



# The Poultry Informed Professional



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## Food For Thought

Last May's issue of *the Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association (JAVMA)* had an article titled: **Drugs and biologicals are not a substitute for effective management by food animal veterinarians.** In it Dr. John B. Herrick stated that today practitioners

must strongly use the facets of production—namely nutrition, genetics, environment, and husbandry practices—to support their health inputs. He described changes in the swine industry progressing from the concept that hogs are dirty animals to the realization that pigs reach their maximum genetic potential in sanitary and ideal environmental conditions. Furthermore, he reported that present-day biologics and pharmaceuticals are of the highest quality, yet, they can not be effective unless top-notch management principles also are involved. According to

*(continued on page 2)*

**Broiler Performance Data (Region)**  
**Live Production Cost**

	SW	Midwest	Southeast	Mid-Atlantic	S-Central
Feed cost/ton w/o color	183.21	185.00	191.66	187.54	187.25
Feed cost/lb meat	17.82	17.45	18.63	19.35	19.21
Days to 4.6 lbs	48	45	47	46	47
Med. cost/ton	4.17	3.24	4.40	3.28	2.84
Chick cost/lb	4.42	4.38	4.51	4.16	4.20
Vac-Med cost/lb	0.10	0.12	0.08	0.08	0.08
WB & 1/2 parts condemn. cost/lb.	0.27	0.28	0.25	0.25	0.40
% mortality	4.81	4.45	4.33	6.46	5.63
Sq. Ft. @ placement	0.80	0.75	0.81	0.79	0.86
Lbs./Sq.Ft.	5.69	6.40	5.81	6.45	5.98
Down time (days)	12	9	11	11	12

Data for week ending 08/29/97.

### CONTENTS

Food for Thought  
..... Pages 1, 2 and 3

Broiler Performance Data (Region)  
..... Page 1

Broiler Performance Data (Company)  
..... Page 2

Broiler Cost of Condemnations (Region)  
..... Page 2

Excerpts... "Livestock, Dairy and Poultry Situation and Outlook" (ERS USDA) and "Broiler Hatchery" and "Chicken and Eggs" (NASS USDA)  
..... Pages 3 and 4

Broiler Cost of Condemnations (Company)  
..... Page 4

Research Assistantship  
..... Page 5

AAAP Meeting, Reno NV  
..... Page 5

Meetings, Seminars and Conventions ..... Page 6

Call for News ..... Page 7

**Food For Thought**  
(continued from page 1)

Dr. Herrick, the challenge for the food animal practitioners is to recognize and use effective management practices.

The December 1995 issue of *Poultry Digest* printed an article by Mr. Ken Rudd titled: **Poultry reality check needed** in which Mr. Rudd (an industry marketing veteran) describes how the poultry industry faces a major disease crisis if present management practices continue. In this article, Mr. Rudd reflects on what we are seeing every day in the industry. He suggests we step back and assess the evolution of our standards and practices and ask ourselves if we are not opening the door to a major disease disaster. He states that virtually all changes made in the last decade have come in the guise of convenience, efficiency and mostly cost cutting. Few, if any decisions, appear to be made for the sake of poultry health, welfare, or the long term protection of the industry. He enumerates a number of changes in the industry that, as a whole, demonstrate the dangerous imbalance between cost-cutting and health-support that we have come to accept.

During the AVMA convention in Reno, Nevada, Dr. Richard Witter spoke at the tumor virus symposium on **The current and future strategies for the control of Marek's disease**. He presented evidence of the gradual increase of virulence of Marek's disease over the past 50 years and the recent isolation of highly virulent pathotypes referred to as vvMDV+. Dr. Witter proposed a paradigm based on the thesis that vaccines alone will be unsuccessful in the long run to control Marek's disease losses. This strategy depends on multiple levels of control all working together. These include minimizing early exposure by not placing birds on built-up litter, genetic selection for increased resistance to infection, and development of improved vaccines. He concluded that breeders, producers, vaccine manufacturers, and other stakeholders, including public research institutions, could share in the cost of this control strategy.

In the last two years the importance of farm hygiene and disinfection to reduce early exposure to many disease agents has become a highly controversial issue. Today, the majority of broiler breeder placements go on built-up litter. As a result, there have been increasing problems associated with early expo-

(continued on page 3)

**Broiler Performance Data (Company)**  
**Live Production Cost**

	Average Co.	Top 25%	Top 5 Co's
Feed cost/ton w/o color	188.62	184.29	181.05
Feed cost/lb meat	18.67	17.44	17.01
Days to 4.6 lbs	47	48	49
Med. cost/ton	3.77	3.21	3.50
Chick cost/lb	4.43	4.44	4.39
Vac-Med. cost/lb	0.09	0.10	0.08
WB & 1/2 parts condemnations cost/lb	0.29	0.18	0.18
% Mortality	5.24	4.14	3.74
Sq. Ft. @ placement	0.80	0.77	0.78
Lbs/Sq. Ft.	5.98	5.73	5.51
Down time (days)	11	12	14

Data for week ending 08/29/97.

**Broiler Whole Bird Condemnation (Region)**  
**Live Production Cost**

	SW	Mid-West	S. East	Mid-Atlantic	S. Central
% Septox	0.318	0.431	0.172	0.313	0.340
% Alrsac	0.100	0.060	0.216	0.148	0.301
% I.P.	0.080	0.108	0.185	0.102	0.368
% Leukosis	0.007	0.032	0.004	0.033	0.013
% Bruise	0.012	0.012	0.018	0.012	0.042
% Other	0.023	0.023	0.071	0.025	0.027
% Total	0.541	0.668	0.666	0.632	1.092
% 1/2 parts condemnations.	0.556	0.447	0.320	0.361	0.498

Data for week ending 08/29/97.

sure to Marek's disease, infectious bursal disease, chicken anemia virus, coccidias, and histomonas. **So, who is keeping track of the "savings" associated with vaccine failures, higher rates of culling and mortality, the potential damage of the immune system early in life, the cost of treatments, the potential danger of transovarian transmission of some agents, the reduced levels of maternal immunity, and the overall reduction on the birds' productive potential?**

As poultry veterinarians we know how to improve performance by improving the health status of the flocks and by minimizing the disease risks. The question is how can we convince the industry before we have a disaster? and before Mr. Ken Rudd says "I told you so."?

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***Excerpts from the Latest Economic Research Service and National Agricultural Statistics Service USDA Reports***

**"Livestock, Dairy and Poultry Situation and Outlook" (ERS)**

**"Broiler Hatchery" and "Chicken and Eggs" (NASS)**

According to Economic Research Service Reports (ERS), the U.S. economy remains very positive for the meat sector. Moderate economic growth, low inflation and stable interest rates are expected to continue through 1998. Consumption expansion has been an important part of this economic strength. Record high consumer confidence is supported by the strong growth in employment and disposable income. Economic growth is expected to slow later this year and into 1998, but decline only by a percentage point from the robust 3-4 percent year-over-year growth since last fall.

In late 1997 and 1998 per capita supplies of total red meat and poultry are expected to resume the expansion that was disrupted by high grain prices beginning in late 1995 and peaking at a record high in mid-1996.

Steady grain prices and short biological cycles will cause pork and poultry supplies to rise in 1998 and more than offset declining beef supplies, leading to record meat consumption of over 214 pounds.

***Grain Stocks to Remain Low***

The August Crop Production report indicated a U.S. corn crop of 9.276 billion bushels, down from the July estimate and slightly below last year. Projected use estimates have been reduced, but the 1997/98 ending stocks have been reduced 349 million bushels from last month to 847 million, nearly 100 million bushels below the 1996/97 estimate. The farm price of corn is expected to average \$2.50 to \$2.90 in 1997/98, still well below the \$3.24 average of 1995/96.

***Broiler Eggs Set Up 3 Percent***

The National Agricultural Statistical Service (NASS) commercial hatcheries in the 15-state weekly program set 171 million eggs in incubators during the week ending August 16, 1997. This was up 3 percent from the eggs set the corresponding week in 1996. Average hatchability for chicks hatched during the week was 81 percent.

***Broiler Chick Placements Up 2 Percent***

Broiler growers in the 15-state weekly program placed 137 million chicks for meat production during the week ending August 16, 1997, up 2 percent from the comparable week a year earlier. Cumulative

(continued on page 4)

**Excerpts from ERS & NASS USDA Reports**

*(continued from page 3)*

placements from December 29, 1996, through August 16, 1997 were 4.58 billion, 3 percent above the 4.44 billion placed during the same period last year.

**Broiler Hatch Up 4 Percent**

The July 1997 hatch of broiler-type chicks, at 709 million, was up 4 percent from July of the previous year.

Leading breeders placed 7.33 million broiler-type pullet chicks for future domestic hatchery supply flocks during July 1997, up 22 percent from July 1996.

**July Egg Production Up Slightly**

U.S. egg production totalled 6.45 billion during July 1997, up slightly from the 6.44 billion produced in 1996. Production included 5.40 billion table eggs and 1.05 billion hatching eggs, of which 989 million were broiler-type and 58.0 million were egg-type.

**Layers Up 1 Percent**

The total number of layers during July 1997 averaged 299 million, up 1 percent compared to July 1996. July egg production per 100 layers was 2,155 eggs compared with 2,180 in July 1996.

**Egg -Type Chicks Hatched Up 2 Percent**

Egg-type chicks hatched during July totalled 34.0 million, up 2 percent from July 1996. Eggs in incubators totalled 34.0 million, up 2 percent from July 1996. Eggs in incubators totalled 28.1 million on August 1, 1997, Down 3 percent from a year ago.

Domestic placement of egg-type pullet chicks for future hatchery supply flocks by leading breeders totalled 199,000 during July 1997, down 25 percent the 266,000 of July 1996.

**Broiler Whole Bird Condemnation (Company)  
Live Production Cost**

	Average Co.	Top 25%	Top 5 Co.'s
% Septox	0.296	0.228	0.202
% Airsac	0.170	0.080	0.078
% I.P.	0.158	0.077	0.042
% Leukosis	0.016	0.005	0.009
% Bruise	0.021	0.009	0.007
% Other	0.041	0.020	0.035
% Total	0.702	0.419	0.373
% 1/2 parts condemnations	0.462	0.301	0.341

Data for week ending 08/29/97.

## Research Assistantship—

### Graduate Training Position in Poultry Medicine

The Unit of Avian Medicine, Department of Microbiology, College of Veterinary Medicine at Cornell University, offers a Research Assistantship to pursue research and advanced studies leading to a PhD degree. Opportunities for training are available in *immunology, parasitology, virology* and *viral pathogenesis at the molecular and animal levels*. Preference will be given to applicants with a DVM degree and US citizenship or permanent resident status in the USA. Candidates with a BS degree and/or MS degree in *molecular biology, virology* or *immunology* are also encouraged to apply.

The award includes an initial salary ranging from \$21,525 to \$25,625/year (depending on years of relevant experience) for candidates holding the DVM degree, and \$15,451 for candidates with a BS and/or MS degree. Tuition (presently \$11,500/year) also is provided. An award is contingent on acceptance of the student by the Cornell/Graduate School as well as acceptance into the field.

The Department has excellent research facilities and resources available, including breeding flocks of specific pathogen-free chickens of known major histocompatibility antigens, virus isolation units for experimental animals, and facilities for molecular biology studies.

For additional information prospective applicants should contact: Dr. R.J. Avery, Department of Microbiology and Immunology, College of Veterinary Medicine, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853-6401. E-mail address rja5@cornell.edu; Phone (607) 253-3402, Fax (607) 253-4058.

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### Abstract, AAAP Meeting, Reno, Nevada

Dr. Dennis Wages, of the North Carolina State University College of Veterinary Medicine, presented work done at that institution entitled "Turkey flocks with high (spiking) mortality that are negative for turkey coronavirus" at the annual AAAP convention in Reno, Nevada on Tuesday, July 22nd. Turkey coronavirus has been speculated to play a role in the etiology of spiking mortality in turkeys, but its role in the disease remains uncertain. The spiking mortality of turkeys agent was recovered from four flocks through the use of sentinel birds and maintained by passage weekly to seven-day-old birds by contact. The presence of turkey coronavirus could not be confirmed even though typical stunting and effects on lymphoid organs were observed. Mortality when the disease was transmitted to turkey coronavirus negative flocks was found to be somewhat lower, less consistent, and later in onset than in turkey coronavirus positive flocks. Until the role of turkey coronavirus in the etiology of spiking mortality of turkeys is established, it was suggested that the status of turkey coronavirus be determined in birds experiencing an outbreak of spiking mortality and that the disease be referred to as turkey coronavirus positive or turkey coronavirus negative spiking mortality of turkeys.

—Abstract provided by Joel L. Cline, DVM, MAM student



# Meetings, Seminars and Conventions

## 1997 September

**September 1-5: VIIIth International Coccidiosis Conference**, Oxford University's Keble College, Oxford, UK. Contact: Drs. M.W. Shirley and F. Tomley, Institute for Animal Health, Compton Laboratory, Compton, Nr Newbury, Berks RG20 7NN, UK. Phone +44 1635 577275/6, Fax +44 1635 577263.

**September 17-18: Poultry Production and Health Seminar**, Hilton Hotel Downtown, Atlanta, GA. Contact: U.S. Poultry and Egg Assn., 1530 Cooledge Road, Tucker, GA 30084-7303. Phone (770) 493-9401, Fax (770) 493-9257.

**September 17-19: 25th Poultry Science Symposium: Poultry Meat Science**, Bristol University, UK. Contact: Dr. I. Richardson, Division of Food Animal Science, University of Bristol, Langford, Bristol, BS18 7DY, UK. Phone +44 117 928 9291, Fax +44 117 928 9324.

**September 23-24: Missouri Poultry Federation Fall Convention**, Sheraton Hawthorn Park, Springfield, MO. Contact: Johanna Derda, Missouri Poultry Federation, 225 East Capitol Ave., Jefferson City, MO 65101. Phone (573) 761-5610.

**September 23-26: XV Latin American Poultry Congress**, Convention Center, Cancun, Mexico. Contact: Union Nacional de Avicultores, Medellin 325, Col. Roma, 06760, Mexico DF, Mexico. Phone +52-5 564-9322. Fax +52-5 584 -2594.

**September 24-25: Northeast Poultry Show**, Holiday Inn, Lancaster, PA. Contact: Pennsylvania Poultry Federation, 500 N. Progress Ave., Harrisburg, PA 17109. Phone (717) 652-7530.

**September 29: Western Meeting of Poultry Clinicians and Pathologists**, Post Hotel, Lake Louise AB, Canada. Contact: Dr. Stewart Ritchie. Phone (604) 854-6600. Fax (604) 854-6100.

**September 30-October 1: Georgia Poultry Conference**, Classic Center, Athens, GA. Contact: Dr. Dan Cunningham, University of Georgia, Dept. of Poultry Science, Four Towers Building, Athens GA 30602-4356. Phone (706) 542-1352.

## 1997 October

**October 8-10: NBC Annual Conference**, Mayflower Hotel, Washington, D.C. Contact: NBC, 1155 15th St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005-2707. Phone (202) 296-2622.

**October 9: Alabama Processor Workshop**, Birmingham, AL. Contact: Alabama Poultry and Egg Association, P.O. Box 240, Montgomery, AL 36101. Phone (334) 265-2732.

**October 15-17: National Meeting on Poultry Health and Processing**, Ocean City, MD. Contact: Sharon Webb, Delmarva Poultry Industry, Rd. 6, Box 47, Georgetown, DE 19947-9662. Phone (302) 856-9037.

**October 15-17: UEP Board Meeting**, Charleston, S.C. Contact: United Egg Producers, 1303 Hightower Trail, Suite 200, Athens, GA 30350. Phone (404) 587-5871.

**October 20-22: Fourth International Symposium on Turkey Reproduction**, sponsored by North Carolina State University, Department of Poultry Science, Jane S. McKimmon Center, NCSU, Raleigh, NC. Contact: Jesse L. Grimes. Phone (919) 515-5406. Fax (919) 7070.

**October 22-23: Twenty-first Annual North Carolina Turkey Industry Days Conference**, Jane S. McKimmon Center, NCSU, Raleigh, NC. Contact: Jesse L. Grimes. Phone (919) 515-5406. Fax 515-7070.

**October 23: Albin S. Johnson Memorial Golf Tournament**, Championship Walker Course, Clemson, S.C. Contact: S.C. Poultry Federation, AT&T Building, Suite 1220, 1201 Main Street, Columbia, SC 29201. Phone (803) 748-1283.

**October 24-25: U.S. Poultry Women in Management Seminar**, Chattanooga, TN. Contact: U.S. Poultry & Egg Association, 1530 Cooledge Road, Tucker, GA 30084-7303. Phone (770) 493-9401.

**October 24-25: Kentucky Poultry Federation Annual Meeting**, University Plaza Hotel, Bowling Green, KY. Contact: Carole Knoblett, Kentucky Poultry Federation, P.O. Box 21829, Lexington, KY 40522-1829. Phone (606) 266-8375.

**October 29-30: N.C. Broiler Breeder & Hatchery Management Conference**, Statesville, N.C. Contact: Mike Wineland, Extension Poultry Science, N.C. State University, Box 7608, Raleigh, NC 27695-7608. Phone (919) 515-5529.

## 1997 November

**November 4-6: Arkansas Processors Workshop**, Clarion Inn, Fayetteville, AR. Contact: Judy Kimbrell, Arkansas Poultry Federation, P.O. Box 1446, Little Rock, AR 72203. Phone (501) 375-8131.

**November 6-7: AEB Meeting**, Nashville, TN. Contact: American Egg Board, 1460 Renaissance Drive, Park Ridge, IL 60068. Phone (708) 296-7043.

**November 13: U.S. Poultry Grain Forecast/Economic Outlook**, Atlanta, GA. Contact: U.S. Poultry & Egg Assn., 1530 Cooledge Road, Tucker, GA 30084-7303. Phone (770) 493-9401.

**November 7-19: Information and Knowledge Transfer in the Poultry Industry**, Utrecht, The Netherlands. Contact: Ir H.H.M. Zeelen, Jodichemdreef 30, 3984 JT Odijk, The Netherlands. Phone/Fax +31 30 656 3283.

**November 18: Ontario Poultry Health Conference**, Kitchener, Ontario. Contact: Ontario Poultry Council. Phone (519) 837-0284. Fax (519) 837-3584.

**November 18-21: VIV-Europe International Trade Fair on Intensive Animal Production**, Jaarbeurs, Utrecht, The Netherlands. Contact: Royal Dutch Fairs, P.O. Box 8500, 3505 RM Utrecht, The Netherlands. Phone +31 30 295 59 11, Fax +31 30 2940379.

## 1997 December

**December 3-4: CFIA Poultry Nutrition Conference**, Radisson Plaza Hotel, Charlotte, N.C. Contact: Owen Robertson, Carolina Feed Industry Assn., 2116 N. Shoreline Dr., Sanford, N.C. 27330. Phone (919) 776-3054.

## 1998 January

**January 19-20: Southern Poultry Science and Southern Conference on Avian Diseases 1998 Annual Meeting**, Georgia World Congress Center, Atlanta, GA. Contact: Gene M. Pesti, Dept. of Poultry Science, The University of Georgia, Athens, GA 30602-2772. Phone (706) 542-1351. Fax (706) 542-1827.

**January 21-23: International Poultry Expo**, Georgia World Congress Center, Atlanta, GA. Contact: U.S. Poultry & Egg Association, 1530 Cooledge Road, Tucker, GA 30084-7303. Phone (770) 493-9401.

# Call for News From the Poultry Professionals

*In order to make this a useful information tool for you and your colleagues, we need your help. Please take a moment to write down industry news or important meeting dates relating to your organization. Please be sure to include a contact name, phone and fax number for those readers needing additional detail. We would also like to initiate a personals column that would include, births, marriages, awards, etc. Thank you for your contributions.*

## Important dates or news from:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Please fax this page to Sue Clanton, Department of Avian Medicine, University of Georgia, at (706) 542-5630.**

**Also, comments may be sent to [avianmed@uga.cc.uga.edu](mailto:avianmed@uga.cc.uga.edu) via e-mail.**

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