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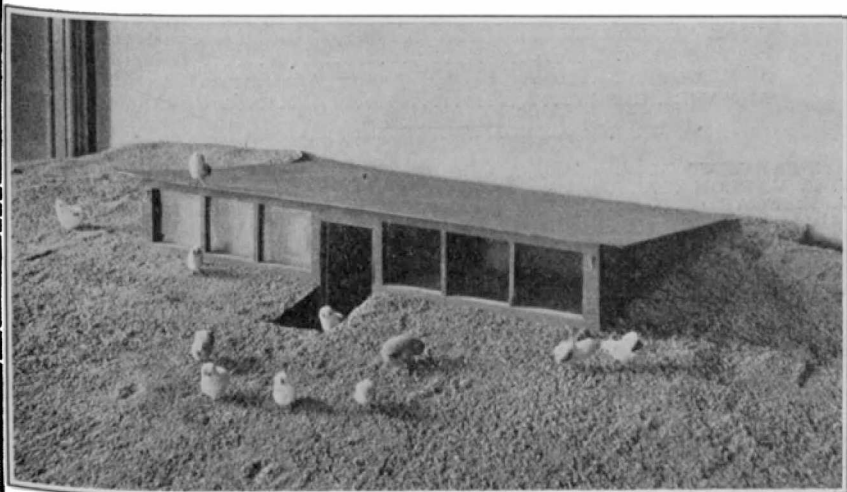
Fort Collins, Colorado

H. T. FRENCH, Director

THE POULTRY HOUSE

BY

W. E. Vaplon, State Leader of Boys' and Girls' Clubs



Under-ground Poultry House

CO-OPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE IN AGRICULTURE AND HOME ECONOMICS—
COLORADO AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE AND U. S. DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE CO-OPERATING

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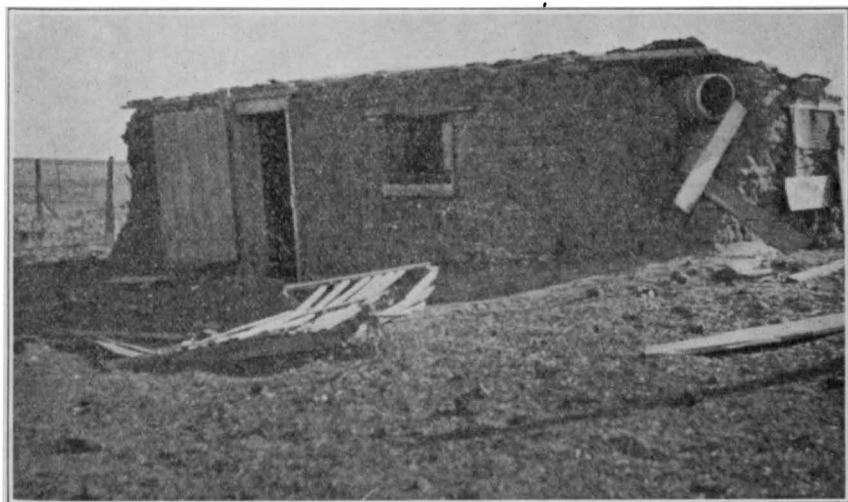
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THE POULTRY HOUSE

(By W. E. Vaplon, State Leader of Boys' and Girls' Clubs)

The chief purpose of the poultry house is to provide shelter for the fowls, but shelter alone is not sufficient if fowls are to be kept healthy and if eggs are to be secured. The house should provide plenty of fresh air and the greatest possible amount of sunshine, and the fixtures should be so arranged as to furnish a roomy place for exercise. Fowls should not be exposed to cold winds and there is no profit in sending them out into the snow for their feed; but even the wind, snow and mud furnish a more desirable place than a cold, wet, filthy, sunless, drafty building.

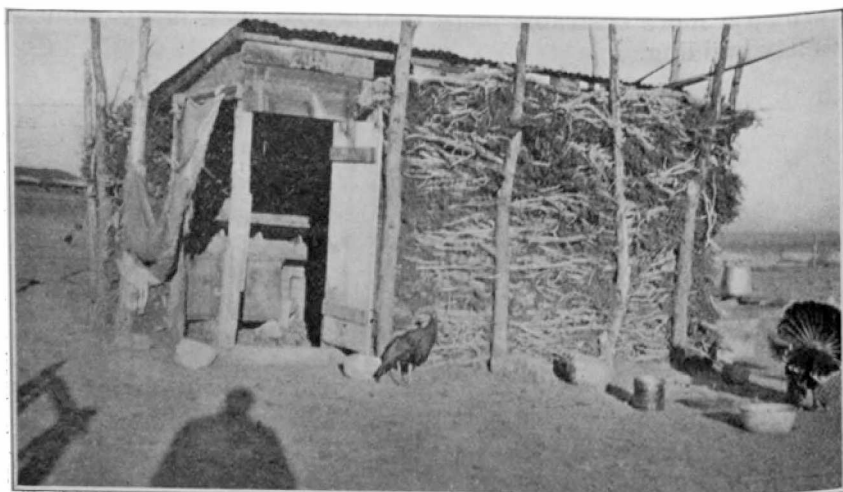


Sod and adobe are splendid materials to use in building poultry houses, but the above house provides neither sunshine nor comfort. Fowls confined in such quarters on a cold winter day would be about as happy as a boy in school on circus day.

FOUNDATIONS AND FLOOR

In building a permanent poultry house the foundation should be made of stone, concrete or other lasting material. It should be made high enough above the level of the ground to insure a dry floor. A concrete floor adds to the convenience of the caretaker and is not uncomfortable for the fowls if it is well covered with litter, but rather adds to their comfort in that there is less dust within the house than where a dirt floor is used. When the floor is of earth, fresh earth should replace the old as often as twice a year and the floor should be as high as the top of the foundation.

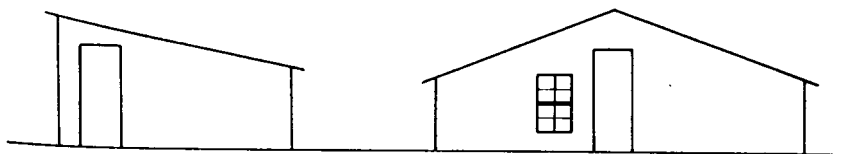
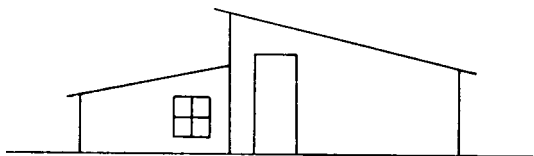
The lower a house can be made, the better for the fowls. A hen house 2 or 3 feet high would be ideal for the hens but of course would not be convenient for the caretaker, but a house should never be built higher than is necessary for head room. Poultry houses 8 or 10 feet high are very cold in winter and are needlessly expensive. The house should be as wide as possible, consistent with the length. The wider the house the farther the fowls will be from the opening when on the roost and the larger the opening may be made during cold weather.



The only material used in making the walls of this poultry house is cedar boughs well packed between posts. No need of permitting fowls to suffer from cold when such material, corn fodder, or straw can be had.

VENTILATION AND LIGHT

If possible light should be admitted from at least two sides of the house. In scratching for grain, hens face the light and heap up the litter in dark corners. Where the house faces the south, which is usually most satisfactory, and a platform is built under the roosts against the north wall, a window under this platform will prove very satisfactory. Light from only one side, where the building is 12 feet or more wide, unless the front is high and largely open, is not sufficient on stormy days. Glass in the windows is not necessary except on the windward sides of the house, for the curtains or shutters used as covering during the night may be raised during the day. Too much opening for fresh air may be as bad as too little. If the cold admitted causes suffering, harm is being done. The amount of air should be regulated by experience, which is the best teacher.



These types are the most popular and practical. They fulfill all requirements and are better than anything freakish.

ARRANGEMENT OF FIXTURES

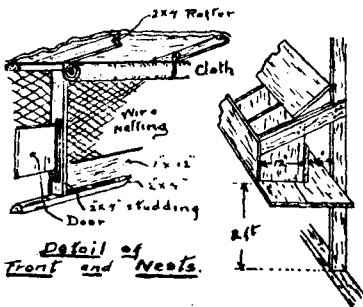
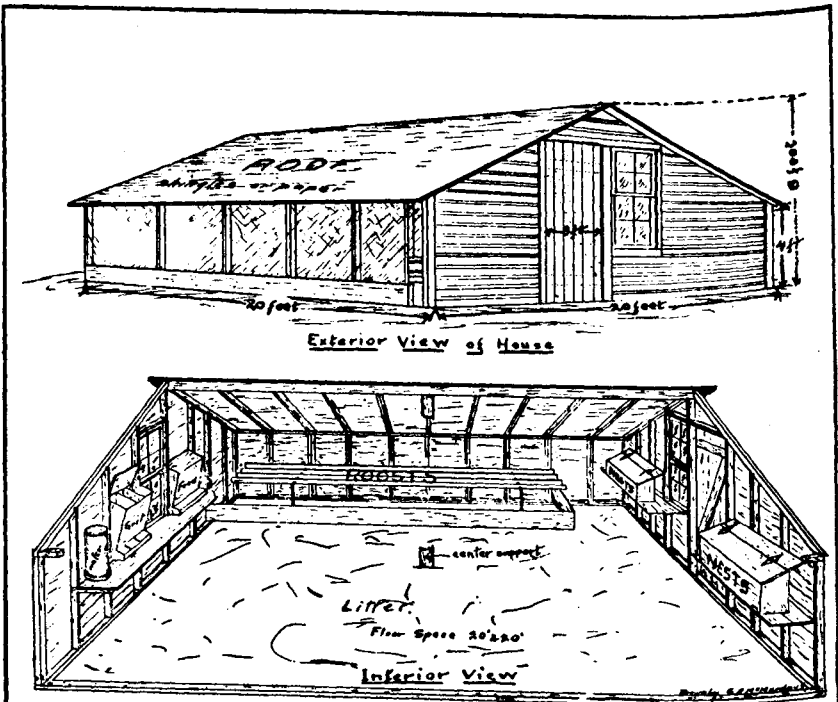
Cleaning out the house is a part of the poultry business and can be made less irksome if wheeling instead of carrying is practiced. The doors should be wide enough to admit a wheelbarrow or cart. Covering the platform under the roosts with sand or with litter from the floor helps to make cleaning easier. By placing the feed hoppers, water dish, and nests on platforms or shelves along the wall, the entire floor is left clear for the use of the fowls on stormy days. Clean straw covering the floor, in which to scatter grain, will induce plenty of exercise.

UNDERGROUND HOUSE

The underground poultry house as shown on the outside cover is especially serviceable in semi-arid regions. About the only cost for materials is the roof. A coating of cement is advisable on the dirt walls, but is not necessary when the soil is firm. The house is made by digging a pit 4 feet deep, about 14 feet wide, and any length desired. A house 4 x 14 x 30 feet is large enough for 100 hens. The roof may be made shed style or double pitch, but the former is preferable. The front should be 3 feet high above the surface of the ground; the rear end of the roof should rest upon a foundation of concrete or a timber about 6 inches high. The entire front, 3 feet high, should be covered by wire netting, and during zero weather by a cloth curtain. No glass windows are necessary in the front, but a small glass window may be placed in each end to give better ventilation in summer and to admit more sunshine in winter. Instead of steps, an incline will facilitate cleaning out with a wheelbarrow.

ROOSTS

In the accompanying illustration will be found an admirable arrangement of roosts. These roosts are all on a level, preventing crowding of the fowls to the top roost; they are made of 2 x 4 stuff ripped into two pieces, the upper corners being slightly rounded and made to rest on two iron rods, ends of which are sunk or driven into the studding, then bent to make legs reaching to the floor. Mites find no convenient hiding and breeding place on these roosts, and are easily found when present.

Bill of Material

22 - 2" x 4" x 12'	2 Windows
7 - 2" x 4" x 14'	1 pr Hinges
8 - 2" x 4" x 16'	2 pr Butts
6 - 2" x 4" x 20'	80 sq ft. Netting
1 - 2" x 6" x 20'	15# Shingle Nails
8 - 1" x 4" x 12'	30# 8d. Nails
660 ft Sheathing	5# 10d. Nails
700 ft Drop Siding	5# 20d. Nails
	5 M. Shingles

NESTS

In the illustration on page 6 will be found a good nest arrangement when permanent nests are wanted. The best cure and a prevention for egg eating is a darkened nest, as the habit of eating eggs which fowls frequently develop is an acquired one, and is forgotten when they no longer plainly see the eggs in the nests.

Orange boxes make good nests and can be replaced by new ones and used for kindling wood when mites infest them. They should be placed on shelves on the wall of the house at least 2 feet above the floor. In bulletin No. 130 will be found a plan of a feed hopper built into the wall of the poultry house. This is inexpensive, out of the way, and can be made to hold a large quantity of feed. Feed hoppers and water dishes should be placed upon a shelf the same as is recommended for nests, to give the entire floor space to the fowls for a play and work room in bad weather.

TRAP NESTS

Trap nests are an advantage where individual records of hens are desired or where pedigree breeding is being carried on. The trap nest is so made as to close after the hen has entered, to enable the poultryman to know which hens are laying and the number of eggs laid by each hen. Only where the poultryman can attend closely to the nests, making the rounds at least once an hour, are they practicable.

In building a poultry house

REMEMBER THAT—

Dampness is a disease breeder.

Sunshine within is good medicine.

Drafts are as bad as dampness.

Plenty of clean straw within furnishes exercise.

Crowding and idleness mean trouble.

A wide doorway is a labor saver.

Roosts on a level are a convenience.

Convenient arrangement lessens cost of production.

Farmers' Bulletin No. 574, "Poultry House Construction" and Farmers' Bulletin No. 682, "Simple Trapnest for Poultry" may be had free of charge by writing to Bureau of Animal Husbandry, Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.

