge, as age resistance alone is not totally successful against the more virulent diseases, such as Marek's Disease.

There is ample evidence in the literature that cycling temperatures within the laying house result in better egg production than from houses where a constant temperature prevails. Penn State did some of the original work on this consideration.

Relating this varying temperature principle to rearing pullets, beyond the period of 10 to 14 days when the chick is getting its temperature-regulating mechanism in order, we need to investigate whether or not to acclimatize our pullets to varying conditions. In our modern poultry house we have a tight, well-insulated building that is for the most part well controlled, temperature-wise, by more and more improved and accurate thermostats.

Are we then producing a 'hot-house' pullet, used to constant environmental conditions that cannot face up to a stress in her later life?

Informal evidence in the field would indicate this — we see older houses used very successfully for rearing pullets. And workers at the University of Georgia found that broilers do best when grown under variable temperature conditions. That is, cold room brooding was utilized; the temperature away from the brooder is allowed to fluctuate or vary normally as opposed to a system where the whole brooder room is held at a uniform temperature at chick level.

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chickweed

yellow rocket

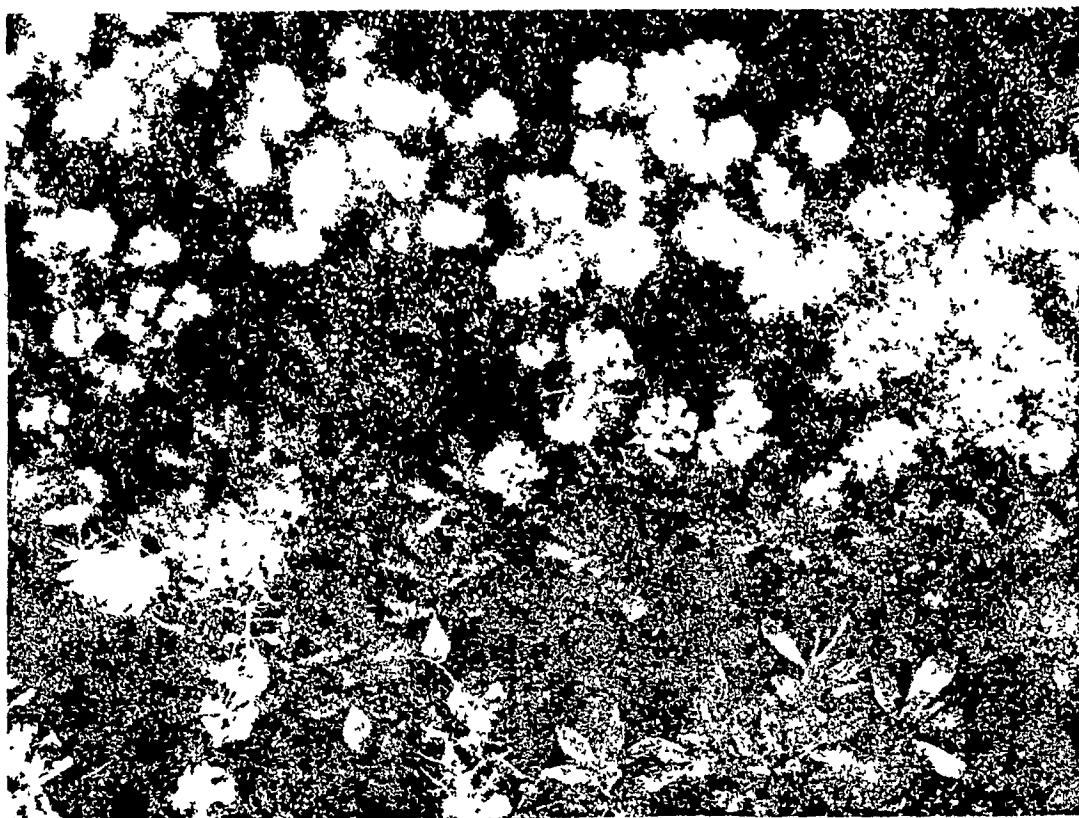
white cockle

other problem weeds in alfalfa?

Remember how bad they were last spring?

The time to control yellow rocket, white cockle, cheatgrass and most other annual broadleaf and grassy weeds in alfalfa is now. This fall. With an application of Princep®, brand of simazine herbicide. It's the way to get weed-free, top quality alfalfa next spring.

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