

The
S.A.P.A.
POULTRY

Die
S.A.P.V.
PLUIMVEE

BULLETIN

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Gratis to Members—Gratis aan Lede.

Editorial : Redaksioneel

S.A. AGRICULTURAL UNION CONGRESS.

Thanks are due to our two delegates at this Congress for the splendid show they put up, not only in securing the passing of our resolution referring to representation on Control Boards, but also in focussing the attention of the Congress to the bald facts about the condition of the farming industry in the Union. A resolution from the Cape Agricultural Union asking for a Commission of Enquiry to ascertain the real reason why farmers were always unable to secure a fair return for their labour, gave the opportunity for the presentation of a considered statement which has since been favourably commented upon in several papers.

The President and the Central Board
of the South African Poultry
Association Wish all the Members
A Merry Christmas.

Congress was unable to agree upon our second resolution asking for the Government and Control Boards to evolve some other system of securing better internal prices to producers than one which involves a tax upon the internal consumer. This matter will be further considered at the first Executive Meeting when we hope there will be further enlightenment of those present as to the injustice of this system.

Future Problems.

The Wheat Control Scheme is now an established fact. Future events alone will decide whether it will give any further consideration and a mode of justice to consumers of wheat and maize. The prospects are not favourable as we see them, as representation is in

S.A. LANDBOU-UNIE KONGRES.

Ons is dank verskuldig aan ons twee verteenwoordigers op die S.A. Landbou-Unie Kongres vir die pryswaardige manier wat hulle die goedkeuring van ons besluit omtrent beheerrade verkry het, en ook dat hulle die aandag van die Kongres gevestig het op die blote feite aangaande die toestand van die Landboubedryf in die Unie. 'n Besluit van die Kaapse Landbou-Unie wat gevra het vir 'n Ondersoekings-komitee om die werklike rede waarom boere altyd nie 'n billike loon vir hulle arbeid kan kry nie, het die gewenste geleentheid gegoe om 'n oorweegte verklaring in te dien, wat sedert dien gunstige ondersteuning van verskeie koerante geniet het.

Die President en Sentraalraad van die
Suid-Afrikaanse Pluimveevereniging
Wens al die Lede
'n Pleisterige Kersfees toe.

Ons tweede besluit wat gevra het dat die Government en Beheerrade probeer om 'n ander beleid te weeg te bring in plaas van die teenwoordige een wat 'n belasting op die binnelandse verbruiker plaas sodat die produsent beter binnelandse pryse kan geniet is nie deur Kongres aangeneem nie. Hierdie saak sal met die eerste Uitvoerende Komiteevergadering oorweeg word, en ons hoop dat die lede van daardie komitee die eunegverdigheid van die teenwoordige sisteem sal sien.

Toekomstige Moelikhede.

Die Koring Beheer Skema is nou 'n voldonge feit. Die toekoms alleen sal bewys of dit enige mate van regverdigheid teenoor die verbruikers van koring newe-

fact denied to stock feeders on the Board. No other branch of stock feeders would appear to have either the energy or acumen to realise that the loading of production costs is rapidly putting them out of business. Their hopes rather appear to lie in further control boards for their respective products, passing costs on to the consuming public. Vain hopes, as will be seen one day. If Millers can be allowed three representatives and bakers one representative, surely stockfeeders who have in turn to manufacture foodstuffs from the wheaten offals, should be allowed a representative also.

The Maize Control Board is also considering a fuller scheme, and it would appear that it is determined to perpetuate two glaring injustices, viz., the levying of a charge upon the internal consumer to make up for loss on export, and the payment of a higher price to the smaller producer than to the large mealie farmer. Both these mean an unfair burden upon the poultry farmer.

Call for Action.

It is up to each and every one to agitate against these matters, and only by continued effort can you hope to secure justice. M.P.s. are now in recess. See your local Member and make him realise that these matters must be faced, as the consequences are likely to be serious. Moreover, as stockfeeders are forced out of business, so must the methods which have acted in that manner, re-act upon the grain producers themselves. Balance must be kept in Agriculture and a successful stockfeeding industry means a successful grain producing industry.

produkte sal lower. Die vooruitsigte soon ons hulle nou sien is nie gunstig nie, want verteenwoordiging van vervoerders op die raad is gewis. Dit skyn as of geen ander tak van vervoerders die energie of vernuftigheid besit om dit in te sien dat die aanhoudende vermeerdering in produksiekoste hulle vinnig ruineer. Hulle hoop dat verdere beheerrade vir hulle produkte met verhoging van pryse vir die verbruiker alles sal herstel. Maar 'n groot teleurstelling is vir hulle aan wag. As Meulenaars drie verteenwoordigers toegelaat word, en bakkers een, is dit seker nie te veel om te verwag dat vervoerders wat voedingstowwe uit Koring Newe-produkte moet vervaardig, ook een verteenwoordiger toegelaat word nie.

Die Mielie Beheerraad sal binnkort 'n volledige skema indien, en dit is asof hulle vasberade is om twee skreinde onregte te bestendig, n.l. dat die binnelandse verbruiker die verlies op uitvoer sal moet dra, en die versekering van 'n hoër prys vir klein produsenters as wat aan die grootskaal melieboer geger word. Beide die gevalle sal 'n onregverdige las op die pluinveeboer plaas.

Stappe Moet Geneem Word.

Almal moet teen hierdie voestelle optree, en alleen deur aanhoudende pogings kan regverdigheid geskied word. Parlement is nou nie aan nie en die Parlementslede is nou meeste tuis. Maak 'n besoek aan u plaaslike lid en sien dat hy dit insien dat hierdie feite sy aandag moet geniet, want die gevolge sal seker ernstig wees. Dit is verder seker dat as die vervoerders doodgedruk word sal dit op graanprodusenters self reager. 'n Ewig tussen landbou moet behou word en 'n suksesvolle veebedryf sal tot 'n suksesvolle graanbedryf lei.

Free State Forms Three New Clubs.

As mentioned in last month's Bulletin, the Secretary of the Association visited several centres in the Free State during November, and had a most successful tour.

New clubs were formed at Frankfurt, Lindley and Winburg, and should be ready for affiliation to the S.A. Poultry Association before the end of this year.

The prospect of a club being formed at Fouriesburg is very promising, and it is regretted that it was not possible for the Secretary to visit that centre without seriously dislocating a pre-arranged itinerary.

The Secretary also addressed meetings organised by the Reits, Bethlehem and Marquard Clubs, where great enthusiasm was shown and the attendances very good.

The Bloemfontein Poultry Society held their monthly Committee meeting on the evening of the 11th November, and the Secretary of the S.A. Poultry Association, upon invitation, was present.

WATERFOWL CLUB.

Will all breeders of, and those interested in, Waterfowl please communicate with Mrs. M. G. Hahn, P.O. Northlands, Johannesburg.

Mrs. Hahn, together with other Waterfowl breeders, is anxious to revive interest in the S.A. Waterfowl Club.

By writing, breeders are under no obligation, as Mrs. Hahn is endeavouring to ascertain whether sufficient breeders are interested in the maintenance of the Club.

Don't delay, as you may then forget to write.

B.W.D. TESTING SCHEME.

As reported in our November issue, the B.W.D. Testing Scheme is progressing very favourably, and many breeders are signing up.

Suitable adjustable sealing leg rings for the test are obtainable from the Association, and breeders are advised to write to the Secretary for particulars.

DIE UITSOEK VAN HOENDERS.

Deur "PEN."

Dit is vandag meer belangrik as ooit dat pluimveeboere alle aandag moet gee aan produksie-koste, en die mees doeltreffende manier om die koste al te bring is deur die toepassing van 'n beleid wat groter gemiddelde produksie aanmoedig.

Die gewone uitsoek van hoenders om die onbetalendes uit te skakel word meer deur die algemene boer en kommersiële pluimveeboer toegepas as wat dit deur die spesiale- of stoet-teler gedoen word. Hierdie uitsoek word toegepas op die swakste 20 persent tot 30 persent van die litrop, terwyl teel seleksie het alleen te doen met die beste 5 persent of 10 persent van die hoenders.

Die Basis van Uitsoek.

Hans word geklassifiseer op hulle fisiese voorkoms en konstitusie, met natuurlik die versekering dat hulle goed geteel en tipies van hulle ras is. Hanne of hennetjies word geklassifiseer volgens hulle ontwikkeling en hulle laat-sonner en vroeë-winter produksie. Met die uitsoek van hennetjies moet al die volgende punte in aanmerking geneem word:—

1. Vroeë of laat ontwikkeling.
2. Kleur veranderings.
3. Liggaamlike veranderings.
4. Ververing.
5. Temperament.

1. **Vroeë of laat ontwikkeling.** Die hennetje van 'n ligte ras wat op 4 maande lê is gewoonlik 'n lêer van klein eiers en sy sal verveer wanneer eiers skaars is. Sy moet van die trop verwyder word sodra sy ophou met lê. Dan het ons die hennetje van 'n ligte ras wat langsaam ontwikkel en lê slegs wanneer sy onstreeks 9 maande oud is. Sy is definitief nie wintgewend nie. Behalwe dat sy te veel kos moet gebruik voordat sy begin lê, sal sy ook die periode van hoë eierpryse gedurende winter oorleef en haar jaarlikse produksie sal veels te laag wees.

2. **Kleur veranderings.** Met rasse soos die Leghorns, Rhode Island Reds, Wyandottes, Koekoeks, ens. het hulle geel vet in verskeie hoeveelhede op gulseltes van hulle liggaam, en dit is meer merkbaar in die bene, oorbelle en bek. Hierdie geel is verkry deur 'n kleur-stof wat in sekere voedingsstowwe voorkom, en die vernameste bronne is geel mielies en groen lusern.

Gedurende produksie is hierdie kleur stof afgewyk na die eierstros toe en verbleking van die betrokke deel van die liggaam is veroorsaak sodat die natuurlike geel wêreld wit of vlekkleurig word, en sodra produksie stop kom hierdie geel kleur terug. 'n Hoender verbleek in 'n definitiewe orde, die eerste om dit te wys is die aars, dan die ooglid, beide na maar enkele eiers gelê is, dan volg die oorbelle na sowat 2½ weke van produksie, dan die bek, na 1½ tot 2 maande, en laaste die bene na 5 of 6 maande.

Dit moet onthou word dat die verbleking terwyl sy aan gereelde of aanhoudende produksie en nie noodwakkig aan groot produksie nie.

Die verblekings toets kan met uitsoeking toegepas word om slegs uit te vind hoe lang 'n sekere hen in produksie is, maar die feit moet nie oor die hoof gesien word nie dat die rangsoem wat gebruik word 'n belangrike invloed het op die diepte van die kleur. Minderwaardige faktore is die hoerbaarheid vet wat voor produksie begin het opgestoor is, die snelheid van die bloed sirkulasie en die grootte van die betrokke hen.

3. Liggaamlike veranderings:

Hen wat lê.

KAM.—Groot, vol, dik, sag en wasagtig.

BEK.—Wit of goed verbleek.

OOGLEID en OORBELLE.—Wit of goed verbleek.

AARS.—Wit (goed verbleek) groot sag, vogtig (beeste deel oorhangend).

VERVERING.—Verveer vinnig en laat.

BEKKEN-BENE.—Dun, buigbaar, en betreklik wyd van mekaar.

BUIK.—Lus, sag, vol en diep.

Nie-lêende of swak lêende hen.

KAM.—Slap, droog, klein, hard en met wit skilfers daarop.

BEK.—Geheel of gedeeltelik geel.

OOGLEID en OORBELLE.—Geel of geelagtig.

AARS.—Geel of geelagtig, klein, hard, droog, rond, ingekrimp.

VERVERING.—Verveer vroeg (voor Januarie) en stadig.

BEKKEN-BENE.—Dik, stomp en betreklik na aan mekaar.

BUIK.—Vas, hard, opgekrimp onder diepte.

4. **Die verveer.** Met die regte behandeling hoe later 'n hen verveer hoe beter is sy, en ons hoor dikwels dat mense sê dat die hennie nie lê nie omdat hulle verveer terwyl hulle behoort te lê dat die hennie verveer omdat hulle nie lê nie.

Daar bestaan 3 vername soort verveenders en die boer behoort alle gebruik te maak van hierdie faktore.

Die vroeëverveender hou in November of Desember op met lê, en het dus net 'n kort lê periode. Sy ly gewoonlik aan 'n gebrek van lewenskrag, lê vermoed en sorgelose hoë produksie, en moet uitgesit word.

Die medium verveender hou gewoonlik in Januarie op met lê en of sy uitgesit moet word of nie is afhanklik op die heersende eiermark, die gemiddelde produksie van die trop, en die ander uitsoek faktore wat in aanmerking geneem moet word.

Die laat verveender, i.e. Februarie, Maart of April is die beste voël; sy verveer en groei na 'n vinnig en is gou weer in die lê.

Die manier wat 'n hen verveer moet in aanmerking geneem word want vinnige verlies van vere staan in betrekking tot 'n kort verveer periode.

5. Temperament. Dit sal gevind word dat die beste lers, mak, gewellig en glad nie wild of skikkerig is nie. Hulle krygs of fladder nie rond nie wanneer hulle hantoor word. Hulle besit 'n besonder wakker en intelligente voorkoms.

WANNEER MOET UITGESOEK WORD.—

Die uitsoek van hoenders behoort nou plaas te vind, maar sorg eers dat die voeding en bestuur reg is anderste sou daar miskien goeie hoenders uitgaan word.

As u nie op hierdie gebied tevrede is nie voed en behandel die hoenders op die regte manier vir sewat ses of sewe weke eers en begin dan met die uitsit van alle onbegewig voëls, die met liggaamlike gebreke en die wat corvet of siek is. Dan kan die ernstige uitsoek begin deur in aanmerking te neem die tyd van die jaar, voeding ens., kleurveranderings, ververing, kop, tipe buik, ens.

Die ideale lê-hen behoort aan die volgende drie vermaantste vereistes te voldoen—grootte en tipe, lewenskrag en 'n sorgvulde vermoë om goed te lê. Dit mag miskien goed wees om te verduidelik dat deur grootte is nie oor groot bedoel nie, maar die regte gewig vir die betrokke ras. Ooergroot hoenders, alhoewel hulle goed mag lê het te veel kos vir liggaamsonderhoud nodig, terwyl die hen wat te klein is kan nie gekoncentreerde swaar voeding en 'n lang produksie periode weerstaan nie.

Bloemfontein and District Poultry Society.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT.

The Chairman of the Bloemfontein and District Poultry Society, Mr. E. Southworth, placed a comprehensive report before the Twenty-sixth Annual General Meeting of his Club.

He referred to the fact that while the Club showed a credit balance of almost £30, it would have shown a deficit of about £20 had not the able Secretary, Mr. Jennings, executed a saving of approximately £80 on the printing of the Show Prize List and Catalogue.

Reference was made to the 1938 Championship Show to be run by the Club without any outside financial assistance, while an appeal is made to all members to give every assistance so that the Show may be the usual success when held in Bloemfontein.

The Chairman went on to refer to the 1938 Conference which was held in Bloemfontein under the able Chairmanship of Mr. E. M. Talmash, a past President of the Association and a present Hon. Life Member, and recorded his appreciation of their President, Mr. A. C. White, for the large part he played in making the Conference the success it was.

Mr. Southworth appealed to members for greater support of the Glen Egg Laying Test, and offered the congratulations of the Society to their member, Miss Ward, on her leading position in the Heavy Breed Section at the end of the seventh period.

The Next Conference at George.

The Thirty-fifth Annual Conference of the Association will be held during April of 1939 in that picturesque Western Province town of George with the active George Poultry, Pigeon and Cage Bird Society as host club.

April is a very pleasant month at the Cape, and the delegates attending the Conference should greatly enjoy their visit.

A new feature of the Conference will be the reading of papers by authorities well versed in their subjects and ample time will be allowed for discussion.

An extra day is being allotted to allow of more time being available for the various Conference activities.

The Breeders' Register meeting is to be held in the afternoon of the first day instead of the first evening, while the Judges' Association meeting will occupy the evening instead of the usual two hours from 5 until 7 in the afternoon. This will allow of matters affecting these bodies to be considered and the necessary recommendations made to Conference which opens the following day.

It is hoped that all affiliations will send their own delegates or delegates as there are sure to be members anticipating holidays. How can such a holiday be better spent than in what is claimed to be the prettiest town in the Union, and among old and new poultry friends?

If affiliations find that they cannot send a member of their Club then it is their duty to nominate a delegate from among those who will be attending Conference. Where two or three affiliations have headquarters in the same vicinity, they should co-operate in securing the attendance of at least one of their members. Life and Individual members, who now include members of the Breeders' Register, who could attend and would act as delegates, are requested to notify the Secretary of the fact.

Now is the time to think of resolutions for the Agenda. Every member should put before his local Committee any suggestions that he or she may have, so that they may be submitted by the Secretary of the affiliation to the Association in good time.



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MOWBRAY - Cape.

The National Mark Scheme.

By A. OWEN-JOHN, F.B.S.A.

Good wholesome food is a national necessity, and to-day most people demand it, but in the past housewives have been faced with quite a number of difficulties and doubts in their efforts to find the best quality foods.

Standards of foods in the past had to be judged by the experience of the buyer, which in the majority of cases left much to be desired. It is easy, therefore, to imagine how frequently that judgment may be misplaced unless there is an officially recognised standard of excellence as a guide.

It is for this reason that the Department of Agriculture and Forestry introduced the National Mark Scheme in Johannesburg in the latter part of 1936, where it has proved such an outstanding success, that it was decided to extend the Scheme to Pretoria as well, where it has been in operation since February of this year, since which it has made rapid strides in that centre also.

It grew out of the idea that the marketing of agricultural products graded according to strict standards of quality and sold under a National Trade Mark, which would be a guarantee of the quality of the products sold under it, would be in the interests of the producer, the distributor and the consumer, and that this mutual benefit would promote confidence and general satisfaction.

Briefly, it is a voluntary scheme, whereby the producer agrees to grade his products according to size, quality and freshness in accordance with the official standards laid down by the Department, and submits them for inspection by Government Inspectors, before marketing. In other words, the producer markets a quality-graded product, and the consumer, when purchasing, can order the grade desired, knowing exactly what to expect.

As with every new project, so with National Mark, its first year of experience has provided valuable experience in operating the Scheme, which was something "brand new" in marketing as far as we in South Africa are concerned. Furthermore, that year has proved that in principle it has filled a long-felt want in the marketing of agricultural produce, and it is greatly appreciated by the producer and consumer alike, as also the distributive trade.

During the time the scheme has been in operation it has justified the confidence of the Government that the mutual benefits derived by selling and buying on a guaranteed quality basis, although voluntary, are so obvious that whole-hearted support would be forthcoming.

At the commencement a limited number of products were graded under the Scheme, viz., beef, eggs, citrus, potatoes, onions, tomatoes, grapes, pears, peaches and apples.

Later, various other products were added from time to time, until at present, in addition to the above, practically all deciduous and citrus fruits are included, as well as tropical fruits, vegetables, bacon, table poultry and butter, so that the range of National Mark products is a fairly comprehensive one.

The Scheme, as it affects eggs and table poultry, will naturally be of most interest to poultrymen.

A commencement was made with eggs in March, 1937, and it may be stated that it was a very humble beginning. Eggs are different to any other product under the Scheme, in this respect, that, take for example potatoes or tomatoes—these as well as other products can be graded and packed on the farm, even if situated 200 to 300 miles from the centre of marketing, whereas with eggs, they must be graded, tested and packed at the centre of distribution.

Then again, there was a definite prejudice even of the producers themselves to be overcome. This may sound strange in view of the insistent demand of the poultry producers for a grading scheme, but a few years ago, and one remembers the strong resolutions sent forward from poultry conferences in this connection. However, it is felt that in spite of an enthusiastic reception from the industry and prejudice in many quarters, the National Mark egg has carved a place for itself which it will retain, as it has come to stay.

Before the advent of National Mark there was no official standard of quality whereby eggs could be judged. Previously everyone had his or her own interpretation of what was or was not a "new laid" egg, and consequently the unfortunate consumer was left with what was, in spite of its high sounding title, a very doubtful commodity. Unfortunately the "new laid" egg and the "day old" egg myths are still with us, and the unsuspecting housewife in many instances still believes that either of the foregoing labels is a guarantee of quality, whereas all poultrymen know that an egg, even if it is but an hour old, having blood spots, meat spots, etc., is anything but suitable to be classed as a first grade commodity, yet it is "new laid."

Every National Mark egg is tested individually, and consequently its quality is beyond question, and is the highest recognised standard of quality. The term "new laid" is not used alone, and the public are becoming accustomed to ask for "National Mark," "blue label," which is our highest grade, as will be seen by the attached National Mark egg grades:

EGG GRADES.

1. Hen eggs shall be classed:—

(1) On the basis of weight:

(a) *Extra Large*: Eggs shall weigh at least 27 oz. per dozen; individual eggs within this class shall not weigh less than 2½ oz.

POULTRY - PLUIMVEE.

WHITE LEGHORNS, Australorps and White Wyandottes. Member of S.A.P.A. Breeders' Register, Mrs. A. M. Bartlet, Fougus, Boschloep, P.O. Box 7499, Johannesburg. Phone 42-9987.

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S.A. Pluimveevereniging Tele-register.—Registrar, Postbus 1795, Johannesburg. Ledegeld, £1 is. per jaar.

S.A. Australorp Breeders' Club.—Sekretaris, N. W. Ayson, "Dalhenmaan," Hornsey Weg, Mowbray, K.P.

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ORGANISE.

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South African Poultry Association.—Secretary, P.O. Box 1795, Johannesburg. Subscription, 7/6 per year.

S.A. Poultry Association Breeders' Register.—Registrar, Box 1795, Johannesburg. Subscription, £1 is. per year.

Capetown and Peninsula Poultry Club.—Secretary, W. F. Klein, Esq., P.O. Box 599, Capetown. Subscription, 10s. 6d. per year.

S.A. Minorca Club.—Secretary, W. W. Bartlet, Esq., P.O. Box 7499, Johannesburg. Subscription, 5/- per year; Initial fee, 2/6.

Sussex Poultry Club.—Secretary, Miss M. O'Grady, P.O. Box 313, Johannesburg. Subscription 5/-, Entrance Fee 5/-.

S.A. Leghorn Club.—Secretary, L. Herbert, Box 2008, Capetown. Membership, 5/- per annum. Handbook Standard and advice free. Join now.

S.A. Bantam Club.—Secretary, O. B. Sheard, 72 St. Swithin's Avenue, Auckland Park, Johannesburg. Subscription, 5s. per year.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM.

To the Secretary, S.A.P.A.
P.O. Box 1795,
JOHANNESBURG.

A. Enclosed find Postal Order/Cheque for 7/6, being my annual subscription to the Association, or B. Forward address of nearest Poultry Club.

NAME

POSTAL ADDRESS

.....

(b) *Large*: Eggs shall weigh at least 24 oz. but less than 27 oz. per dozen; individual eggs within this class shall not weigh less than $1\frac{1}{4}$ oz.

(c) *Medium*: Eggs shall weigh at least 21 oz. but less than 24 oz. per dozen; individual eggs within this class shall not weigh less than $1\frac{1}{4}$ oz.

(2) On the basis of quality:

(a) *Special New Laid*: Extra Large, Large and Medium.

Shell: Clean and sound.

Airspace: Not more than $\frac{1}{4}$ inch in depth.

Yolk: May be dimly visible.

White: Firm and clear.

Membranes: Firm and regular.

(b) *New Laid*: Extra Large, Large, Medium.

Shell: Clean and sound.

Airspace: Not more than $\frac{1}{4}$ inch in depth.

Yolk: May be visible.

White: Firm and clear.

Membranes: Slightly tremulous.

As stated, a guarantee is given that every egg is individually tested by the registered producer or wholesaler, as the case may be, and this testing is checked by the Government Inspector, in his inspection of all consignments, to ensure the maintenance of that high standard of quality which National Mark eggs carry.

When inspection is complete, each egg is individually stamped on the large end with the official National Mark stamp, which contains the date of inspection as well as the packer's number, enabling an egg to be traced if necessary, and the date is the consumer's guarantee of its freshness.

As will be seen by the regulations, there are two qualities, the first which carries the blue label and the second a green label. Of the total National Mark eggs passed only 10 per cent. are of the second quality (green label).

The progress of the Scheme has been very satisfactory, as from a very humble beginning it has steadily grown in volume and popularity in spite of many difficulties, and the first year saw over 8,000,000 eggs going through under the National Mark, and the volume is still growing.

It is pleasing to record the fact that sustained and loyal support has been received from several wholesalers and retailers, which has materially helped in the development of the Scheme.

The Catering Department of the South African Railways and Harbours are keen supporters of most National Mark products, as also are the Johannesburg General Hospital and other public institutions.

Most of the largest retail provision stores in the city sell National Mark eggs, many of them exclusively, and to give some idea of developments in this connection one large store sells 1,500 dozen weekly, another leading store 1,200 dozen, another 1,000 dozen, etc.

During the last few months several stores have doubled and a few trebled their sales of National Mark eggs.

Owing to the fact that there is but a small percentage of "extra large" eggs, the bulk of eggs are graded into "large" and "medium" respectively.

So far all retail stores sell at a uniform price, so that no underselling takes place. The maximum price for "large" during the scarce period was 3s., and 2s. 9d. for "medium," and during the plentiful season "large" sell at 1s. 6d. and "medium" at 1s. 3d. At no time since its inception have National Mark eggs (blue label) sold at a lower figure than 1s. 3d. per dozen.

Table poultry commenced under the National Mark Scheme in September, 1937.

The difficulty with this product is that of a large quantity coming forward daily. Only such a small proportion is of a quality suitable for National Mark standard.

Taking the figures for our annual report which was up to June the 30th of this year, this covered a period of actually 10 months (September, 1937, to June, 1938), the number of birds submitted for inspection during this time was 80,588 head, of which only 33.3 per cent. was passed, or accepted and marked with the National Mark stamp.

The foregoing includes fowls, chickens, ducks and turkeys.

As will be seen on reference to the regulations governing National Mark table poultry, all birds must be submitted for inspection after being killed and plucked, but before being trussed and while the head and legs are still on.

The marking is done by attaching a National Mark disc to the wing by a piece of twine—this is sealed with a lead seal on which the National Mark is also impressed in closing.

Again referring to the regulations, it will be noticed that the age factor does not apply to "boilers" as it does to all other grades.

The demand for National Mark table poultry is steadily increasing, and, as previously stated, in view of the small percentage of birds coming forward that are suitable for National Mark, the demand will soon be difficult to meet.

Still, there is reason to believe that, as National Mark quality will become better known and appreciated, the producer will again find it profitable to produce the right quality to meet this demand.

REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE MARKETING OF TABLE POULTRY UNDER THE NATIONAL MARK.

Table poultry shall be graded as follows:—

Chickens:

Broilers: 1 lb. to 2 lb. in weight. Age, 8 to 10 weeks.

Chickens: 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. to 3 lb. in weight. Age, 14 to 16 weeks.

Roasters: 3 lb. to 4 lb. in weight. Age, 16 to 20 weeks.

Special Cockerels: 5 lb. to 6 lb. in weight. Age, 20 to 24 weeks.

Birds:

(a) Hens: 3 lb. to 4 lb. in weight.
Cocks: 3½ lb. to 4½ lb. in weight.

(b) Hens: 5 lb. to 6 lb. in weight.
Cocks: 6 lb. to 7 lb. in weight.

Ducks:

Ducks: 3½ lb. to 4½ lb. in weight. Age, 10 to 12 weeks.

Turkeys:

Young toms: 14 lb. to 16 lb. in weight. Age, 9 to 10 months.

Young hens: 9 lb. to 11 lb. in weight. Age, 9 to 10 months.

1. Table poultry shall be starved 24 hours before killing.

2. It is recommended that table birds be killed by piercing the brain and severing the jugular vein from inside the mouth and throat, and shall be well bled.

3. Such table poultry shall be dry-plucked. Feathers shall be left on the heads and necks to allow of a covering of 2½ inches from the base of the skull.

4. To meet certain trade requirements feathers may be left on the backs and tips of the wings, thus preventing bruising when packed.

5. The birds shall be undrawn (intestines left intact) except when required to be trussed "ready for cooking."

6. The crops of table birds intended for sale under the National Mark shall not contain food. If present the crop must be removed through a slit made in the back of the neck.

7. The heads, legs and feet shall be cleaned of all blood and dirt; the heads shall be wrapped in white parchment paper in a uniform manner.

8. Whether intended for wholesale trade or to be trussed "ready for cooking," all table birds intended for sale under the National Mark scheme must be submitted for inspection, passed, and sealed, before the heads and legs are removed.

9. When table birds are drawn and trussed the giblets (gizzard, liver and neck) must be cleaned and wrapped in white parchment paper and packed with each bird.

10. The minimum number which will be accepted for inspection at any time on any premises is 50 birds.

11. All classes of National Mark table birds must conform to the following requirements in addition to the weights and ages specified: Breast bone straight; skin, fine, thin, pliable, white or yellow skins permitted; bone fine; breast cartilage, soft and pliable; bodies, plump and well covered with meat, freedom from bruises and torn skin.

12. Each table bird passed by the inspector for National Mark shall have an approved circular disc attached to the wing indicative of its particular class, such disc to be secured by a wire fastened with a lead seal, without which no table bird can be sold under the National Mark scheme.

13. National Mark table poultry shall be packed in single layers in standard boxes of clean, white odourless wood, and lined with white parchment paper.

14. After the individual table birds have been passed and sealed as provided for in Regulation No. 12 the boxes in which they are packed must be sealed by the inspector, preferably on the binding wire around the box.

An approved label must be attached to the box indicating its contents.

What has proved a great handicap in developing National Mark eggs and table poultry is the fact that there is no producers' organisation in Johannesburg, through which to work. Had there been an Egg Circle or a Producers' Company, it would have made a considerable difference, particularly to the producers themselves.

At present the country producer is unable to participate to the extent he should in this Scheme, because of the nature of his product.

An effort has been made to remedy this and to form an agency, but owing to certain difficulties in the way, this plan unfortunately has not developed.

However, a further effort is in course of development, and it is hoped that this time it will become an accomplished fact to the benefit of all concerned.

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Write for literature and any further information to Concentra (Pty.), Ltd., New Fishery Harbour, Table Bay Docks.

The Production of Quality Eggs.

By "Producer."

It was rather startling to hear from a big merchant this past month, that of the eggs received by him, on occasion only 20 to 30 per cent. can be classed as first grade. This is a serious state of affairs and means a big financial loss to the producers concerned. It would be well therefore to state the conditions which must prevail before you can market good quality eggs. Let it be understood from the first that distance from market, while a drawback, can be overcome to a very great extent, and we have producers at considerable distances from markets (hundreds of miles), who are marketing a first-class egg.

The egg can only contain what is put into it in the way of feed. Food should therefore be of the best quality, and hens should have access to plenty of cool, fresh, drinking water. Foods which can taint eggs should be avoided, garlic, onions, acorns, and certain grasses and weeds can be instanced in this respect. Nests should be plentiful and kept clean with plenty of clean litter. They should also be placed in the shade. Clean, unwashed eggs should be the aim, and cleanliness of nest and nesting material plays a big part in the production of clean eggs. One writer in a poultry paper recently stated that eggs were never laid dirty. He has evidently never kept poultry or would be aware that it is quite a common occurrence for hens to foul their eggs when actually laying them; while with birds on free range, or even if kept intensively, rainy days will cause plenty of dirty eggs. Eggs can be washed without doing much damage to their keeping qualities if care is used. A damp, clean rag, not over wet and the water either previously boiled or from a well or borehole, should be used. Rags should be boiled and cleaned frequently. Stains can be removed with fine sand, vitx, or monkey soap. Overseas steel wool has been used with success instead of damp cloths. Eggs should be dried before packing. Recent experiments have proved that clean eggs previously washed will keep better in store than unwashed,

dirty eggs, and an egg carefully washed cannot be detected from an unwashed egg by the naked eye. Clean eggs market better than dirty eggs.

The following methods must be adopted to market your eggs in the best condition:—

Collect frequently and do not allow eggs to stand for even a short time in the hot sun. Collect more frequently in hot weather than cold, and take care to remove all broody hens from nests to special crates or houses. Hens sitting for even a few hours on eggs in hot weather will later cause rapid deterioration.

Do not allow eggs to stand in tins or baskets for any time, unless you use open wire baskets. You should allow the eggs to cool as quickly as possible. They should be stored in a cool place and not packed in egg boxes until quite cold.

Market eggs as quickly as possible, at least every other day, every day if possible. Pack in properly constructed boxes with clean flats and fillers, and use wood wool for packing; straw is liable to taint eggs. Grade to size if possible, as eggs will travel better than if extra large eggs are forced into small fillers. Discard weak shelled eggs and cracks. You are liable to lose more in the long run by packing eggs which will break easily on the journey and spoil packing materials and soil other eggs.

Transport to rail under cover. A sack over the boxes will help to keep off the hot sun's rays. See boxes are not exposed to the sun on the railway station platform and rail if possible by the evening trains. Do not keep or allow your eggs to be packed in corrugated iron sheds which become veritable furnaces on a hot day.

Remember that losses due to breakages in transport are as often due to inefficient packing as to bad handling on rail. Fifty per cent. of the boxes used in mailing are not fit for the job, but should have been used as firewood months ago. Merchants speedily recognise those who market a good egg, and the premium paid can be easily earned by just that little extra care and attention which so many refuse to give to their job.

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Pluimveehuise van Steenkoolas.

Deur P. Serfontein, Lektor in Pluimvee, Landboueskool, Potchefstroom.

Behuising is een van die duurste items op 'n pluimveeplaas, en dit is minstens die rede waarom baie boere nie die nodige pluimveehuise oprig nie. In baie gevalle



Fig. 1.—Die boere moet hierdie vorm gebruik om die vloer te maak met die mengsel. Let op die deursigtige waaraan die buite vasleë.

is boere geneig om waardevolle terfhoenders te koop en om alle raad aan te neem in verband met voeding en algemene bestuur, maar sodra aanbeveel word dat daar in die nodige behuising voersien moet word, is hulle nie bereid om die raad aan te neem nie. As aangeneem word dat 'n goed-geboude huis minstens dertig jaar lank gebruik kan word, is die belegging per hondert hoenders nie baie hoog nie.

Om hierdie rede het skrywer vir die afgelope vyf jaar noukeurig aandag gegee aan verskillende pluimveehuise wat op verskillende maniere gebou is, waaronder die volgende genoem kan word: riethuise, grashuise, bakhuise afgewit met kalk- of sementmengsels, ens. In elke geval het die huise tydelik aan hul doel beantwoord, maar die reparasies wat voortdurend aangebring moet word, maak valke tipe huise oekonomies en ondoeltreffend. In sommige dele

van die land is die grond ongeskik vir steenmaak, met die gevolg dat pluimveeboere wat steenhuisse wil bou dit baie moeilik vind om steen gemaak of gekoop te kry.

PROEWE UITGEVOER.

Drie jaar gelede by geleentheid van 'n besoek aan mnr. F. C. Pistorius, Amelia, Coalbrook, wat ook moeilikheid gehad het om steen gemaak te kry, het hierdie pluimveeboer aan skrywer enige gewys wat toe drie jaar gestaan het en gebou was van 'n mengsel van steenkoolas, boerkalk en sand. Hierdie muur was nie onder dak nie en het na drie jaar se blootstelling aan alle weerstoestande nog baie stewig gelyk.

Dit het voorgekom of hierdie manier van mure bou gebruik kan word in die bou van pluimveehuise waar die materiaal maklik verkrygbaar is. Gelukkig was mnr. Pistorius gewillig om hierdie metode op proef te stel en daar was groot hoeveelhede steenkoolas van 'n steenkoolmyne op die aangrensende plaas beskikbaar.

Huise van verskillende groottes is gebou, waarvan die grootste se linnewerk 16 vt. by 24 vt. was. Hierdie huis het mnr. Pistorius ingereg vir 200 henne op die vryloep-stelsel, en is gebou volgens die standaardhuis soos aanbeveel deur die Departement, behalwe vir die verskil in afmetings. Nadat hierdie huise vir 'n tydperk van twee-en-'n-half jaar in gebruik was, was die muur nog net so stewig en het dit met die tyd harder geword.

Daar die huise baie goedkoop is en die hoofbestanddele waaruit die muur gebou word in verskillende dele van ons land verkrygbaar is, behoort hierdie

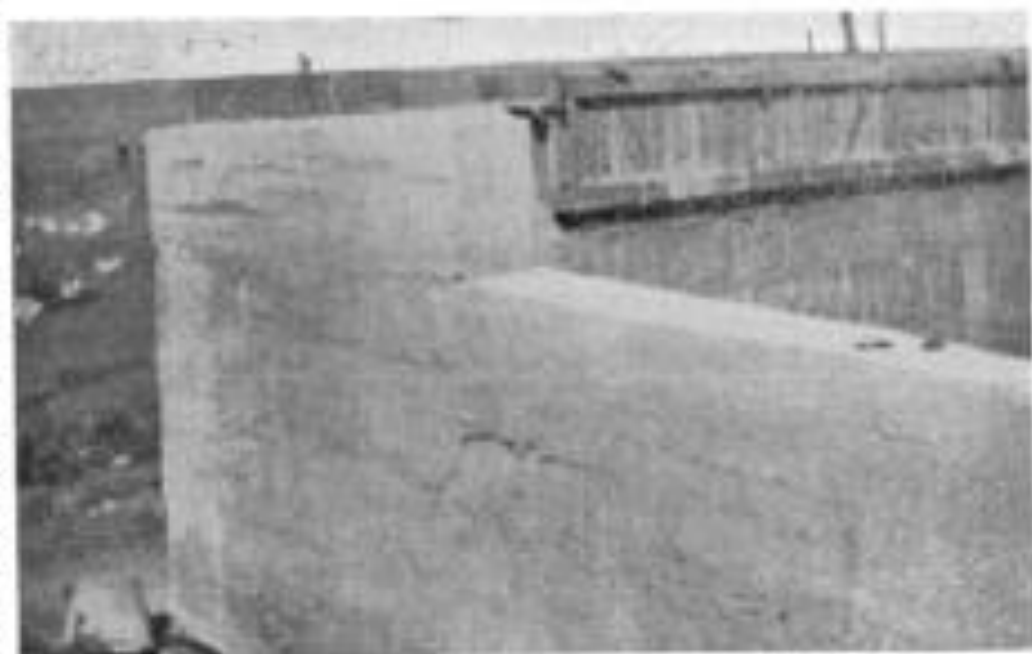


Fig. 2.—Die vorm moet baie swaar by die buite. Die vorm op die binnel is afgehaal.

goedkoop manier van bou groot byval te vind by pluimveeboere. Derhalwe word in hierdie artikel 'n kort beskrywing gegee van die mengsels wat gebruik is.

Vir pluimveeboere is dit miskien van belang om te weet dat mr. Patricius geen ondervinding of onderrig in bouwerk gehad het nie. Die metode van bou is baie eenvoudig, en pluimveeboere wat die tyd het, kan soke huise self bou. Daar is miskien ook ander persone wat hierdie metode van bou op proef gestel het en dinge ondervind het wat nie hier genoem word nie. Daar is bepaald nog baie probleme opgesluit in hierdie metode, maar dit word gevoel dat as die moontlikhede deur ervare boumeesters ontgin word, die behuisingsprobleem van pluimvee tot 'n mate opgelos kan word.

SPEKIFIKASIES EN METODE.

Vir die muur van bogenoemde huis is 24 sakke beukalk gebruik, en 10 papier-sakkies sement om die vloer in te sit en die binnekant van die huis af te pleister.

Kaste of vorms word gebruik, dog die wat vir die hoek gebruik word, moet absoluut haaks wees, sodat die waterpas aan die buitekant van die kas gebruik kan word. Die kaste word met lang boste op die muur vasgetrek. Die gite in die kaste, waar die boste deurkom, moet omtrent 2 duim van die onderkant van die kas wees sodat die kas goed op die muur kan vas sit. So word die kas met planke vasgespyker volgens die dikte van die muur. Die boste word uitgetrek net voor die kaste afgehaal en verkuise word.

Die volgende mengsels is gebruik:—

- (1) 8 dele steenkoolas, 2 dele sand en 1 deel beukalk; of
- (2) 6 dele steenkoolas, 2 dele sand en 1 deel beukalk.

Die muur van die huise wat uit hierdie mengsels gebou is, het effens bros voorgekom, en derhalwe is die sand weggelaat vir die volgende huise. Dit is toe gevind dat eersgenoemde mengsel, sonder die sand, uitstekend goeie resultate lewer, en word dus aanbeveel omdat dit goedkoop is as die ander mengsel. Die as moenie geef word nie sodat daar fyn stof kan wees om met die kalk te meng.

'n Derde groep huise is gebou met 'n mengsel bestaande uit 8 dele growwe riviersand en 1 deel kalk. Hier was ook fyn stof by

om met die kalk te bind. Hierdie huise lyk stewiger as die ander, maar hulle is nog nie lank genoeg opgerig om 'n opinie oor uit te spreek nie.

Die mengsel moet baie nat aangemaak word. Die moet so nat wees dat warmte die mengsel in die vorm gegooi word die vanself moet wegloop. Hoe meer water daarby is, hoe gladder en harder is die muur. Die mengsel kan op die grond goed natgemaak word, en dan word tog water in die vorm bygevoeg, of dit kan op die grond net effens natgemaak word en die meeste water kan dan in die vorm bygevoeg word. Eersgenoemde metode word verkies. Dit is nie nodig om die mengsel in te suur nie, maar sodra dit aangemaak is, word dit in die kaste gegooi en gelaat om te set. Dit neem gewoonlik 45 tot 60 minute. Verwyder die planke, en dan is die muur gereed vir die volgende laag.

Sorg egter dat geen hout in die muur kom nie, want die hout owl uit en as dit weer droog word, laat dit die muur bars. Ysterklip of draad wat nodig is, kan met veiligheid gebruik word. Waar knye ingestuit word, is dit altyd beter om 'n bietjie sement daaragter te sit, want die mengsel is geneig om weg te trek as dit droog word.

Die bou van die huise is dus heel eenvoudig. Daar is nie geskoolde arbeid voor nodig nie. Hierdie metode van bou behoort dus byval te vind by pluimveeboere waar die materiaal maklik verkrygbaar is. As goeie deel kan word volgens die resultate van 2½ jaar—wat nog maar 'n kort tydjie is in die lewe van 'n pluimveehuis—dan kan hierdie huise met veiligheid aanbeveel word.—(Uit „Boerdery in Suid-Afrika.” Ons is dankverskuldig aan die Staatsdrukker, Pretoria, vir die bygaande drukplaat.—Redakteur S.A.P.V. Bulletin.)



Fig. 3.—Die kluimgeboude huis.

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Progeny Testing.

By M. S. PEASE, M.A., School of Agriculture,
Cambridge.

We are told that "like breeds like"; but if it were merely a matter of like breeding like, breeding for egg yield would be relatively very simple. We could select by performance and we might expect egg yield to go up progressively.

With the advent of trapnesting that notion was put to the test; in the '90's Pearl and Surface in America commenced trapping and breeding from the best birds; they found that at first, starting with a flock laying about 100 eggs per annum, the rises took them very quickly up to a flock average of 160, but that further selecting on these lines got them no further.

That was the classical case showing, when you are dealing with problems like egg yield, there are difficulties. Firstly, like does not always breed like, and secondly you are faced with the unknown fifty per cent. each time in the problem of the potential egg yield of the male. The same problem arises with dairy cattle and around that a great controversy has arisen. When one looks at what has been written about the problem of the dairy bull, there is very little certainty that one can put one's finger on what the practical man craves for, namely, some sort of numerical index of breeding worth that could be attached to a bull. All attempts to do so have failed to stand the test of practical criticism.

I am inclined to think that the same thing is true of cocks in poultry. In America the attempt has been made to calculate such an index for cocks, but I do not think it is worth very much for the practical breeder.

There are, however, two simple cases where the progeny test is infallible, and here this test might be used a great deal more than it is by pedigree breeders. Where you are dealing with a simple Mendelian factor such as white shank and yellow shank the only test for determining whether a bird with white shanks will breed true or not is by progeny testing. The test is to mate him with some yellow-shanked birds. If you get six chicks with white shanks and none with yellow, you can feel reasonably certain that the bird will breed true for white shanks and that you can safely use it in the breeding pen. The progeny test should be applied much more by pedigree breeders for simple cases like white and yellow shanks or for rose combs and single combs.

There is also the case of the Cuckoo and the Plymouth Rock, in which the sex-linked barring factor can be tested, so as to avoid the black pullets. The females can only be barred or unbarred; you cannot have any of the covering up as there is in the male. Generally speaking, you cannot tell whether the male Barring Rock is pure or not; the progeny test is to mate him with unbarred females. The pure cock will give you nothing but barred birds and the impure one will give you half and half. These tests are infallible, quite easy and quite simple, and one wishes that every character were equally simple to deal with.

With regard to the problem of egg yield, it is stated, even by quite competent poultry experts, that the breeding worth of a hen is obvious because it is measured by her egg yield. Now I believe that the statement is true where there is a low level of production, but in practical poultry keeping we are not concerned with edging up the yield by another twenty eggs per bird when we are dealing with birds laying about 200 eggs. There I think we are up against a much more difficult and much more subtle problem.

Now three or four years ago, Dr. Morley Jull, the great American authority on poultry, published some very interesting results indeed on this aspect of the problem. His figures have been curiously overlooked in this country, but they have a very important bearing on the difficulty we have to face. Jull considered the question of progeny testing where you are dealing with 200-egg birds. His figures relate to 10 sires, 128 dams, and about 1,000 birds, all of which were hatched from dams which laid over 200 eggs, while the cocks were also from such dams, all R.I.R., trapnested, and controlled under strictly equal conditions over the three years to which these figures relate. You see in Table I, a cock A was mated to a bunch of females whose average egg production was 223 and the egg production of the daughters was 218. Cock B was mated to a bunch of females whose average egg production was 244, while the average egg production of the daughters dropped to 171. Cock C's mates averaged 246 while the production of the daughters dropped to 200 eggs. Obviously, then, cocks B and C had failed to pass on the factor of egg production.

TABLE I.

	SIRE	DAMS		SISTERS		
		Above	Below	Above	Below	
Sire	A B C	A	215	222	206	226
Dam		D	190	204	192	203
Daughters		E	204	215	213	208
		F	215	175	198	197
		G	199	194	194	198

Then Jull asked himself: Can we eliminate the influence of the male and evaluate the influence of the female? That can be done in this way:—Take the bunch of females to which your cock is mated; the average egg yield, of course, is a certain figure which some of the individual figures will be above and some below. In the case of sire A those whose egg yield was below the average the production of the daughters was 222. If you assume that sire A produces the same effect on both groups of females then, in that way, by comparing, you eliminate the influence of the sire and you get a comparison which shows the effect of the females.

You will see sometimes the dams which were above the average gave better results and sometimes rather inferior results; but at any rate there is not very much support for the notion that at a high rate of production we should use for breeding birds with an egg production above the average. The conclusion is that the dam's

actual egg yield is no guide to her worth as a breeder of egg producers; nor is the average production of her full sisters, at that high level of production.

TABLE II.

Dam	Egg Yield	Mated to Cock	Average Daughters' Yield	Sires subsequently mated to	Egg Yield
A	246	P	189	L	241
B	245	Q	223	M	201
C	230	R	192	N	210
D	210	R	178	N	169

So much for the factor of the dam. What about the factor of the male? Let us take four cases from July.

It is quite obvious that when each of dams C and D were mated to the same sire, the sire R depressed both of their egg yields very much. In the case of sire R the daughters of D suffered the greatest depression. The effect of looking at the full table is that it is very difficult at that high level of production to make any rule about the sire. Some strains seem to be better than others but they bear very little relationship to the origin of the sire.

(To be continued)

Drie Nuwe Pluimveeklubs in die Vrystaat Gestig.

Gedurende November het die Sekretaris van die Vereniging 'n toer van 'n gedeelte van die Vrystaat gemaak.

Nuwe pluimveeklubs is gestig op Frankfort, Lindley en Winburg en hulle behoort in staat te wees om voor die einde van hierdie jaar by die Vereniging aan te sluit.

Daar is ook die moontlikheid dat 'n verdere klub op Fouriesburg gestig sal word, en ons sien uit daarna. Dit is met spyt dat dit nie moontlik was vir die Sekretaris om 'n vergadering aldaar toe te spreek nie, maar dit sou 'n voorsigtige reisplan ontwing het.

Algemene vergaderings is ook toegesproek op Reitz, Bethlehem en Marquard en die betrokke klubs het die vergaderings behê.

Op al die dorpe was daar 'n goedsdriftige gehoor en die opname was bevredigend.

Dit is duidelik dat pluimveetoere dit noodsaaklik vind dat hulle organiseer en dat hulle graag die Vereniging in sy pogings wil ondersteun om hulle self te beskerm.

Die Sekretaris het ook op uitnodiging die komitee vergadering van die Bloerfontein Pluimveeclub bygewoon.

Aan al diegene wie bygedra het tot die sukses van die toer is die Vereniging dank verskuldig.

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POULTRY AT THE LAYING TESTS.

"The letter written by Mr. P. H. Duranty in your November issue was very interesting to me, and I noticed that he was wondering why good layers had been turned down at the Tests for small and slight peeping. Another poultry farmer of my acquaintance wonders why his hen was disqualified for white on earlobe. There are also arguments about eye colour, feather colouring, etc., and so on.

"Now I am wondering whether it would not be better to have egg-laying competitions solely to find out which are the best layers, and which I presume was the original idea when these Tests were first started. Handsome is as handsome does, and the first hen that I produce to lay 340 eggs in a full year will receive my admiration for as long as she lives, and her show points will be of a secondary consideration. I have won hundreds of prizes with poultry and pigeons, and I am quite positive that their show points and utility points do not make a perfect blend. There are very few layers in existence that have won championships in both departments. But why worry about show points at all for Utility White Leghorns or Rhode Island Reds, which are kept purely as a commercial proposition. For instance, there must be approximately a hundred thousand Utility White Leghorns and Rhode Island Reds in Natal alone, and the majority of their owners don't care a tinker's cuss about showing; but presuming that all these thousands of laying hens were capable of winning prizes at Shows, I wonder how many prizes are available for them and what is the total value in South Africa. I mean in real cash, the stuff that poultry farmers require to pay their living expenses with (trophies ignored). Would £100 cover the total, or even £50, and yet we have Government officials disqualifying the best layers in South Africa as proved at the Tests and advocating the brooding of White Leghorns and Rhode Island Reds to a standard which would probably be sacrificing millions of eggs per year. They seem to ignore the fact that South Africa exports eggs and not levels.

"To brood for show points and to discard our best layers merely because of trifling faults could easily lose from ten to thirty eggs per bird, and one hundred thousand hens each laying ten eggs less is a million eggs lost in Natal alone. What stupendous folly to insist on Poultry Farmers sacrificing a million eggs or more worth about £5,000 for the problematical chance of sharing in the £50 or £100 of prize-money, thus throwing away the substance for the shadow. My advice to commercial poultry farmers is to brood from their best layers and leave the brooding of show birds (which is really a hobby) to the showmen. A 340-egg hen cannot be a bad colour nor can she have serious faults, and she has positively got stamina, vitality and a splendid machine inside her body. The same remark applies to the world's record milking cow. Would this cow be disqualified for body colour or eye colour?

Ask any intelligent farmer if he would like a son of this champion to breed from. I have heard it said that a good horse cannot be a bad colour. They win races in all colours, shapes and sizes, and the Wonder Horse, "The Tetrach," was the most peculiar colour of all, but wasn't disqualified either for racing or for breeding. Then take athletes, they win races and make new records, having various colours in eyes, hair and skin, but a record breaker is a champion regardless of colour in his make-up, and I ask, why should it be necessary to breed fowls to a standard, which are kept purely for laying purposes.

"I have always contended that judging to a standard is really judging by comparison, because each judge would have a different interpretation on some of the points, and to prove that I am right I will give £5 to any two judges who will adjudicate on a White Leghorn and a Rhode Island Red in my presence and providing that they both make the same allowance for each point and show the same total.

"I am sure that there can be no serious fault about any hen that has laid 300 eggs in 365 days, and furthermore, the South African Utility White Leghorn has no superior in any country, and it has become so without having Government officials disqualifying the winning pens in the past. Poultry farmers cannot make a living out of brooding show birds in South Africa, but they can make a living if they ignore a show standard and only breed from their best layers. Struggling poultry farmers cannot afford to ignore their best layers for trifling faults, and I would suggest that the proper place to test out these theories is at the Government Institutions. If it is thought they can develop a strain of layers capable of winning a Laying Test and then to win first prize in the show pen, let them give us practical proof. Even if they are successful, I again ask, where are the shows with sufficient prize-money to make it worth while to sacrifice an average of ten to twenty eggs per bird. I, and several others, are not very keen on paying £2, loosing five pellets, and paying railage charges, knowing that the best laying pen may be disqualified at the last moment. When a pen has once been accepted there should be no disqualifications for defects caused through heavy production, such as light eye, white in earlobe, or change of colour to a lighter shade in Rhode Island Reds.

"The following facts will show what a grave injustice was done to the leading pen of Rhode Island Reds at the Glen Test, the property of Ardenlee Poultry Farm. This pen, No. 89, held a clear lead of 33 eggs at the end of the 11th period with a total of 884 A eggs, but when the final report arrived Pen 89 had been reduced to fourth position with a total of 786. Advancing backwards, as it were, the officials had brought about this result by simply disqualifying hen No. 443 with a total of 241 A eggs and substituting hen 444, an egg-eater, with a total of 68. What made other competitors more confounded was the fact that no explanation was given in the report as to how this result

was brought about, and of course any person not in the know would get a wrong impression of the laying ability of the birds; and now, to prove the injustice and stupidity of this disqualification, since hen No. 443 moulted and rested after the Test, there is hardly a trace of white in earlobe. She is a fine heavy bird, and has proved herself to be one of the best breeders in the country by producing 67 fine chickens during the breeding season, and all experienced breeders will agree that this was an exceptional performance for any hen to achieve in the year immediately following a good Test record.

"The same kind of injustice was meted out to the best pen in the Light Bred section. The White Leghorns in pen 40, owned by the Redfern Poultry Farm, laid a total of 900 A eggs, but one hen was disqualified because she had one small feather, slightly larger than a pin head, between her toes, and this reduced the pen to the fifth position. This really means that the men who agreed to the disqualification were in favour of the owner using his worst hen as a breeder and that a better laying hen was not good enough, and it must not be overlooked that the other top notch laying hens competing in the same pens were penalised and reduced in position on account of the trifling fault of one hen. The important point that all competitors must bear in mind is, that it may be their turn next to be disqualified.

"There are lots of little faults that can be found if one looks close enough for them, such as a tawny spot of red on a white earlobe, faulty eyes in an Australorp, and so on.

"Previous to these disqualifications I was always under the impression that Governments choose their representatives from men who had proved their ability as experts through their outstanding successes in the departments they are going to represent, otherwise how can they instruct ordinary persons how to make a success of their business. If they continue the disqualifying of some of the best laying hens in South Africa, it is inevitable that the poultry industry will decline. The man who pays the paper should call the tune, and my opinion as a competitor is, that the competitors themselves are the proper persons to decide on the faults which merit disqualification. The majority of competitors at Laying Tests are experienced breeders, and are much more capable to decide than theorists, who have probably obtained most of their knowledge in Colleges. If the Government really wishes to improve the poultry industry, I suggest that it takes all their poultry experts from lecturing for as long as necessary (and especially those who tell us that disinfectants are so much rubbish and useless) and to start them right away on the job of eradicating B.W.D., taking the country in sections and doing a thorough job of it, because to have poultry farms clear of B.W.D. just here and there and to leave out the neighbouring flocks, is so much waste of time and useless. For a complete success the clearing of B.W.D. must be made compulsory, and finally the poultry farmer should be able to buy his poultry food at lower prices. If the Government carry out these suggestions, the Poultry Industry will boom, and Poultry Farmers will not find it necessary to ask for subsidies. However, if these officials insist on making disqualifications for trifling faults there

are several remedies which might improve matters. For instance, there are M.P.'s who would be glad of the opportunity to ask pertinent questions if we gave them a few facts and figures similar to those enumerated herewith, or we could leave the Government Tests entirely alone and let them stew in their own juice, so to speak. At any rate, these are ways and means if we go about it right."

A. BEARDSLEY.

Bellair, Natal.

(EDITORIAL NOTE.—The above views are interesting, but naturally those of the writer. They are pointed to see what support other breeders will give to the points in question. It would be well, however, to point out that the Government runs all but one laying test in the Union, and have the right to make their own regulations. These have been made in collaboration with the Central Board of the S.A. Poultry Association on the understanding that the laying tests in the Union should be a test for future breeders of recognised breeds of hens. The standards for these hens are those laid down by breed clubs, and in South Africa cover the S.A. White Leghorns which is a type capable of high production and true to standard. It is a fact that numerous breeders can show both successes on laying tests and on the bench in White Leghorns and Australorps. In addition, the Breeders Register have their section at Glen restricted to members and again here, or for birds on open competition which breeders desire to be entered for the register, the rules laid down by that body must govern the birds concerned. If standards are not enforced deterioration must set in, as has been the case overseas, and "mongrels" capable of high egg production would be just as eligible to compete.)

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Constantia, C.P.

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