

DEPARTMENTAL NOTES

LAYING RECORDS OF PULLETS HATCHED FROM EGGS IMPORTED BY AIR MAIL

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IN *The Tropical Agriculturist*, July, 1939, the hatching results from a batch of 24 eggs imported from Great Britain by Air Mail were reported.

Of the 16 chickens hatched all were reared to maturity. Eight proved to be chickens and eight pullets.

The pullets are a particularly vigorous lot indeed; they have proved to be rather too precocious. This is possibly due to the warm climate. Before they had reached the age of 5 months most of them showed signs that they would start to lay before long. As this was an unduly early age for Rhode Island Reds to start laying, efforts were made to check them so that they would have more time to mature and grow before starting to lay. These efforts took the shape of shifting their quarters from time to time and omitting all mash from the ration giving them only grain. The object was to try to prevent them laying until they were 7 months old. These measures did not prove fully effective. One bird started to lay in October when she was only 5 months old; two others early in November when they were only 5½ months old; four others later in November and early in December when they were from 6 to 6½ months old. One bird did not start laying until February when she was just 8 months old.

Their laying records up to the end of May, 1940, have been extremely good and are given below. They show no signs of a slackening in egg production. Indeed one pullet, No. 19, has laid 29 eggs in the month of May. On account of the rather early age at which they started to lay, the eggs were at first rather small but have improved and are now of good average size. As will be seen from the table every one of these eight pullets has put up a creditable record. The poorest layer is No. 22 with a total of 112 eggs in 183 days or 61 per cent. of the possible. Thus 19 and 20 are running neck to neck for the first place. No. 19 has laid 163 eggs in 201 days or 81 per cent., while No. 20 has laid 158 eggs in 197 days or 80 per cent.

Egg Production up to May 31, 1940

No. of pullet.	Date first egg.	Age when first egg was laid.	No. of days in lay.	No. of eggs.	Percentage
16	.. 26·10·39..	5 months	.. 219..	153..	69·8
17	.. 3· 2·40..	8 months	.. 119..	95	79·8
18	.. 8·11·39..	5½ months	.. 206..	141..	68·4
19	.. 13·11·39..	5½ months	.. 201..	163..	81·1
20	.. 17·11·39..	6 months	.. 197..	158..	80·2
21	.. 20·11·39..	6 months	.. 194..	143..	73·7
22	.. 1·12·39..	6 months	.. 183..	112..	61·2
23	.. 11·12·39..	6½ months	.. 173..	129..	74·5