

# FRANK'S FEEDER

by Frank Miser

## SPECIAL CARE FOR YOUR NEW BIRD

A great many birds on the market today come into our country through quarantine stations. We're fortunate to get the birds and should do all we can to keep them alive. The highest death rate occurs during the first part of quarantine and during the first two weeks after the birds are released from quarantine. There are a few general rules that apply to most of the birds that come through the station, that is, canaries, finches, and parrots.

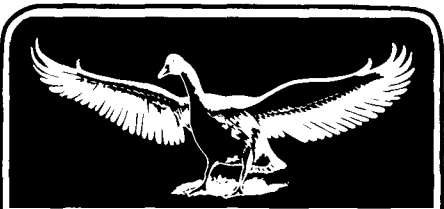
**Canaries:** Because of the high price, canary pox, and air-sac mites, I do not recommend placing your new canaries in an outdoor aviary. Keep your bird in the house and check him for thinness, molting, and damaged feathers. If any of these problems are present place the bird in a cage on a heating pad at medium temperature. Put vitamins and antibiotics in the drinking water. Put plenty of good seed on the cage floor and in the seed cups. If wing or tail feathers are broken, pluck them during this special care period. If the bird is molting continue the special care until the molt is over. Each morning you can feed a goodly amount of hardboiled egg yolk mixed with dried bread crumbs. This care and diet should bring the canary into condition quickly.

**Finches:** Finches that used to sell for \$7.50 a pair now cost about \$75.00 a pair so we no longer want to accept a ten percent loss of finches. The first thing you should do is to carefully select the finches you want and separate the hardy ones from the delicate ones. The hardy birds may be placed into a warm outdoor aviary. Those more delicate should be treated like the canaries just mentioned. No matter where you house the finches it is most important to inspect them each evening. See if they are happy, healthy, and sleek in feather. If you notice one all puffed up either on a perch or on the

floor you must quickly place it in a small, very warm, well lighted cage. It should be fed top grade seed, spray millet, cuttle-bone and fresh water.

Parrots, large or small, can be kept in outdoor aviaries or small cages inside. It depends on the type of bird and its condition, health, and flight ability. You should find out what sort of food the parrot is used to so you can continue the same diet. You may gradually modify the diet until the bird has adapted to what you choose to feed it. In quarantine some of the birds are fed mash, cooked corn, cooked rice, cooked chicken scratch, or some other soft foods. These soft foods should be continued until other foods including hard seeds are eaten readily and the soft food is refused. During quarantine, parrots are sometimes given almost too much antibiotics. This can lead to a crop mold condition which will inhibit the birds eating. To correct this problem I use N.F.Z. and a copper sulphate solution in the drinking water for five days. The N.F.Z. directions are on the package. The copper sulphate is mixed with water (4 ounces to a quart of water). If the solution is cloudy or settles, add one ounce of vinegar. This is a stock solution. Do not give it to your birds as is. This solution must not come in contact with any metal. Store it in glass or crockery containers. For drinking water take one tablespoon of the copper sulphate solution and add it to one gallon of the NFZ mixed drinking water. Fresh apples, oranges, celery or other fruit should be given to parrots daily, but not to excess.

Any abnormally high rate of death among your birds is cause for concern. The dead birds should be taken to a good veterinarian or the State Veterinarian Services Laboratory for necropsy.



*Ken McConnell*

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