

One man who secures a cartload of watercress a day has his pullets laying at top, and his flock in the pink of condition; his eggs have a most attractive yolk colour, and he finds the cress an excellent means of reducing his feed bill. The cress is chaffed and fed separately in troughs. It is little economies like this that go to make up the difference between profit and loss.

If eggs are to be produced in winter good feeding is imperative. It is desirable, of course, to produce them at the lowest possible cost, but this principle can be carried too far. If eggs are to be secured in heavy supply in cold weather the birds must be kept at concert pitch, and the best means of doing this is to provide the birds with an abundant supply of the most desirable foods. I have seen pig-potatoes and waste vegetables boiled up and mixed with a little pollard as a morning mash. Neither did the owner feed any animal food. He complained that his fowls were not paying although from a great laying strain. It would have been surprising had they done so. The best layer will not be profitable if she has not the necessary material from which to produce her special egg-yield. Of course, the poor layer will not be profitable if fed on the ration demanded by the bird of heavy-laying strain. It is a commonly accepted rule with all classes of stock that if the maximum results are to be secured the animal capable of it must be fed to the very best advantage. The day is gone for the argument to hold water that a fowl is too fat to lay. If she becomes fat she is not a high-type layer, for the bird capable of laying two hundred eggs or over in the season cannot be overfed, even if an ample supply of the right class of food is always before her. Of course, her natural tendency to lay eggs may be checked and her energy diverted to flesh and fat formation if she is provided with the wrong class of food—with a sloppy innutritious ration, instead of a balanced and concentrated diet including a safe proportion of nitrogenous material.

It cannot be expected that pullets will lay well in cold weather unless they have everything in their favour. They must be quartered in dry, roomy houses where no vermin is allowed to live. They should be also managed intelligently. Never allow them to wait about in a wet yard on a cold morning for their breakfast. Feed them in the house at all times, throwing the evening grain in litter. They will have something to scratch for in the early morning—and thus obtain the necessary exercise—in the grains of corn left from the evening meal. The scratching-quarters should be roomy enough to comfortably accommodate all the birds, so that in cold and wet weather they need not go into the runs at all; but it is not advisable to keep the layers continually confined. If the quarters are comfortable, and the birds are habitually fed and watered in them, they will only go out in