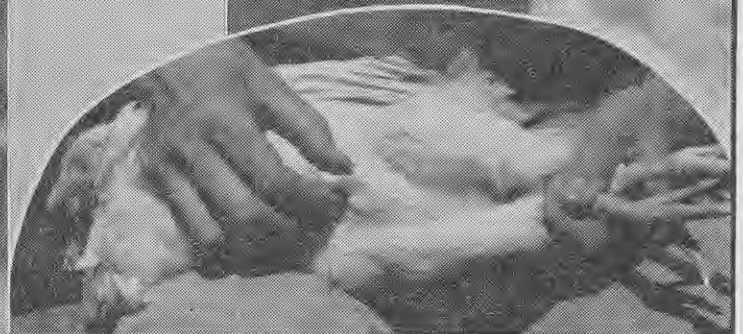


BUYING PERCHING PULLETS

RATHER THAN HAVE BOUGHT PULLETS SENT HOME, THE BUYER SHOULD GO AND COLLECT THEM SO AS TO BE ABLE TO EXAMINE THE BIRDS OFFERED. HERE ARE SOME OF THE POINTS TO BE WATCHED



Upper left—Part the fluffy feathers on the abdomen below the vent and look for body lice or their eggs, which may be found fixed to the bases of the feathers. The vent should be moist inside and dry outside, clean, and free from discharge, and the surrounding feathers should be unstained. Upper right—The eyes should be large, bright, dry, and clean, as are those of this bird; dull, watering, and sunken eyes are signs of poor health. Lower left—Look into the mouth and down the throat; uncleanness or sores are a warning of future trouble, such as colds or roup. Lower right—Feel the condition of the breast and keel; the breast should be full and solid, and a pullet with a breastbone that feels knife edged should be rejected; a crooked keel indicates a weakness of stamina.

[Fraser Niederer photos.]

In general, birds of heavy breeds hatched during the latter half of August and of light breeds hatched during the latter half of September can be expected to begin laying during the follow March and to continue laying all winter. Therefore the householder should place his order with the hatchery in adequate time to obtain delivery of 8-week-old heavy-breed pullets in late October or of light-breed birds in November, even if that means placing the order a year ahead. Light breeds hatched in early October and heavy breeds hatched in early September are likely to be better winter layers than those hatched a month earlier. June and July hatches are unlikely to be good winter producers, and late-October or November hatches will not begin to lay until winter is well advanced.

Ensuring Quality of Birds

The merits of heavy and light breeds were discussed in an article in the June, 1949, issue of the "Journal".

Not only should pullets have been hatched at the desirable time, but they must be healthy and of good quality. A careful customer makes certain that the quality of any purchase is correct for the price and that it will do properly the job he wants it to do. That applies to buying pullets. If the customer is satisfied with the previous lot of pullets, he should go back to the same farmer; if he is not, inquiries should be made about a recommended source of supply.

Several of the articles in this series have dealt with the culling of poor-type birds and the selection of profitable types, and the illustrations on this page show some features to be examined when judging the worth of a bird.

Collecting pullets from the seller's farm is best, but if they are sent through any transport system, they should be examined carefully as soon as they arrive. If the buyer is dissatisfied with the birds, he should feed them, water them, and send them back promptly, and communicate with the seller, who in most cases will appreciate a proper complaint being made at once so that he can look into the cause and endeavour to rectify the position.

The purchase of quality stock should be treated as only the first step in setting up a dependable pen of layers. Housing and feeding them properly are equally important. Poor management can ruin even the best birds.