

# SELECTING HENS THAT PAY

By C. H. COULSON, '26

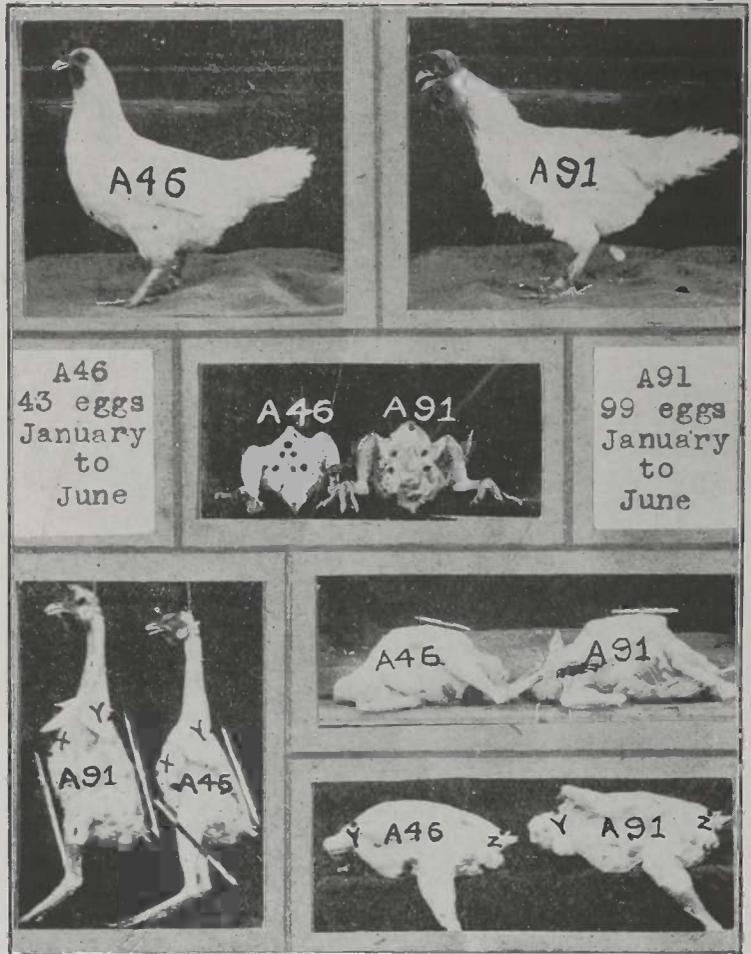
Secure the Maximum Profit From Your Chickens at the Minimum Cost—  
 Make Your Flock Pay Large Dividends This Winter by  
 Feeding Only the Hens That Produce

**H**OW many "boarder" hens are you feeding? Are your pullets going to pay their way, or only add to your feed bill this winter? There is a very practical way of culling the flock and now is the time to do it. The season of high production is over and for the next three or four months only selected hens will lay, only good pullets will bring returns. And in eliminating the "boarder" more room is made for the producers, and what is more important, the feed bill is reduced.

The calling of the flock is not necessarily the work of an expert, but may be done well by anyone who puts a little interest in the work. There are four general tests by which the value of the hen or pullet is determined; first, physical development; second, actions of the bird; third, character as indicated by the head; and fourth, body conformation. Then by diagnosing the birds according to the above outline they may be given a fairly accurate rank as to their capacity to produce eggs.

The physical development of the bird applies chiefly to pullets as the hens have already attained their full size. Naturally the healthy vigorous pullets are the best, and will come into production much sooner than the slow growing birds. However, do not be too hasty in culling out the backward pullet. It has been demonstrated in experiments only last year that the slow developing pullets often prove to be good producers. The suggested method of handling such birds is to segregate them, thus giving them an opportunity to develop. Then by applying the other tests of culling a fair estimate of their worth can be made. The weight of the bird is one of the best indicators of its vitality. Nothing will come from a bunch of feathers.

The action of a bird will give some valuable dope on its ability to produce. A highly excitable fowl is seldom a good producer. They are restless, noisy and wild, using their energy for other things than the formation of eggs. The fowl with a disposition of the opposite nature, the Laziness and high egg production do



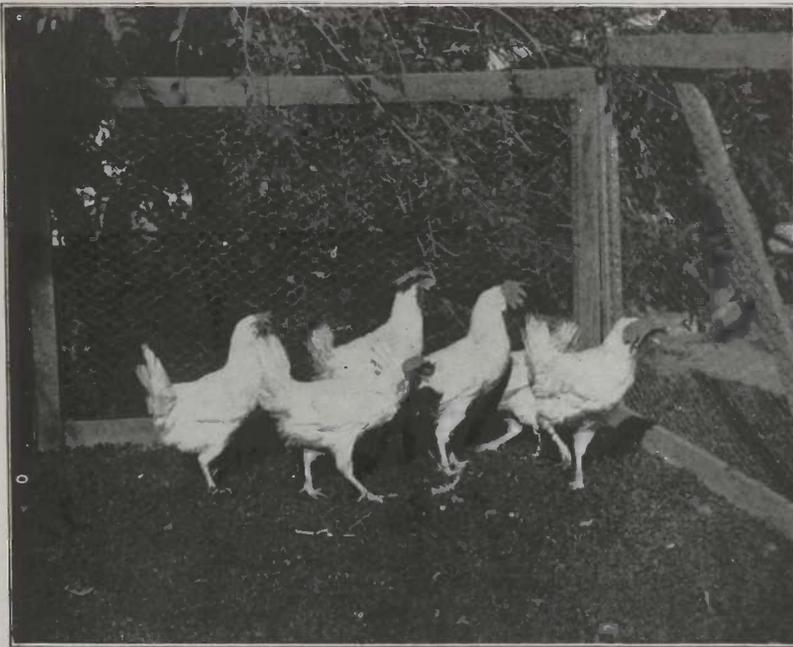
Hens Nos. A91 and A46 were hatched at the same time at the University of Arizona and were given the same kind of feed and care. They were trapped from January 1 to June 1, during which time hen No. A91 laid 99 eggs and hen A46 laid 43 eggs. They were then slaughtered for study. Note the depth of abdomen; spread of lateral, sternal, process bones and pelvic bones and keel-bone. The distance between X and Y on each hen is the same. Also the distance between Y and Z on each hen is the same.

not go together. Activity is rightly said to be the life of a hen. Thus by their actions the excitable and lazy fowls have been eliminated. The high producers are keen, intelligent, and aggressive. They are alert, always looking at the approaching person, not in fear, but in curiosity. It is hard to photograph a good hen because she is seldom still.

Closely associated with the actions is the head characteristics of the fowls. A bird with a listless appearing head places her in the poor producer class. Likewise a masculine head and beefy type can be placed with the culls. Someone has said

that a good layer can be determined by the expression of the eye, and this is an excellent index to the value of the bird. A bright intelligent eye always on the alert shows the right character, giving the head a feminine and refined appearance.

The body conformation is one of the most important of the culling tests. It usually holds true and is very definite in its standards, making it possible to determine with almost unflinching accuracy the low producers. The novice at culling can easily compare birds and judge them with surprising accuracy. The good producer has great depth of body—deep



Winning pen—University egg laying contest.

from the back to the keel bone. The back is broad and the ribs long and flat. The pin bones are wide apart and low, allowing the placing of two or three fingers between them. The abdomen is soft and velvety to the touch and is very pliable. Testing the hens by their body conformation is easily done by comparing one hen with another, and the poultryman soon learns to measure a bird and determine whether or not to put the "butcher" sign on it.

Now equipped with such brief information as given above try your luck in eliminating the "boarders" from your flock. If you are not sure of

your judgment place your culls in a separate pen and determine their value by their actual production. Very likely you will have most of the "boarders" in the first culling.

And what will this mean to your income? If you have three hundred birds there will probably be forty or fifty in the flock that are low producers. It costs approximately seventeen cents to feed one bird thirty days which will mean that you are spending seven or eight dollars on your culls each month and doing a lot of extra work to boot. You can be the judge as to whether or not it pays to cull the farm flock.

## THE IDEAL HOME

Every woman has a mental picture of what her ideal home would be like, which direction the house would face, the number and size of the rooms, their arrangement, how each would be furnished, what particular labor-saving devices she would install, and so on.

Fortunately the ideal home is usually only a picture, for a woman whose home was ideal would have nothing to look forward to in the way of further improvements. To my mind, the ideal home is one that offers a constant challenge to improve it. Every one knows that the happiest woman is she who is always planning ways to make her work easier, her home brighter and more cheer-

ful. Nothing pleases a woman more than planning an improvement, except standing back and looking at it after it is finished.

I have just been visiting a neighbor who is in raptures over her kitchen which has been done over. For several days now she has been asking me to come and see it. The walls and ceiling have been painted white, and the woodwork is creamy buff; even the shelving of the kitchen cabinet has been treated to a coat of glossy white paint. A white enamel sink has replaced the old one of ugly looking zinc. Fresh, brightly colored curtains drape the windows. There is new linoleum on the floor.

The whole atmosphere of the kitch-

en has been completely changed. Instead of the dull, dreary appearance it formerly possessed, it is now bright and cheerful. But the greatest change is in the woman herself. Previously she had no enthusiasm about her work in the kitchen, and her other work naturally suffered as well. Now she is just flowing over with enthusiasm, is planning new culinary surprises for her family, and is looking forward eagerly to a few new utensils and some extra kitchen cutlery. In a word, her kitchen fascinates her, and much to her surprise it seems easier to keep clean than previously.

I have had many similar experiences myself. Last year the whole family's outlook on life was changed by the installation of carbide gas lighting. No one who has not had the daily grind of trimming wicks, cleaning and refilling lamps, and carrying them about, can realize what freedom from this work has meant to me. But the real boon came in the more cheerful atmosphere of the house; the new-found pleasure of our evening at home. And I confess to a certain pride in inviting neighbors to visit us.

Each year we plan some new improvement in the house, and each one arouses me to fresh pleasure in my home. Two years ago we installed a new water system and modern bathroom. At the moment I am looking forward to a furnace and heating installation, and perhaps a radio at Christmas. A more carefully planned garden looms ahead next spring.

But there are an infinite number of similar things I have in mind, all of which will come about in time, and each one tending to make my home more enjoyable. I want another good-looking floor lamp in the living room, a built-in China closet, additional shelving in the pantry, a gas hot plate for emergency cooking, new rugs in a year or two, and certainly an enclosed porch. If my home were already perfect I think it would bore me. As it is, I find it ideal because it is always urging me to improve it.

Mrs. Grace Osgood, Ohio.

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Cheese is a hearty food and should not be served in the same meal with other hearty foods. A bulletin entitled, "Use More Cheese," which is available at the state college at Ithaca, New York, gives a lot of good recipes for using this food. Ask for a copy on a post-card by number H 133.