

**FEED LIBERALLY DURING THE MOULTING SEASON**

Forcing Molt Stops Egg Production Without Causing Early Resumption—Growth of Feathers Calls for Plentiful Supply of Protein—Fat Gives Feathers High Gloss.

Scarcely anything on the farm is more distressing to view than a lot of hens going into cold weather without enough feathers to keep them warm. It is much like a man wearing a palm beach suit with snow on the ground, and trying to seem unconcerned about it, or the chap who leaves off his overcoat in zero weather to harden himself—so he says.

**Forcing The Molt Unwise**  
But there doesn't seem to be any help for the unhappy poultry minus their winter clothing. Much was said a few years ago about forcing the molting of hens, controlling it, and so arranging things generally that the hen would go back on the job laying eggs with less delay. An experienced New York poultryman declared he had solved the problem by cutting down very materially the hens' rations for several days. This was followed by heavier feeding than ordinarily. The menu, or the lack of it, stopped laying, and often resulted in molting at once.

The results were not so satisfactory as had been hoped. In many cases the hens did not finish the molt much, if any, quicker than if they had been left alone. It didn't seem possible by this means to control the time at which the hens could be brought back to laying. Egg production could be stopped all right, but it couldn't be resumed any earlier than usual, and sometimes it looked as if it had been stopped permanently. Obviously, this wouldn't do.

One of the chief attractions of poultry keeping is a constant supply of eggs, let the feathers fall when they may. So the United States Department of Agriculture doesn't advise any one to try systems that seem in conflict with Nature, who seems to have a way of her own in such things. Feathers were intended to come off about once a year—the hen being more or less feminine after all—and the Federal Government had devised no scheme or plot for interfering with the prevailing mode. "It is distinctly unwise," says a recent publication of the department, "to attempt to force the molt. It is well to let hens

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lay as long as they are in the mood to do it, and then to let them molt when they get ready."

Hens have never been credited with having very much sense, and they certainly seem to live up to their reputation in the matter of clothes which, in this case is a synonym for feathers. It is quite the thing for some women to wear furs all summer, regardless of the temperature, and hens do the same thing with their feathers. Why they don't shed their heavy covering while the weather is hot passes the understanding of ordinary mortals. One reason perhaps is the burning power of the hot sun! A few there are, it is true, that begin to molt in the summer, but most of them don't start until fall, just when they need feathers. Then they go shivering around the yard looking perfectly miserable, as doubtless they are.

As a rule, hens that begin to molt early do the job slowly, and are the poorer layers of the flock, while those that molt late get through with it quickly, and are about the best layers.

Usually it takes three or four months to complete the process of molting. A few are all through in two months. Some go at it gradually, as if they didn't like to attract attention, while others drop all the feathers they have, or nearly all, at one time, and go about almost naked, with no regard for the properties. And while this is going on the hens lay few or no eggs. This is because the growth of a new coat of feathers makes such a demand upon the body that it is out of the question for egg production to continue in any large degree.

The growth of feathers, like all other growth, calls for a plentiful supply of protein in the ration. Most poultry raisers, however, make no effort to feed a special ration at molting time, but continue to give the laying ration, which the hens have been getting right along. This is good practice because a laying ration contains protein which goes into the forming of feathers, since egg production practically ceased when the molt begins. Still, some poultrymen like to be sure there is a liberal supply of protein available for the hens during the molting period, and this is achieved by feeding beef scrap in a hopper where they can help themselves, a sort of hen cafeteria. With many farm flocks, where little or no attention is given to feeding the hens any animal feed, their rustling ability being relied upon to supply this in the shape of bugs and worms, and where the hens may not during the molting period be getting enough animal feed to promote quicker growth of feathers, it is good practice to feed beef scrap in the way described. Milk is also an excellent feed at this time.

Rations which contain a high percentage of fat have a tendency to give the feathers a high gloss. Sunflower seed, because of its fat content, is in favor among some poultrymen as a feed during the molting period, especially with birds which they wish to get into the best condition for exhibition.

**HARVESTING CROPS WITH LIVE STOCK SAVES FARM LABOR**

Farm labor often may be saved by using livestock to harvest and market part of the crops, specialists of the United States Department of Agriculture point out. By pasturing forage crops and grain crops much labor can be saved.

Hay must be secured for winter feeding and grain for home use and seed, but many progressive farmers turn large acreages directly into beef, pork, and mutton. Pasturing off the crops also helps to maintain the fertility of the soil without extra labor or expense. The keeping of farm animals furnishes profitable work during the winter, when other work is less pressing, and when they require most care. This distributes labor throughout the year more evenly than otherwise would be possible.

More detailed information concerning this subject is contained in Farmers' Bulletin 1008, 'Saving Farm Labor by Harvesting Crops with Live Stock,' which points out, largely by pictures of actual farm practices,

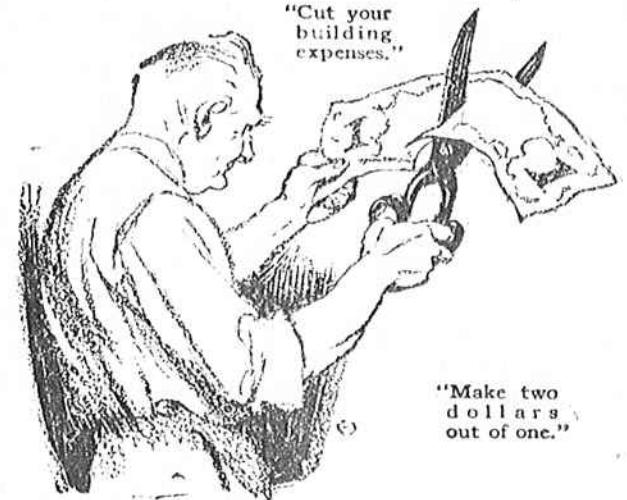
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some of the advantages of keeping live stock and of using the hogs, sheep and beef cattle to help harvest and market farm crops. Copies of the bulletin may be had free by addressing a request to the United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.

**WILL MAKE ADDRESS ON CO-OPERATIVE MARKETING**

Columbia, Aug. 22.—Invited to make an address, Theodore H. Price, Well known authority on financial and economic subjects and one of the world's greatest cotton experts, has just expressed his sympathy and confidence in the campaign now being conducted in Spartanburg county for co-operative marketing of cotton. His telegram to Dr. W. W. Long, director of extension service of Clemson College reads as follows:

Long, Columbia, S. C.,  
Highly appreciate invitation. Am sympathetic with your purpose and greatly regret acceptance impossible, as I have promised to be in Texas most of September and October, and cannot leave New York in August.  
(Signed): "Theo. H. Price."

Dr. Long wired Theo. H. Price to come to Spartanburg county and spend several days in the interest of the co-operative marketing campaign. Mr. Price is going to spend several weeks in Texas assisting in the campaign in that State.

Dr. Long has been informed through Aaron Sapiro, the co-operative marketing expert of California, that the Farmers Co-operative Marketing Association of Texas has arranged a loan of \$10,000,000 through the War Finance Corporation, \$2,500,000 from Texas bankers and \$2,500,000 from large banking institutions of New York City, making a total of \$15,000,000 to help finance the Texas cotton crop which is handled through the cotton marketing association.

**FIND WEATHER REPORTS HELPFUL IN HANDLING BEES**

Weather reports issued by the United States Department of Agriculture have been used with notable success by a Wisconsin beekeeper in the handling of bees in fall and spring. By keeping in touch with the local office of the Weather Bureau at Milwaukee he learns when weather is likely to be mild enough for late

flights of bees in the fall before they are put into winter quarters and for early release in the spring.

Honeybees develop dysentery and other serious disorders if kept in the hive too long in winter. This is due to the fact that they will not void their faeces while in the hive. It is, therefore, important to shorten the season of housing as much as possible without running into danger of freezing weather or high winds which scatter the colonies. It is highly desirable to give the bees a cleansing flight just before housing.

This apiarist has found that he can expect a satisfactory temperature for flying between November 5 and November 20 practically every year. In

a recent autumn there was such temperature November 17. As the official forecast was for much colder weather, he housed his bees November 19. The temperature dropped steadily and reached zero December 1. The month of December was the coldest in 16 years. Other beekeepers, not using the forecast, left their bees out until about the middle of December, with resulting damage.

Last spring he received a special forecast April 1 announcing that the following day the temperature would be satisfactory for flight. He set the hives out that night, and the following day the temperature went up to 71 and the bees had a "glorious cleansing flight."

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