EVENING SESSION. 7:30 P. M.

Supt. C. P. Norgord, presiding.

POULTRY MARKETS AND PROFITS IN POULTRY.

Geo. W. Hackett, North Freedom.

For several years we have been active in preaching the doctrine of "more and better poultry" on the farm and statistics show that the past ten years have brought an increase in poultry products in Wisconsin amounting to more than 85 per cent gain. This has been going very well when the extent of the product is taken into consideration. Better methods of housing and care are being employed each year and the industry is gaining in prominence and importance. It is now time that more attention should be given to the marketing of our poultry and eggs if we are to receive the greatest benefits in cash returns. It is easier to cater to a present demand than to create a demand for special products and in most cases the common demand will bring the greatest profits, all things considered. All food products should be standardized for classification on the markets, but so far as poultry and eggs are concerned, but little progress has been made in that work. It was not until within the past two years that even the leading poultry organization of the country, the American Poultry Association, took any active steps to create a standard whereby to classify and judge market poultry and eggs. A committee especially qualified to do the work has carefully prepared a text for such a book, the publishing of which has been authorized, and it should appear upon the market in the near future. The work has been approved by the leading marketmen and commission men of the country and its general use is sure to result in great good.

Wisconsin Conditions Favorable.

From the standpoint of market poultry, Wisconsin is admirably situated. We have an abundance of the two most important foods to successful feeding of poultry for market, corn and buttermilk. I have taken pains to inquire of the commission men of both Milwaukee and Chicago as to what are the greatest faults with our Wisconsin poultry when placed upon the market. The answer was practically the same in each instance; thinness of condition and lack of uniformity. It would be hard to estimate the loss sustained annually by our Wisconsin farmers alone from these causes and they could both be easily remedied. Our poorest farmers do not think of putting their hogs or cattle upon the market without first having given them special feeding to fit them for market. There is just as good reason for fitting the poultry for market as there is for fitting the hogs or cattle.
A scene on the Goose Market before Thanksgiving day at Watertown, Wis., the home of the stuffed goose industry in America. Mr. August Koepke markets 62 stuffed geese which average 22 pounds at 24 cents per pound.
Fitting for Market.

For improving the quality of dressed poultry, there is no other method of fitting equal to crate feeding, but the farmer is not ready to adopt that method, nor is it to his interest to do so, for the reason that crate fed chickens, when shipped upon the market in small lots, do not command any better price than the thin stock if they are equal in market type and uniformity. Most of

Wisconsin Conditions Unusual.

Not alone in the possession of corn and buttermilk for poultry feeding do Wisconsin conditions excel for market poultry work. Our numerous beautiful lakes afford extensive summer resorts where thousands of tourists spend their vacations, and thus supplies a market

Peter West Taming Geese, preparing for the stuffing.

the grading is done after the stock is dressed, except when bought up for feeding purposes by the packers for their large feeding plants. It will, therefore, be seen that the farmer’s principal interest in feeding lies in the additional weight thus secured and no other feeding he can do will bring better returns on his investment. Any improvement in condition adds improvement to quality as well and will work to the desired end and to closer grading and better market conditions. The constantly increasing shortage of the production of meat animals adds ma-

at our very doors that is well worth considering. The tender broiler is a toothsome morsel much appreciated by the tourist, who is willing to pay a good price for such things.

Even the “egg farmer” cannot disregard the market poultry end of the proposition, for in raising his required number of pullets he must, of necessity, produce a large number of cockerel’s that should return a good profit. These should be ready for the market during the season when tourists are numerous at these resorts, and at from one and one-half to two and one-half
pounds will bring about as much as the same chicks will bring if allowed to run on the farm until late in the fall, and their room is much preferred to their company while the pullets are being developed into layers.

**Feeding Stations.**

With the rapid increase in the poultry business in Wisconsin, the time is now ripe for the establishment of large feeding plants, such as are in operation in several of the States farther south, where more attention has been paid to this line of work. Up to the present time, we have but few feeding stations in Wisconsin and they are but small ones.

By feeding stations we mean the establishment of plants where chickens purchased from the farmer, considered by him to be ready for the market, are put in fattening crates and there fed for from fourteen to twenty days on a ration of corn meal, low grade flour and buttermilk mixed to a batter. This method of feeding not only puts on the flesh rapidly, but also whitens and makes it very tender. Crate fed chickens command a fancy price from special city trade.

At the present time some of the large packing plants of the country are looking for locations in Wisconsin where the farmers will supply the required stock to insure success in such a project. It would be better if farmers would organize and co-operate to develop this enterprise, but if they will not, the feeding and cold storage plants of the great packing concerns should be encouraged.

We are pleased to note the following statement from a circular letter issued by the Mazo Poultry and Egg Company, of Mazomanie, Wis.: "It is gratifying to us to note the improvement in poultry in the last two years, and from the enthusiasm displayed, there will be much bigger efforts made this coming
season to improve the quality as well as enlarge the flocks in this community. Let quality and uniformity be your slogan.” They state further that in May, June and July of last year that they paid as high as 30 cents per pound for broilers and could not get near enough to supply the demand. They also recommend that the later cockerels be caponized and agree to contract for all capons offered at prices far in excess of that paid for ordinary chickens. This comparatively small enterprise only indicates the great possibilities of market poultry in Wisconsin.

The stock for these crate feeding establishments, like that which would be considered in good market condition, should be specially fed by the farmer before being offered for sale, as the crate feeding is simply a finishing process. The farmer will therefore find it profitable to yard his fattening stock in small runs and feed a good-fattening ration for from two to three weeks before selling. At least one feed daily of mash mixed soft with buttermilk would be advantageous.

Raising the Chicks.

There is no one phase of the poultry business upon which so much depends as the raising of the chicks. Artificial means must be employed to produce numbers in paying quantities. This involves considerable careful attention during the earlier stages of the chick’s life and, in fact, it can never be neglected. Rapid growth from the start is as essential in the chick as in the pig or calf if best results are to be obtained.

Back of the chicks should be good, vigorous, well developed breeding stock, supplied with the nutriments in their food that give life and vigor. The brooding method, if artificial, should provide ample ventilation and a system of heat-

ing that will be dependable. Clover chaff and other suitable litter should be provided to induce vigorous exercise, and care should be taken not to over-feed during their early stages of development. Milk, either sweet or lobbered, is good for chicks at all ages and beef scrap is necessary to most rapid development.

It is doubtful if any better method of developing broilers can be found for the general farmer than that of allowing them to have the regular runs, with all the good, wholesome feeds they will consume.

Too much cannot be said of the importance of providing additional room adequate to the rapidly growing youngsters, that their quarters may not become crowded, and these quarters should be kept scrupulously clean.

Growing chicks require a lot of green feed, either growing in the runs or supplied in various forms. Sprouted oats are very good if the sprouts and roots are not allowed to grow too long and fibrous.

Uniformity of Stock.

Uniformity of stock can only be secured by raising pure bred stock that has been bred for a definite purpose for many generations. Not only that, but it would be of still greater advantage to breeders if they would do a little community work and as far as possible raise the same kind of chickens in one locality. It would work to the same advantage that it does in other lines of live stock breeding, and the satisfaction alone would well repay the required effort to change from the common mongrel to the pure bred fowl.

Goose Feeding.

There is one line of poultry feeding in which Wisconsin excels, and that is the
fattening of geese by a special process which produces a carcass of the most excellent quality that demands an extraordinary price, which is fixed at two cents per pound above the average number of pounds weighed by the geese offered by a feeder; that is, if the average weight of the geese offered was 24 pounds, the price would be 26 cents. This special feeding is carried on in only a limited territory in the state, namely, around Watertown and Fond du Lac. The extraordinary weight of 351 pounds has been attained by this method of feeding. Corn meal, low grade flour and milk constitute the feed in the main.

The producing of winter ducklings is also a profitable department of poultry keeping in our State, where the work is reduced to a science and all the conditions are right, but it is not to be recommended to the general farmer.

Marketing Eggs

Much has been said and written about the co-operation of egg marketing in this country, but only in a few instances has any progress been made, although wherever tried out the profits have been greatly increased. The average farmer will not take the care necessary to gather his eggs strictly fresh and provide the means to keep them clean and to grade them as the best trade demands. The fact that about 17 per cent of the total egg product is lost on account of the condition in which it is offered for market should be an incentive to arouse farmers to more business-like methods in this important branch of industry. This will probably not be accomplished until stringent laws make it a necessity. At the present time, No. 3 eggs, or "blood-rings," cannot lawfully be shipped in interstate commerce. The Danish people have set an example for the world as to what can be done by cooperative egg marketing and the strict code of rules by which they must abide has made for them a reputation in the best markets of Europe that has made poultry keeping one of the most important industries with that people. Our American farmers should not be satisfied until they have reached that goal.

DISCUSSION

A Member—How are those chicks fed to make them weigh two pounds at the age of ten weeks?

Mr. Hackett—This weight is obtained by feeding soft mash exclusively after they are four or five weeks old. For best results the mash should be mixed with buttermilk or sour skim milk and for the last days of the feeding period the mash should contain a large percentage of corn meal and low grade flour.

Supt. Norgord—How is the stuffing of geese you referred to carried on at Watertown? Is it a profitable business?

Mr. Hackett—It is claimed to be a very profitable business, but it is not followed by a great many people. As stated before, the food is prepared in the form of noodles and forced down their throat. I understand there is a law against it, but it is not enforced. The law was enacted to prevent the use of cramming machines for forcing fattening poultry. These geese are fed by hand.

A Member—Are those geese good eating?

Mr. Hackett—They are indeed, most excellent eating. The material they are fed, especially the large amount of buttermilk, makes the meat white and of the finest flavor.

Dr. Porter—This process of stuffing geese is shown on the monuments of the Egyptians as being carried on there 3,500 years before Christ. They stuffed geese with wads of dough.
Mr. Hackett—I do not believe this method of feeding is inhuman. The use of the stuffing machine is a different proposition. In this day of research and invention, we find we can learn many things from the methods of the Egyptians of long ago.

A Member—At what age would a chick be at its best for crate fattening?

Mr. Hackett—Probably at about four months as a rule, but at any age a chick should be in good condition before going into the crate. By good condition I mean in a condition that is generally considered ready for the market. A chick in that condition can be finished in about ten days.

A Member—Could sufficient weight be added to make crate feeding profitable after chicks are already in that condition?

Mr. Hackett—If the profits in crate feeding depended entirely upon the additional weight obtained, the profits would be fair, but the greater profits come from the improving of the flesh, for which a fancy price can easily be obtained when a trade is once secured for the same. It is not unusual to obtain from three to five cents more per pound for these fancy chickens. We would advise the farmer to try crate feeding a few chicks for his own table.

Music by Orchestra.