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HOMEMAKERS' CHAT

WEDNESDAY, June 4, 1941.

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Question Box
How produce more eggs?
How meet tick danger?
When remove ham rind?

Answers: from poultry specialists,
entomologists, and home econ-
omists of the U.S. Department of
Agriculture

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It's Thursday again, with the usual variety of questions in the mail bag-- how to get hens to lay more eggs,-- what precautions to take against wood ticks-- and whether or not to leave the rind on a ham when you cook it. The answers are from different specialists in the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

Homemakers in all parts of the country are asking how they can help in the defense program. One of the best ways, of course, is to see that the family has plenty of the right kinds of food. And among the "right kinds", eggs come high on the list.

Like our first correspondent today, you have heard of the drive for more eggs as a defense measure. While the demand is partly for eggs to be sent abroad and partly for defense workers here at home, it also includes eating more eggs right on the farm in the interest of better family nutrition. And that brings us to our first question:

"How can we get the hens to lay more eggs, particularly in July and August?"

Here's what the poultry specialists of the Department say:

In the first place, although egg laying usually begins to drop off in June, you can enable the hens to maintain a fairly good rate of production through the summer if you feed them a good laying mash and feed it liberally. On many farms, people feed no mash and only a little grain, and depend too much on their chickens' foraging for themselves.

If you use both mash and grains, feed about one and one-half to two parts of mash to one part of grains for the summer laying diet. The more feed a hen eats above what she needs to keep going, the more material she has for making eggs.

Feed supplies are plentiful just now, and prices are moderate. If you want to use home-grown grains in making your laying mash, buy a good ready-mixed concentrate and use it in the proportion recommended by the manufacturer. You can also get good egg production by feeding surplus skim milk or buttermilk along with the home-grown grains. If you keep the flock on grass range in summer, the green feed helps to keep the hens in good condition. Don't overlook their need for plenty of fresh clean water. Remember an egg is about 65 percent water, so the hens need plenty of water.

You can get more detailed information on feeding chickens from your State Extension Service or from the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

Now we'll switch from national defense to defense of a personal nature. The subject of our next letter is defense against common dog ticks or wood ticks. As you know, ticks are numerous in overgrown, wooded regions up to about August first, and many questions have come in lately about them. For example, are dog ticks dangerous to human beings? Is it true that ticks carry Rocky Mountain spotted fever in other places than the Western States? If a tick bites your child what should you do?

The Department's entomologists say that ticks on dogs do not invariably carry disease, but often they do. In any case it is not good for a dog's vitality to be infested by ticks. So get them off, either by picking them off individually with tweezers, or by giving the dog a derris dip. You make the dip by dissolving 2 ounces of fine derris powder containing at least 3 percent rotenone and 1 ounce of neutral soap in a gallon of tepid water. Put the dog in a tub containing the dip, or brush it on thoroughly. Let the dip dry on the dog. If it is not

convenient to dip the dog, dust him with derris powder. Do not permit the powder or dip to get into the dog's eyes.

Unfortunately it is true that cases of Rocky Mountain spotted fever have been reported from States in every part of the country. This dreaded disease is spread through tick bites. Tularemia, or rabbit fever, can also be spread by ticks. The tick first bites some small wood animal that has one of these diseases, and then bites a human being. However, a tick usually feeds from 6 to 8 hours before producing Rocky Mountain spotted fever, so if you get the ticks off your child or yourself promptly no harm may result from tick bites. Only a few of the ticks that get on people in the woods or from dogs carry disease germs, but it's well to take thorough precautions. To be on the safe side, always use tweezers in removing ticks by hand. Avoid crushing ticks with the fingers.

Look for ticks especially at the base of the hairline on the neck, and under the clothing. If you find ticks, after removing them touch the spots with a solution of carbolic acid, silver nitrate, or iodine. For further information on ticks write to the Bureau of Entomology and Plant Quarantine.

Now we turn from out-doors to an indoor problem. "When you cook a ham, should you take the rind off first?" Home economists of the Department say to leave the rind on the ham until after it's baked or boiled. If the ham is to be served hot, take the rind off hot--otherwise leave it on until the ham is cold.

On a baked ham the rind gets hard and stiff, but you can lift it right off a hot ham if you loosen it first at the shank end. A little more work is required to take the rind off a cold ham without tearing the fat.

To pretty up the ham before serving, you can criss-cross the fat with a knife while the ham's hot, for a quick way of making a top dressing. Sprinkle the ham with brown sugar, stud it with whole cloves, and maybe add some slices of pineapple or some candied cherries. Brown to a delicate golden color. Let the ham cool a little before carving and the slices won't be so likely to fall apart.

Another good "topping" is made with bread crumbs and brown sugar moistened with cider or vinegar. It is better to let the ham chill before putting on this dressing. After spreading it over the hot surface, stud with whole cloves. Brown the coated ham in a hot oven for 10 to 15 minutes.

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