



# Poultry Patter

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## GOOD SANITATION IS NECESSARY FOR SUCCESS

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Many factors contribute to the success of an egg producer. One of these is attention to details.

Two details very often neglected on our poultry farms are the supply of clean water and the proper disposal of dead birds.

### CLEAN WATER

Except for air, water is the most essential nutrient taken in by the bird. Nearly two-thirds of the egg is water. A constant supply of water is needed to carry on body functions. Water is cheap and easy to supply, but often very little thought is given to the water our chickens drink.

Since chickens do not perspire, they must keep cool by breathing. On hot days about 50 percent of the water they drink is evaporated in the air sacs to help maintain their body temperature.

All living things need water to survive. This includes disease organisms. Because of this the water trough is one place where these organisms can live and multiply outside the body of the bird. Therefore it is essential that the water birds drink is clean and as free of disease organisms as possible.

Cleaning waterers is an important detail that must be done regularly. This means every day. It involves more than merely rinsing; it requires washing and disinfecting the water fountain or troughs. On many automatic systems the float valve is covered. This area around the float is an excellent place for disease organisms to multiply and contaminate the drinking water. Don't overlook this danger point in your regular sanitation program.

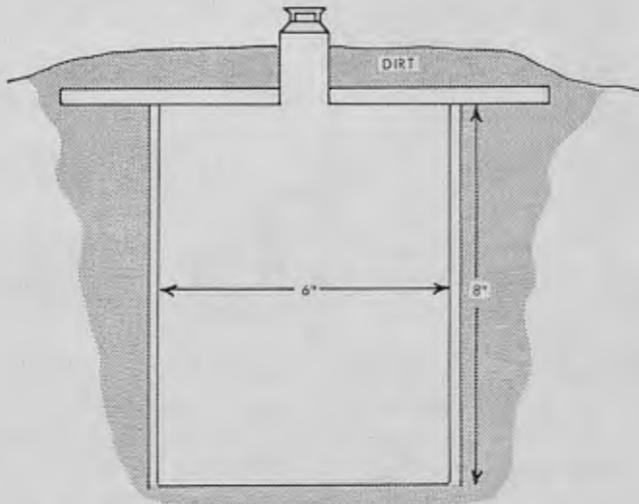
### DISPOSAL OF DEAD BIRDS

Disposal of dead birds is another detail that is badly neglected on many poultry farms. It is a real nuisance to find the spade and dig a hole to bury an individual bird or two. It is much easier to lay the carcass behind the house out of sight or throw it on the manure pile or in the spreader. But the bird most likely died because of some disease. The dead carcass can harbor many diseases until it has lost its moisture. These birds are often eaten and carried from farm to farm by dogs or cats, and even wild birds and animals. As dead birds are moved they carry their disease organisms with them. How can this problem best be solved?

In areas where shallow wells are used or where the water level is very close to the surface it may be wise to burn dead birds. This is the most sanitary method if the carcass is completely burned. Commercial incinerators are available and will do an excellent job. The main disadvantage is the fuel cost when only a few birds are involved.



The disposal of dead birds can be made very simple by constructing a pit. Build it on a high or well-drained area, yet conveniently located so as to make it easy to dispose of dead birds as soon as they are found.



This pit can be any size, but a hole 6 x 6 feet and 8 feet deep will take care of a flock of 3,000 to 5,000 birds of normal mortality. In this type of a pit decomposition is very slow, yet it is fast enough to take care of the day-to-day death loss. To prevent a cave-in, the pit must be lined with something that will resist decay. Treated planks spaced 2 inches apart are very desirable. Space between the planks is necessary to allow for seepage. This pit can also be built of concrete blocks laid on their sides to permit seepage through the holes in the blocks. A regular cesspool works very satisfactorily, too.

The cover must be tight. Four inches of reinforced concrete with an opening and a tight cover is good. An old milk can with the bottom taken out makes a good neck and the cover is tight. The milk-can opening is about right size to accept birds, yet it is almost impossible for small children to fall through. A low, large opening could be dangerous.

Certain digesters are now available to help speed up the natural process of decomposition. These digesters require water. So if you plan to use digesters, build your pit with a waterproof bottom and tight sides 18 to 24 inches above the floor. Seepage takes place in the upper part of the pit. Therefore the top of the pit is built the same as described previously. Be sure to read the instruction on the particular digester that you buy and build your pit according to specified directions.

#### FLY CONTROL

At this time of the year flies become a real problem. Treated fly cords are a real help if they are hung in the poultry house close to the ceiling so they will not tempt chickens to roost on them. Commercially treated cords soaked with Diazinon, Korlan, or Parathion should be used at the rate of 300 feet per 1,000 square feet of floor area. If you want more information write your county agent for Entomology Fact Sheet No. 17. Insect Pests of Poultry.



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