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FARM POULTRY FLOCK MAINTAINED FOR BOTH MEAT AND EGGS

OBJECTIVE:

1. To learn the best management and feeding methods for the farm flock owner of Western North Dakota.
2. To promote more farmer interest in poultry as an economically sound project year in and year out.

PRESENT STATUS:

Each spring, about April 1, the Dickinson Experiment Station purchases 500 straight run White Rock chicks from the Poultry Department, North Dakota Agricultural College. The starter ration this year was a high energy type ration containing 60% corn and was pelleted. Rather than change over to grower mash and scratch grain at six weeks as has been our custom, we pelleted another batch of high energy, high protein feed composed of 50% corn. The cockerels were moved to separate quarters at six weeks and we started marketing three pound birds at nine weeks of age. About 170 were sold during the eleventh week and the average weight was 3.9 pounds. The entire flock of 248 cockerels had a cumulative live weight of 975 pounds and consumed 2,963 pounds of feed. Each pound of fryer was produced for 3.04 pounds of feed and each bird ate feed costing $.50. Table X gives a partial summary of results obtained with the three flocks of cockerels we have raised.

The pullets were moved to clean range at seven weeks of age and fed a mash and grain ration. We housed 234 pullets August 23, 1953. Percentage egg production obtained from the last two flocks of pullets is shown in Table XI.

Table X - Three Years Results With Cockerels from Five Hundred Straight Run White Rock Chicks

	1951	1952	1953
Hatching date	March 30	April 4	April 2

Starter ration	Commercial - 18% protein	Commercial - 21% protein	Hi-energy home mix pelleted - 21% protein
Scratch Grain	After 4th week	After 5th week	None
Cockerels moved to separate qtrs.	7 weeks	7 weeks	6 weeks
Pullets moved to range	10 weeks	8 [illegible] weeks	7 weeks
Cockerels reached 4 lb. average	12 weeks	13-15 weeks	11-12 weeks
Feed consumed per cockerel marketed (pounds)	12.9	14.1	11.4
Feed cost per cockerel marketed	.45	.50 to 13 wks.	.50
Av. selling price per cockerel	$1.46	$1.27	$1.10
Mortality	3%	7%	3.5%

Table XI -

	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.
1951 pullets	35	67	69	60	48	43	29	30	34	35	33	38
1952 pullets	15	40	40	52	48	51	55	49	46	44	45	43
1953 pullets	36	55	55	(2 weeks)								

SUMMARY:

Although the poultry project is not a true experiment, we keep records on methods and rations used from year to year and have been able to make some improvements each year. The high energy pelleted ration used in 1953 gave such good results that we plan to continue mixing our own chick starter and grower. Our goal in egg production is year 'round production of more than 50%.

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