Feed Consumption of Broad Breasted Bronze Turkey Breeding Stock

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As feed is the principal item of expense in the production of turkey hatching eggs, data on feed consumption of turkey breeding stock should be of interest to those who contemplate keeping a flock of turkey breeders.

The data presented in Table 1 have particular significance in that no mortality was experienced in the female stock. One tom died during the early part of the wintering period. During the wintering period, November 8 to January 2, the hens were fed mash and grain ad libitum in separate hoppers. During the breeding season, January 3 to May 31, the mash was available all the time but grain feed was restricted to 4 to 4½ ounces per bird per day. This was done to encourage the hens to eat the mash which contains many of the nutrients that influence egg production and hatchability. Artificial lighting was commenced January 2. All birds were Broad Breasted Bronze hatched May 1, 1945 from the station flock.

The data for the wintering period are based on 59 hens and 11 toms which were kept separately. The data for the breeding season are from 44 hens and four toms in the breeding flock and six additional toms housed in a separate house.

It is of interest to note how little mash the hens ate during the wintering period when they had free access to grain. Whether or not it is necessary to restrict the grain during the laying season we cannot say. Other investigators have reported good results when turkey breeders were fed mash and grain free choice. To May 31 the 44 hens in this flock produced 81 eggs and 51 poults per hen.

The hens ate only 59 percent as much feed as the toms during the wintering period and 67 percent as much during the breeding season. The amounts of feed consumed per hen per day during the wintering and breeding periods were .66 and .59 pounds, respectively. The toms ate 1.11 pounds daily during the wintering period and .82 pounds daily during the breeding season. During the wintering period the average weight of the hens increased from 15.0 to 18.5 pounds and that of the toms from 23.4 to 31.3 pounds. These increases in weight during the wintering period while the birds were still growing was probably largely responsible for the greater feed consumption during the wintering period.

Summary

Broad Breasted Bronze turkey hens ate 37.1 pounds of feed per

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hen during the wintering period of November 8 to January 2 and 87.7 pounds during the breeding season, January 3 to May 31. Toms consumed 62.4 and 122.5 pounds of feed for the two periods respectively.

Feed Consumption of Broad Breasted Bronze Turkey Breeders

		Pounds of Feed Per Bird		
	Wintering	Period	Breeding Season	Total
		Lbs.	Lbs.	Lbs.
Hens	Mash	6.4	51.1	57.5
	Grain	30.7	36.6	67.3
	Total	37.1	87.7*	124.8
Toms	Mash	18.8	45.9	64.7
	Grain	43.6	76.6	120.2
	Total	62.4	122.5	184.9
Flock 44 hens + 4 toms	Mash		52.8	
	Grain	.....	37.8	.....
	Total		90.6	

*Calculated from data for flock assuming the toms in the flock ate the same total amount of feed as the separated toms.

KNOW YOUR BARLEY—A REVIEW

If you want to know your barley, you will find Technical Bulletin No. 907, U. S. Department of Agriculture (May, 1946), entitled "Classification of Barley Varieties Grown in the United States and Canada in 1945," a handbook of valuable information. The authors are Ewert Aberg, a Swedish agronomist, and G. A. Wiebe, Principal Agronomist, Division of Cereal Crops and Diseases, B.P.I, S., & A.E., USDA. The North Dakota Agricultural Experiment Station was one of the experiment stations which cooperated by maintaining barley classification nurseries. The authors have included a key for the Identification of Varieties from the threshed grain, a difficult task. This key is based upon two groups of characters: (1) kernel characters, and (2) spike characters which may or may not be observable in the threshed grain—this second group includes characters of the awn, glume, hood, rachis, etc. This second group of characters will, of course, be more easily noted in a sample of poorly threshed grain.

A large section of the bulletin is given to a complete botanical description of each variety and a brief summary of its history and distribution. The index deserves special commendation, for it furnishes recognized names of varieties, synonyms used in naming varieties, the C.I. number, the Station number, the type as to winter, spring and a classification as to commercial use, breeding material, or special interest.

The bulletin is illustrated with 92 splendid original illustrations, mostly from unusually good photographs.

Technical Bulletin No. 907 should be an indispensable handbook for the teacher of farm crops, for the seedsman who wants to keep himself informed, for seed laboratories, and for plant breeders. (Reviewed by H. L. Walster.)