

Mutant Gene Makes Chickens Drink Too Much

Some chickens are guilty of excessive drinking. The problem is not alcohol, but just plain water.

A hormonal deficiency appears to cause such chickens to drink excessively and produce very wet litter.

Such a condition is created by a mutant gene, which changes the genetic make-up of otherwise normal chickens, according to Dr. Edward G. Buss, Penn State professor of poultry science. He said the gene gives these chickens an uncontrolled appetite for water.

The problem of unusually wet litter was reported years ago by poultrymen. Dr. Buss says the geneticist can produce a population of chickens free of the undesirable gene.

As an alternate solution, first generation crosses of normals and abnormal can be produced that will be nearly the same as normals.

Feed intake and other characteristics do not differ between normal and abnormal chickens. Livability of both types of chickens is the same. Normal and defective lines or

strains show no differences among eggs — such as number, size, shell thickness, and albumen firmness.

Physiological studies of defective chickens have shown that the genetic aberration changes the content of a hormone coming from the posterior pituitary gland. Current experiments suggest that the kidneys of defective chickens function in the same manner as in normal poultry. However, excreta of abnormal females contains 90 per cent water compared to 55 per cent for normal hens.

The condition is termed autosomal, meaning it is caused by a gene on a chromosome other than the sex chromosome.

Abnormal hens have been found to drink water amounting to 40 per cent of their body weight. The normal water intake for hens is 8 per cent of body weight.

Abnormal roosters drink water amounting to 25 per cent of their body weight, compared to normal roosters consuming 5 per cent



ICC Asked to Let Trucks Ease Rail Car Shortage

Secretary of Agriculture Clifford M. Hardin recently announced that he has asked the Interstate Commerce Commission to relax its rules to make it simpler for the nation's railroads to substitute truck transportation for moving agricultural commodities when rail cars are in short supply.

In making the request, the Secretary said the chronic shortage of rail cars in the past few

years has severely hampered the efficient marketing of farm commodities. The use of substituted motor carriers for rail service provides one means of helping to alleviate the rail car shortage, particularly during grain harvesting season.

Hardin noted that during 1970, one rail line originated 4,985 truckloads of grain under substituted motor service arrangements, offsetting the need for more than 2,000 boxcars during an acute rail car shortage.

"If the rules for using substituted truck arrangements were relaxed, it could have a tremendous impact on the Nation's boxcar problem," Secretary Hardin said. "We in government should do everything possible to facilitate the movement of grain from farms to our consuming centers."

"I hope the Commission will take quick and favorable action on an amendment or exemption which will ease the railroads' entry into substituted trucking arrangements."

"In the meantime, I have asked the ICC to grant a special blanket permission to all railroads so that these arrangements can be implemented quickly, without individual carriers having to seek special permission."

USDA Recommends Three Milk Classes in 7 Orders

Three instead of the present two milk use classifications were recently recommended by the U.S. Department of Agriculture for the Chicago Regional, Central Illinois, Southern Illinois, Indiana, St. Louis-Ozarks, Louisville - Lexington-Evansville and Paducah, Ky, federal milk orders.

USDA's Consumer and Marketing Service said the orders now classify and price milk for two general uses — fluid or bottling (Class I), and manufacturing (Class II).

A new intermediate category is proposed for milk going into cottage cheese, yogurt, and for all cream and cream products. The new Class II would be priced 20 cents over the monthly Minnesota-Wisconsin price series.

A new Class III would cover milk processed into butter, dry milk, hard cheeses, and other products. The Class III price would be the Minnesota-Wisconsin price series, which presently

applies to these products in five of the orders. The comparable price in the Louisville-Lexington-Evansville order now is 10 cents lower than this during April through August, and the Indiana order price for these products now is the lower of the Minnesota-Wisconsin price series, or a butter-nonfat dry milk price.

C&MS officials said these recommendations are based on a hearing in Clayton, Mo., last July. They were scheduled for publication in the Federal Register June 11, and exceptions or comments may be filed up to July 1. Seven copies should be sent to the Hearing Clerk, 112-A, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

Copies of the decision are available from the market administrators of the orders, or from the Dairy Division, Consumer and Marketing Service, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250.

Send Cherry Recipes Now

We're informed that cherry season is about two weeks late this year and cherry picking isn't expected to start till late this month.

So how can we expect housewives to get interested in cherry recipes this early?

That's why we're still asking for cherry recipes for our Favorite Recipes column. We'll hold publication of the cherry recipes till our June 26 issue.

Send your favorite cherry recipes right away to Lancaster Farming Recipes, P.O. Box 266, Lititz, Pa. 17543. We still have plenty of potholders, limit one per family, for those who send

recipes.

Besides being pretty and delicious as they are, cherries can be used as pies, shortcakes, puddings, relishes, jams, jellies, ice cream, or you name it.

Remember, send your favorite cherry recipes right away for publication in our June 26 issue.

Note: We have been delighted with the response to our call for shoo fly pie recipes. Since our Favorite Recipes column began, we have accumulated nearly two dozen shoo fly pie recipes. Keep them coming. We'll respond in one of our issues with a big Favorite Recipe column on shoo fly pie.

It's Almost Cherry Picking Time at the Haases' Fruit Farm

By Mrs. Charles G. McSparran
Farm Feature Writer

Cherry picking is a fun time for the whole family at Cherry Hill Orchards on the New Danville Pike (Route 324) south of Lancaster. This is the former H Landis Shank fruit farm, but has been owned by Mr. and Mrs. Richard A. Haas for the past two years.

This orchard has the largest sweet cherry acreage in Penn-

sylvania. They have 100 acres of cherries of over 20 varieties. They have cherry trees from all over the world such as Germany and Canada and from all over the United States.

The main variety is the big black sweet cherries which most people know as Bing cherries, although there are several varieties of them.

They also have the large white cherries and a couple acres of sour cherries.

The sweet cherries should be ripe by June 25 and the sour ones a little later. There will be around 10 days of cherry picking.

About 90 to 95 per cent of their fruit is on a 'pick your own' basis. Customers bring their own containers. The containers are weighed before and after picking in order to charge for the number pounds picked.

They hire from 50 to 70 men to set up 1,200 ladders where the picking is the best. These men will be donned in red tunics this year so they are easily spotted by the thousands who come to pick. The orchards are open every day except Sunday.

Customers come from all over Pa., Md., Del., Va., N.Y., N.J. and Conn. Most customers, however, come from all over Lancaster County. Sometimes customers bring friends with them who are on vacation from far-away states like Texas. Some people make sure they get their vacation at the right time to pick cherries there. People come with picnic baskets and bring the whole family because it makes a nice family outing and children can pick too. Some pick as many as 400 or 500 pounds of cherries.

The more you pick, the cheaper the price. For example, they have a price for up to five pounds, a little cheaper price for up to ten pounds, cheaper for fifteen pounds and so on but over 100 pounds is a much cheaper rate. The price this year will be about the same as last year. When you pick your own, you pay about half what you pay at a supermarket.

The reason more people do not

raise cherries is because it is such a perishable crop. There is danger of a freeze or a late frost when the trees are in blossom.

There is this danger until late May.

You must have bees to cross

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Tommy, left, and Matthew Haas love to pick cherries from the low branches of the trees.



Mrs. Richard Haas cans the white cherries from their orchards.