Boys' and Girls' Poultry Club

BY

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Assistant State Club Leader

For information regarding Boys 'and Girls' Clubs address
M. J. Abbey, State Club Leader
Bozeman, Montana
Information in this bulletin is approved by the Poultry Husbandry Division of the Montana State College.
Boys' and Girls' Poultry Club

1. AGE 10-18 inclusive.

2. REQUIREMENTS.
   (a) Members agree to set at least three sittings of eggs (pure bred if possible), using either hen or incubator for hatching.
   (b) Keep a record of cost of eggs, feeding chicks, care and value of chickens produced.
   (c) Make an exhibit of two pullets and one cockerel at local county and State Fairs, if possible.
   (d) Write a story on "How I raised my chickens."
   (e) Mail a summary of record and copy of story to State Club Leader.

3. ENROLLMENTS.
   Each member must enroll before June 1st with County Club Leader, County Agent, Superintendent of Schools, or State Club Leader. Chicks should be hatched by May 1st.

4. FULL MEMBERSHIP CARD.
   One is not a full-fledged Club member until after he has returned this card (which will be sent each member about June 1st). This card shows that you are either going ahead with your work or that you have dropped it. This card should be returned as soon as it is received.

5. Final Summary and story to be sent to the State Club Leader by November 1st.

6. BASIS OF AWARDS (to be used in awarding prizes)
   (a) Exhibit ................................................................. 40%
   (b) Record showing profit on investment, number of chicks raised, etc.................................................. 40%
   (c) Story, "How I raised my flock".................................. 20%

   Total score........................................... 100%

   WHAT BREED TO SELECT

   Many Poultry Club members will be confronted with this question, "What is the best breed to raise?" There is no best breed. The selection will depend upon whether or not the Club member wishes
to specialize in egg production, meat production, or production of both meat and eggs.

For all practical purposes chickens may be divided into the following classes: (1) Egg breeds, (2) meat breeds, (3) general purpose breeds, and (4) fancy breeds.

The egg breeds are generally small to medium in size, of nervous and active dispositions, early maturing, poor meat producers, poor sitters and good foragers. Examples: Leghorns, Minorcas, Anconas, and Spanish.

The meat breeds have the following characteristics: large in size, slow and sluggish in action, slow in maturing, poor layers as a rule, good sitters, poor foragers, can be confined to small quarters. Examples: Brahma, Cochin, and Langshan.

The general purpose breeds rank between the egg and meat types. They are of medium size, fairly gentle disposition, hardy, quick growing, close rivals of the egg breed in producing eggs, good table fowls, among the best brooders, fair foragers and can endure a fair amount of cold. The most important breeds are Plymouth Rocks, Rhode Island Reds, Wyandottes, and Orpingtons.

The fancy breeds are as a rule raised for their beauty or attractiveness and for their novelty.

**INCUBATION**

Eggs may be hatched by natural incubation or by artificial incubation. The Club member may use either method.

In selecting eggs for hatching, choose only those that are perfect in shape, normal in size, uniform in color and firm of shell. Secure the eggs from vigorous, well-fed chickens. They should be as fresh as possible, should never be kept over two weeks, and if kept more than a few days, they should be put in a cool place and turned carefully every other day.

Club members should plan to hatch their chicks early. Early chicks are more vigorous, grow to broiler size while the price is good and the pullets will begin laying in early winter.

A great deal of the success of natural incubation depends upon the “Mother Hen.” She should be gentle, easy to handle, in good health and should have been setting at least three days. Her breast should be fairly free from feathers and the skin over her breast warm when felt by the hand. This heat is what brings forth the
“biddies” and is due to an extra large amount of blood circulating through this region during the broody period.

The nest should be in a quiet place, protected from the rain and heat of the sun, and so constructed that the hen can be confined to the nest. The nest should also be dark. Many poultry men advise putting some soil or sod in the nest; on the top of this placing straw and carefully shaping and packing before putting in the eggs.

The “mother hen” should be placed on the nest in the evening before dark. At this time she is easier to handle and will settle down in a contented manner. Before putting her on the nest, dust her well with a good insect powder and work it into the feathers, especially under the wings and about the vent. This is probably best done by holding her by the feet, head down, and using a sifter. Sprinkle some powder in the nest. To play safe and safeguard the chicks, it is a good plan to repeat this operation about the eighteenth day.

Club members should plan to attend to their sitting hens about the same time each day. The hens will soon learn that they are to be fed and watered at this time. Give clean, fresh water and plenty of feed such as corn, wheat, barley, oats, and peas. Also have some grit handy. A little green food frequently will be appreciated by the “mother hen.” Provide a dust wallow near the nest. See that the hen goes back on the nest.

Eggs should be tested on the tenth day, and the sterile and those with dead germs removed. This will be one of the most interesting pieces of work connected with the Poultry Club work. A circular will be sent each member telling him how to make and use a home made tester.

CARE OF CHICKS

Moving into a new home should be done in the afternoon or at night so the “mother hen” will become settled during the night.

Most Club members will want to overfeed the little “biddies” during the first few days. Don’t! Just before the chick left the shell and came into a new world, it absorbed the yolk of the egg. This is plenty to last it until it can get out and seek its own food. Clean fresh water is the first thing to place before the chicks.

In Circular 74, Professor W. F. Schoppe of the Montana Experiment Station, says:
"During the first few days the chicks should be fed frequently but sparingly. Our practice is to feed five times a day for the first two days, giving the chicks dry bran. This is sprinkled on a pie tin which is first filled with fine gravel or chick grit. The chicks should never have all they want at one feeding and should always be kept a little hungry. A good plan is to allow them to eat for fifteen or twenty minutes and then remove the pans.

"On the third day drop two of the bran feedings and give some fine cracked grain. There are several chick grain mixtures on the market that are very good and handy for persons raising few chicks. For those who care to mix their own chicken feed the following rations are recommended as having been tried out and found satisfactory.

No. 1—Fine Cracked Grain Mixture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ingredient</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fine cracked corn</td>
<td>15 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine cracked peas</td>
<td>15 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cracked baled barley</td>
<td>10 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broken rice</td>
<td>2 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chick grit</td>
<td>5 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oyster shell (fine)</td>
<td>5 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crushed bone</td>
<td>5 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chick charcoal</td>
<td>2 pounds</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No. 2—Fine Cracked Grain Mixture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ingredient</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fine cracked corn</td>
<td>15 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine cracked peas</td>
<td>15 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine cracked baled barley</td>
<td>10 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broken rice</td>
<td>5 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaffir corn</td>
<td>15 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chick grit</td>
<td>5 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oyster shell (fine)</td>
<td>5 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crushed bone</td>
<td>5 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chick charcoal</td>
<td>2 pounds</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"The grain should be scattered where the chicks have to scratch to find it, thus forcing them to exercise and build up strong bodies.

"The second week the amount of grain may be increased and a gradual change made from the bran to a dry mash. This is done by first omitting a feeding of bran and substituting a feeding of mash. After a day or two omit the second bran feed and use the mash, and finally omit the third feeding of bran. Continue the mash, leaving it before the chicks a little longer each time until they have it before them all the time.

"The dry mash should contain a rather wide variety of grain. Mixed mash can be bought from grain dealers who handle poultry supplies or they can be mixed at home. The following mash is used at the Montana Station:

Dry Mash Mixture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ingredient</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bran</td>
<td>5 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corn meal</td>
<td>5 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barley meal</td>
<td>5 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ground oats</td>
<td>5 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shorts</td>
<td>5 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meat scrap</td>
<td>5 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt</td>
<td>10 ounces</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"This is fed in an open hopper before the birds all the time.

"After the chicks are a month old there is little danger of overfeeding and they should then have all the mash and grain they can eat.

"About the sixth week, or as soon as the chicks are large enough, the fine grain mixture is gradually replaced with a ration containing coarse cracked and whole grains, made up as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ingredient</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coarse cracked peas or wheat</td>
<td>10 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coarse cracked corn</td>
<td>10 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coarse cracked or whole barley</td>
<td>10 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oats</td>
<td>5 pounds</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"The above rations contain grains which are sometimes hard to get. While they are not all necessary, it is advisable to use them as better results will be obtained by using a wide variety.
"As soon as the weather permits, the chicks should be allowed to run out on the ground. This helps them to keep healthy and gives them a chance to pick up considerable food in the form of greens and grubs. As often as the land near the brooder coops becomes foul it is well to move them fresh ground. Have before the chicks at all times a supply of clean, fresh water. When it is available, some poultrymen give their chicks all the milk they will drink. This plan is excellent and when followed less meat scrap is needed in the mash. There should be constantly before them in the hopper, fine oyster shell, chick grit and charcoal. The chicks, until three weeks old or until turned outside, should also be supplied with green food. The tops of green sprouted oats, onion tops, lettuce, or water cress chopped fine is excellent for this purpose.

"The ‘mother hen’ and her brood should not be confined with the laying hens or old stock, as the chicks suffer from the confinement, feeding cannot be governed and they are apt to make poor growth. If possible to keep the young chicks separate from the old flock, some kind of a small feed yard should be made in which to keep the feed and water for the chicks. This yard should be made so that the chicks can get in easily, but so that the old hens cannot enter.

"Such a feed yard can be made of laths. The size depends on the number of chicks to be fed. A yard 3 feet wide and 6 to 8 feet long is large enough for the ordinary farm flock. This feed yard is made in six sections, four sides and two for the top. The sides are fastened together with nails or hooks. The two top pieces are arranged to be lifted up or off so the feeding can be done easily. Cut the laths for the sides and ends 2 feet high by 6 or 8 feet long and the ends 2 feet high by 3 feet long. Space the lath 3 or 4 inches apart so that the chicks can get through, but the old hens are kept out.

"For the first few days it may be necessary to raise this yard off the ground a couple of inches so that the small chick can run under the bottom boards. Put all the feed hoppers, water, and milk dishes inside the yard and always feed the chicks inside this enclosure."

ENEMIES AND DISEASES OF CHICKENS

Lice: These pests make their home on the body of the chicken. The best way to keep the chicken from getting them is to keep the “mother hen” clean. Have a good dustbox full of dry powdered dust for her to “wallow” and also dust her with insect powder before setting. If the chicks get infested spread a little unsalted lard or vaseline on the head, under the wings and around the vent. Use this sparingly.

Mites: These live in the cracks and crevices of the chicken coop or house and come out at night to suck the blood from the birds. Kill them by applying a solution of carbolic acid, kerosene or coal tar dips to the wood of the house or coop.

Gapes: This trouble is caused by small worms getting into the inner surface of the windpipe. It is made evident by frequent gaping. Look out for this while your chicks are from ten days to four weeks old. Prevention is the best remedy. Keep the chicks on clean fresh ground and add a few drops of coal tar solution to drinking water. The worms may often be extracted by using a small
quill feather stripped of all its web except a small tuft at the end. Use dry or moisten with kerosene. Insert carefully into the windpipe, give two or three turns and withdraw. All worms removed should be scalded or burned.

HOUSING

The chicken house should be on a dry, well-drained soil and so placed as to receive the greatest amount of sunlight. Some shade should be provided during the hot summer days. It should be well ventilated in order to furnish fresh air as well as to remove dampness, but drafts should be avoided.

A good brood coop can be made out of waste lumber or out of box. It should be made so that it can be closed at night to keep out cats, rats and other animals. Yet enough ventilation should be allowed so that the hen and chicks will have plenty of fresh air.

The coops and houses should be made so that they can be easily cleaned, and then cleaned often.

The Club member who is interested in building poultry houses should write for Montana Experiment Station Circular No. 72 or 79.

The Club member will find it interesting and profitable work to make the feeding troughs for the dry mash, shell and grit that is to be fed. Another interesting exercise will be to make a drinking fountain out of a tin can.

FITTING YOUR TRIO FOR EXHIBITION

All Club members are urged to exhibit their birds at local, county and the State fairs where prizes are offered for the best trio—two pullets and one cockerel. Scrub their feet and shanks with soap and water. Remove broken wing and tail feathers. The feet and legs should be greased with lard or kerosene about a week before the show. The feathers should be clean.

The construction of a neat, strongly built coop will add to the appearance and ease with which your trio can be handled.

RECORD AND STORY

The record should show the business ability of the Club member. Boys and girls can be business-like and here is a chance to demonstrate it. Each Club member will be furnished a record book which becomes his property. On October first a record blank will be sent each member, on one page of which he shall enter a sum-
mary of the record book, and on one page write his story. The Club member shall fill out this blank and mail at once to the State Club Leader, Bozeman, Montana.

If the Club member exhibits at a fair the record book and story form a part of the exhibit and in awarding of prizes count 60 points. The following points may help you in writing your story:

Tell what breed you selected and why.

Describe your method of raising, care and feeding of your poultry.

What difficulties did you have and how did you overcome them?

**STANDARD CLUB**

All Standard Clubs will receive a beautiful charter from Washington, D. C., signed by the Secretary of Agriculture, Director of Extension and the State Club Leader. If there are five boys and girls in your Poultry Club and you have a local club leader, you should write the State Club Leader for further information on the Standard Club.

**FREE SCHOLARSHIPS**

To further Boys' and Girls' Club Work in Montana, the State Board of Education is offering the following scholarships at any of the four institutions comprising the University of Montana: To the county winner in each club, a one year scholarship; to the State winner in each contest, a four-year scholarship; and to the winners of the second and third places in the State contest, a three and two-year scholarship, respectively.

A neat scholarship certificate is issued to each winner. These are good whenever the winner chooses to use them.

**STATE AND COUNTY FAIRS**

Prizes are offered at the State and County Fairs to Club members who exhibit their poultry. The record book and story is to form part of the exhibit. Every Poultry Club member should if possible enter these contests. Get in touch with your Club Leader, County Agent or County Superintendent of Schools, and find out if there is to be a county fair. You should be glad to show people what you can do.

**ACHIEVEMENT PINS**

During 1918, the State Club Leader, through the help of friends who were interested in the boys and girls of Montana, issued a
beautiful Achievement Pin to each Club member who finished the work and sent in the final report. The State Club Leader plans to make similar awards to deserving members this year. Are you going to win a prize?

**FINAL WORD**

The biggest achievement that can come to any Poultry Club member is to feel that you have completed successfully the work that you started out to do. We learn to do by doing. Success comes only to those who work faithfully and honestly. No Montana boys and girls are “quitters.” Will you not feel proud to have Montana at the top in Poultry Club work?

Be business-like in your work. Have a time to do your work and do it. Have a place for all the letters you receive about your work and save them. File the bulletins and instruction sheets that you get so you can refer to them easily. Study them carefully. Keep your record up to date and be proud to show it to your friends.

For further help and information write the State Club Leader, Bozeman, Montana.

**FINAL REPORT BLANK**

No Club member will be entitled to compete for prizes, win a scholarship or receive an “Achievement Medal” who has not sent to the State Club Leader, Bozeman, Montana, a full report of his or her Club work. This report will call for the following data:

1. Name.......................... Address.......................... County..........................

2. Number of chicks you had at first.................. Breed..................

3. If you purchased eggs, what did they cost you? $..................

4. If you purchased any chick feed, wheat, oats, or other feed, what did they cost you? $..................

5. Estimate feeds such as milk, meal, wheat, oats, etc., which you did not purchase at market price $..................

6. Figure your labor at 15 cents per hour $..................

7. Add the items under 3, 4, 5, and 6 and you will have your total cost $..................
8. How many chickens have you sold? $.................. 

9. How many chickens have you killed and used in your home? 

........................

10. How many have you now? $.....................

11. Estimate the value of the chicks which you have sold, those that you have killed for home use and those which you have now at 75 cents per bird. Add these figures and you will have the entire value $....................... (If you have pure bred stock, estimate at $1.00 per bird.)

12. Subtract item 7 from item 11 and you will have your net profit $....................

13. Write a brief story on why you joined the Poultry Club, how you did the work and what results you obtained.