

in order to identify the same immediately upon appearance. In case of infection, treatment should be carried out as outlined previously in these notes.

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POULTRY-KEEPING.

CULLING.

THE coming month is an excellent period for culling the second-year hens. Any of these showing signs of moulting should be disposed of at once, for as a general rule it indicates that their profitable laying-period has passed; moreover, the early moult is always undesirable for the breeding-pen. The marketing of birds should not be delayed until the moult has practically set in. They should be disposed of immediately they commence to take their rest prior to going into a moult, as from a poulterer's point of view the bird in heavy moult is difficult to dress and does not present an attractive appearance.

In addition to weeding out all two-year-old birds that show signs of having passed their best period of production, the first-season layers should also be gone through and the weak ones discarded. As a general rule the latter will commence to moult before the former. Thus when one-year-old and two-year-old birds are running together, and there is no mark for age-determination, the time of moulting will not give a good guide in the work of culling. In such cases the only safe course is to discard all birds showing a weak constitution. No sentiment should be allowed to enter into this matter, as in practically all flocks birds are found that will not pay beyond their first laying season. Especially is it necessary to keep only high-class laying stock in these times of exceptionally high cost of foodstuffs.

Birds it is intended to cull at the termination of the present laying season, and which are now in a laying condition, should be forced for egg-production by including a good supply of meat, milk, &c., in the ration, so as to secure every possible egg from them before being marketed. Even if an odd bird shows the effects of the forcing condition by ovarian troubles, &c., it will pay to destroy it rather than retard the laying of the others by providing a less forcing ration.

Returning to the question of culling out the early moult, it is sometimes claimed that the bird which moults first must necessarily be the first to recover from it, and will naturally be in a producing condition when the feathers of the late moult are being renewed, thereby showing as good a profit for the year as the latter. This may be true in isolated cases, but in a general way it is not so. It stands to reason that for a bird to be a heavy egg-producer she must necessarily be a long-season layer, and obviously to be a long-season layer she must be a late moult, for it is rarely that fowls moult and continue laying at the same time. It will generally be found that the high-type layer (the late moult) will lay for several weeks longer in the autumn (when the price of eggs is on the up-grade) than the early moult, and then, after renewing its feathers, will resume laying before the bird that moulted first. Of course, no rule