

## FEEDING BABY CHICKS

By CHARLES BERKENCAMP, '29

**Proper Feeding of the Baby Chicks Essential in the Development of the Commercial Flock—Feeding Practices and Correct Feeds For the Young Chick Discussed**

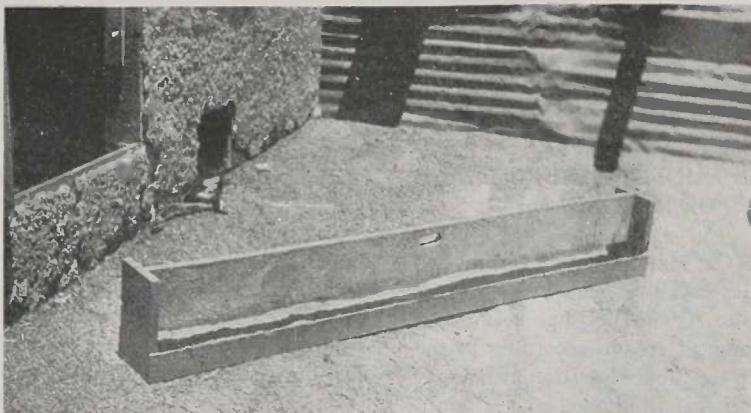
**N**ATURE provides nourishment for the chick for the first two or three days of its life. Just before the chick emerges from the shell, the remainder of the yolk, which has been nourishing the growing chick during the process of incubation, is absorbed into the abdominal cavity, and this will continue to nourish it for the first two or three days of its life. For this reason chicks should not be fed until they are from thirty-six to forty-eight hours old. If fed before the yolk is completely assimilated, digestive disorders are likely to occur.

When regular feeding begins, frequency of feeding is an essential of good practice. This is particularly true in the case of artificially brooded chicks which do not have the hen to hunt feed for them. Chicks will grow faster if fed four or five times each day than if fed only three times, but they should receive only what they will eat up clean each time. Over-feeding will do more harm than under-feeding; therefore care should be taken that only a sufficient amount be given each time to satisfy their hunger and keep them exercising.

The first feed should consist of a mixture of hard-boiled egg chopped fine, shell and all, with four or five times its bulk of dried crumbs or rolled oats. These feeds or combinations of feeds may be used with good results for a week; then gradually substitute equal parts of cracked wheat or cracked corn.

As soon as the chicks are old enough and will eat whole wheat, cracked corn, or other grains, the small-sized feeds may be discontinued and the larger-sized grains fed to them not less than three times a day. A commercial chick feed containing a variety of grains can be bought from most feed dealers and may be used instead of the home mixture if desired. In addition to these feeds, sifted grit, oyster shell, or charcoal should be before the chicks at all times. This may be done by placing them in a hopper.

If chicks are kept in confinement they should be furnished with a liberal supply of tender, green feed, such as lawn clippings, sprouted oats, lettuce or cabbage leaves, or any other such feeds which may be available. When-



A good type of feeder for baby chicks.

ever possible, however, chicks should have a grass range, where they will be able to obtain their own green feed, and catch bugs and worms. Chicks that are allowed to run on a grass range are usually strong and thrifty and will grow much more rapidly than those in confinement.

Fresh buttermilk or sour milk is excellent for baby chicks, and if possible, give them all they will drink. It can be put in suitable vessels arranged so that the chicks cannot get in and thus dirty the milk or wet themselves. If plenty of milk is fed, it is not necessary to feed so much other feeds.

Drinking water should be plentiful, kept fresh, and always contain enough potassium of permanganate to give it a rich wine color. The reason for doing this is that it helps check intestinal parasites, and is an excellent means of preventing the spread of disease through the drinking water.

The per capita consumption of lamb and mutton in the United States is only 5.5 pounds. England's consumption is 25 to 27 pounds, and Canada's is 9 pounds. A moderate increase of per capital consumption in this country would mean a vastly increased market for this product of the sheep

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