

TRENDS

A Newsletter of the Mississippi Poultry Association

SEAN MCDONALD FINDS HIS CALLING ON THE FARM

*Ginger Rowsey, Senior Writer, FarmProgress
Published in Delta Farm Press*

There's nothing better than farm life, according to Sean McDonald.



*Sean McDonald raises broilers and cattle near Laurel, Mississippi.
He also runs custom hay and custom fertilizer businesses.*

Sean McDonald went to college with the intention of becoming a physical therapist.

Of course, life rarely goes according to plan, and McDonald's story is no different. Instead of starting a physical therapy practice, he bought a farm at the age of 21. Today, at just 30 years old, McDonald and his wife, Morgan, own eight broiler houses, run a cow-calf operation, and manage a custom hay baling business, as well as a custom fertilizer business near Laurel, Miss. He also serves as chairman of the Mississippi Poultry Association's Grower Advisory Committee.

"I've always been someone who's ready to jump in with both feet and get to work," McDonald said. "A lot of people don't understand it, and you don't see as many young people on the farm today, but I wouldn't trade it for anything."

McDonald is about as far from the screen-obsessed-Millennial stereotype as you can get. As he gave us a tour of his farm, it is apparent that the hands-on job of tending and caring for growing animals is truly a passion.

"There's something satisfying about seeing life grow before your eyes and knowing you played a part in it," McDonald said.

"The reward of farming is not monetary. It's other things you get to see and do."

WHAT'S INSIDE:

- NEW ATTEMPT TO REGULATE POULTRY FARM AIR EMISSIONS BEARS WATCHING
- READY TO RE-SET YOUR CLOCK TO BEACH TIME?
- THE SURPRISING POWER OF CHICKEN MANURE
- BROILER HOUSE LAMP AND LIGHT DIMMER BASICS
- INFECTIOUS BURSAL DISEASE: A HIDDEN ADVERSARY

continued from front cover

RUNNING A BROILER OPERATION

While the McDonald operation is diverse, the largest portion of the farm income is derived from poultry. The McDonalds grow for Wayne Farms. On the day of our visit, they had just received about 160,000 day-old chicks (roughly 20,000 per house). They'll raise each flock for approximately eight weeks getting the birds to the right market weight — around 6-8 pounds.

During that time, the growing birds are kept under a watchful eye. McDonald walks the houses every day. He also uses a Rotem Platinum Plus Environmental Controller, which allows him to closely monitor all aspects of the poultry house, including feed, water, temperature and ventilation.

After birds are transported to the plant for processing, McDonald says it is time to clean out the houses and prepare for the next flock.

"Between flocks it's all hands on deck. We can clean out all of our houses and be ready for a new flock in about 10 days," McDonald said.

That is an impressive feat when you consider that one chicken house can produce around 25 tons of litter per flock. McDonald says nothing goes to waste, with the leftover litter contributing to his growing fertilizer business.

"Poultry litter is a hot commodity. It's a good organic fertilizer. Chickens have a diverse digestive system, so it's got all the essential fertilizers packed into one. I use a lot of it on my land."

It is a labor-intensive career, but McDonald says the hardest part of the job is seeing misconceptions of poultry production spread through the media.

"We receive a lot of flack from various activist groups. None of that is true. Our birds are very well cared for, they have



Sean McDonald stands outside one of his eight broiler houses.

plenty of room and proper ventilation." He adds, "It's good practices and good genetics that produce quality meat. We're not using hormones. In fact, I think chickens are the cleanest meat you can get."

PASSING ON THE TRADITION

As an elementary teacher, Morgan McDonald has a unique platform to share the story of agriculture with her students.

Sean, too, has worked with Mississippi State students interested in careers in the poultry industry. However, he says the most important audience is his own two children.

"Probably the most rewarding part of farming is getting to raise your kids on the farm. There may be no better place to instill the value of hard work. In my opinion, there's no other way to raise a kid but on a farm."

While Sean may not have originally intended to go into poultry farming, it is in his blood. His grandparents had chicken houses. His wife grew up on the chicken farm they now own and operate. He is hopeful to pass on the tradition to the next generation.

McDonald will be the first to tell you, life doesn't always go as planned. Sometimes it turns out better. ■

MSU LOSING THREE PROFESSORS IN POULTRY SCIENCE AND AG & BIO ENGINEERING

Three MSU professors in Departments of Poultry Science and Agricultural and Biological Engineering are leaving Mississippi for other universities.

Dr. Aaron Kiess who has been part of the MSU poultry science department since 2008 is taking a position with North Carolina State University. At MSU, his appointment was split between teaching and research. He has had some a rather diverse research over the years, he has investigated issues related to litter management, fertility, pre and post-harvest food safety. Dr. Kiess is an endowed chair, focusing on hens, in his new position at NC State.

Drs. John Linhoss and his wife, Anna, are leaving the ABE department to head to Auburn University. His research focuses on improved methods for environmental control of commercial poultry houses through integration of animal physiological and behavioral responses, control of disease in poultry through environmental management, and development and testing of

precision poultry and livestock farming technologies. Dr. Linhoss has written articles in previous newsletters such as "Preparing Your House for Winter Time Conditions", "Electrical and Other Considerations to Reduce Fire Risk and Potential Losses" and "How Much Water Does Your Evaporative Cooling System Need?" ■



Dr. Aaron Kiess
Endowed
Chair
North Carolina
State University



Dr. John Linhoss
Assistant Professor
in Biosystems
Engineering
Auburn University



Dr. Anna Linhoss
Assistant Professor
in Biosystems
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2021 • Issue 2

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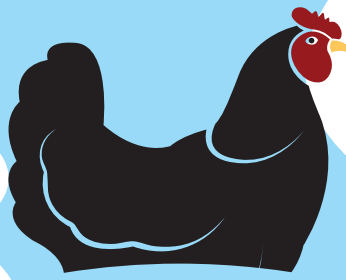
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Commercial Lending Team Leader
601-607-4402
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NEW ATTEMPT TO REGULATE POULTRY FARM AIR EMISSIONS BEARS WATCHING

John E. Milner, MPA Counsel - Brunini, Grantham, Grower & Hewes, PLLC



While water-related regulations have been a primary concern for the poultry industry ever since the Obama administration came out with its Waters of the U.S. (WOTUS) rule, new attempts to regulate air emissions on poultry farms bear watching. This article updates both air and water developments that affect the poultry industry.

AIR - NEW DEVELOPMENTS REGARDING REGULATION OF AIR EMISSIONS FROM AGRICULTURAL FACILITIES

(1) 2021 Maryland poultry farm case

An environmental group in Maryland sued that state's Department of the Environment (MDE) to require regulation of ammonia from poultry houses. On April 12, 2021, Maryland's Attorney General, Brian Frosh, filed a notice that the state would seek an appeal of the Montgomery County court decision that reversed the state's 2020 Clean Water Act discharge permit that was issued by MDE. In 2020, MDEQ had reissued its Clean Water Act discharge permit to control any potential water pollution into local waterways and the Chesapeake Bay as a result of chicken farms. A petition

for judicial review contended MDE was required to include in the permit limits to control gaseous ammonia emissions from chicken houses that may deposit in local waterways.

In March of this year, a county circuit judge in Maryland's Montgomery County issued a ruling that reversed MDE's issuance of the Clean Water Act discharge permit and remanded it to MDE to "mandate effluent limitations for ammonia and other water quality based effluent limitations." MDE's press release that addressed this court order noted that throughout the state's more than 30-year history of issuing discharge permits, MDE "has been consistent in its interpretation of federal and state law, regulating air emissions under Clean Air Act permits and not Clean Water Act discharge permits." The MDE press release further stated:

Under the Montgomery County Circuit Court ruling, MDE could be required to issue discharge permits for a broad variety of activities that generate air emissions, such as vehicles, landfills and power plants, and could be required to modify existing discharge permits for facilities such as wastewater treatment plants.

After the Maryland Attorney General's decision to appeal the Montgomery County Circuit Court's ruling, the Maryland



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John Milner serves as counsel to the Mississippi Poultry Association and has special expertise in poultry-related environmental issues. Partner Gene Wasson also has impressive abilities in the environmental sector. Partner Trey Jones has significant Environmental Litigation experience.



John E. Milner



Gene Wasson



William “Trey” Jones, III



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Free background information upon request.

Environmental Secretary, Ben Grumbles, made the following public comment:

We appreciate the Attorney General’s support in seeking to clarify the scope of our permit after the lower court’s decision. Maryland continues to be a national leader on environmental compliance and regulation. We are committed to advancing the science, stewardship and conservation practices that seek to reduce pollution from poultry houses. We are also committed to regulatory certainty in the wake of the unprecedented ruling in the lower court.

<https://nccwashingtonreport.com/2021/04/16/maryland-to-appeal-court-decision-on-air-emissions-from-animal-feeding-operations/>

While this court action takes place in the State of Maryland, depending on how it turns out, this case could have an impact in Mississippi and nationally. We will provide significant updates as they occur.

(2) 2021 national agricultural facility air quality study

In the last few months, national media have begun reporting on a “first-of-its-kind” study that purports to blame agriculture for contributing to poor air quality. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/climate-environment/2021/05/10/farm-pollution-deaths/>

The article cites a study, discussed in a May 18, 2021 research article of the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS), purports to “show how food production negatively impacts human health by increasing atmospheric fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}), and ... identify ways to reduce these negative impacts of agriculture.” The study states that it quantifies “the air quality–related health damages attributable to 95 agricultural commodities and 67 final food products, which encompass >99% of agricultural production in the United States.” The essential conclusions of the study are as follows:

Agricultural production in the United States results in 17,900 annual air quality–related deaths, 15,900 of which are from food production. Of those, 80% are attributable to animal-based foods, both directly from animal production and indirectly from growing animal feed. On-farm interventions can reduce PM_{2.5}-related mortality by 50%, including improved livestock waste management and fertilizer application practices that reduce emissions of ammonia, a secondary PM_{2.5} precursor, and improved crop and animal production practices that reduce primary PM_{2.5} emissions from tillage, field burning, livestock dust, and machinery. Dietary shifts toward more plant-based foods that maintain protein intake and other nutritional needs could reduce agricultural air quality–related mortality by 68 to 83%. In sum, improved livestock and fertilization practices, and dietary shifts could greatly decrease the health impacts of agriculture caused by its contribution to reduced air quality.

<https://www.pnas.org/content/118/20/e2013637118>

We will provide updates regarding any “traction” that this study receives as well as about other activities that focus on poultry farm air emissions regulation.

WATER - BIDEN EPA CONSIDERS RENEWING EXPANSION OF WOTUS PERMITTING SCOPE

With regard to water regulatory issues that affect the poultry industry, the long-running dispute over where federal regulation of waters originates is coming back into the limelight. The

new Biden Administration EPA is re-considering the Trump Administration EPA's restriction of the Obama WOTUS Rule, which was criticized as federal overreach and economically harmful to agriculture and industry.

At issue is the rewrite of the WOTUS Rule by the Trump EPA that drastically reduced the scope of waters protected by the federal government under the Obama-era interpretations of the Clean Water Act. The Trump EPA action angered environmentalists and President Biden's EPA is vowing to take up the WOTUS Rule again with an eye to expanding the environmental permitting scope of the Clean Water Act. EPA is undergoing a review process to determine its course of action.

Agricultural groups broadly backed new EPA Administrator Michael Regan's nomination because of his history of engaging with industry while serving as North Carolina's top environmental regulator and they are reserving judgment at this point. Key opponents of the Trump EPA's WOTUS Rule revision

say they are hopeful about Regan's promises to reach out to them, although they are also trying to figure out how much the Biden Administration is willing to invest in tackling this politically sensitive issue.

Environmentalists are pushing courts to unfreeze their lawsuits against the Trump EPA WOTUS Rule. The Biden Administration has requested that re-activation of these lawsuits be put on hold while it conducts its review. This continues to be a political minefield, with conflicting interests between environmentalist and the agriculture, construction and mining industries. None of Biden's EPA appointees or nominees so far have had significant experience with this controversial issue. As always, we will keep you posted on significant developments in this continuing saga.

If you have any questions concerning this article, feel free to contact John Milner, MPA Counsel, at jmilner@brunini.com or (601) 960-6842. ■

BREEDER HATCHERY WEBINAR SET FOR AUGUST 10 & 11

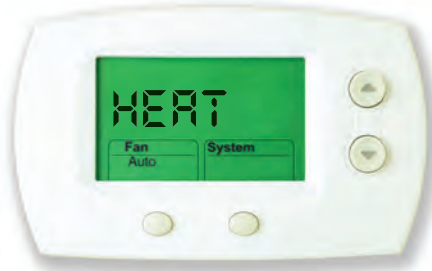
The ninth annual MPA Breeder/Hatchery Webinar will be online August 10 & 11 using GoToWebinar.

We will send you an email invitation to join the webinar. So that we know where to send the email, **please register by Aug. 6 by sending your name and email to Reed at wade@mspoultry.org** or you can call him at 601-932-7560.

Dr. Tom Tabler, MSU Poultry Science Extension professor, put together an agenda focusing on the needs of breeder technicians and growers and hatchery employees. The agenda, set to conclude by noon both days, is shown below.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 10, 2021				
START TIME	END TIME	TOPIC	SPEAKER	COMPANY
9:00	9:15	Welcome/Instructions		
9:15	9:45	Primary disease challenges in pullets	Dr. Sue Ann Hubbard	Merck
9:45	10:15	Keeping "ugly eggs" out of the hatchery	Patrick O'Haver	Innovatec
10:15	10:45	The Poultry Industry: Animal Welfare and Sustainability	Dr. Shawna Weimer	U of Maryland Ext Ser
10:45	11:15	Managing nervousness in pullets	Dr. Austin Jasek	Zinpro
11:15	11:45	Nutrient Management Plans/Litter disposal permits	Tracy Tomkins	MDEQ
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 11, 2021				
START TIME	END TIME	TOPIC	SPEAKER	COMPANY
8:30	8:45	Welcome/Instructions		
8:45	9:15	Management for egg production/fertility	TBD	Aviagen
9:15	9:45	Managing CO2 levels during the hatch window	Dr. Chris Williams	Zoetis
9:45	10:15	What serology and titers can tell the breeder department	Dr. Kristen Sutherland	Boehringer-Ingelheim
10:15	10:45	Water sanitation in hatcheries	Mary Foy	Proxy-Clean
10:45	11:15	Effects of incubation on chick quality	Scott Jordan	Cobb
11:15	11:45	Disease/POSC Department Update	Drs. Jim Watson/Mary Beck	MBAH/MSU

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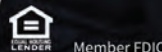


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POULTRY SCIENCE STUDENTS RECEIVE MISSISSIPPI POULTRY ENDOWMENT SCHOLARSHIP AT MSU

In 2016, the Mississippi Poultry Foundation Board of Trustees created an endowment at Mississippi State University with a \$25,000 donation. In 2018, the Trustees added another \$10,000 and in August 2019, the Trustees approved another \$15,000 bringing the total to \$50,000. The 4 percent earned on the endowment is awarded annually to students chosen by the Mississippi State Poultry Science Department.

The recipients of the 2021 Mississippi Poultry Foundation Endowment Scholarship are Samantha Plocher, a sophomore from Ohio, Joshua Montelongo, a freshman from Texas and Ruth Wallace, a freshman from Georgia. They will each receive \$500.

The deadline for the scholarships is April 15 each year and scholarship recipients will be chosen by and then notified by the MSU Poultry Science Department. ■



Samantha Plocher



Joshua Montelongo



Ruth Wallace

MISSISSIPPI LOST 6,000 PEOPLE SINCE 2010 WHILE ALL SURROUNDING STATES GAINED POPULATION

Mark Leggett - President, Mississippi Poultry Association

Mississippi was one of only three states that lost population from 2010 to 2020, according to the U.S. Census Bureau in the apportionment data released in April to Congress.

Even though it lost population, Mississippi did not lose a Congressman as it did in 2000 and will remain at four for the next 10 years.

Since 2010, Mississippi lost 6,018 people, falling from 2,967,297 to 2,961,279, a - 0.2 percent decline. To put that in perspective, it is about the 2010 population of Forest (5,684) or Columbia (6,582) gone.

Mississippi dropped from 31st most populous state to 34th. Arkansas, Nevada and Utah all ranked below Mississippi in population in 2010 and moved above three million people in 2020.

Mississippi was one of only three states to lose population, the others were Illinois and West Virginia.

All of Mississippi's surrounding states saw increases in population: Alabama 5.1 percent; Arkansas 3.3 percent; Louisiana 2.7 percent; and Tennessee 8.9 percent.

Looking just one more state over to the east and the west, Georgia grew 10.6 percent and Texas added 15.9 percent to its

population. Georgia added one congressman and Texas added two, the most of any state.

Mississippi had eight Congressmen in 1920, fell to seven in 1930-40, then six in 1950. The state had five congressional districts from 1960-2000 when it dropped to four. The number of congressmen reflects the state's share of total U.S. population, which has been declining.

Before 2020, Mississippi's population dropped from the preceding 10 years in 1990, 1960, 1940 and 1920. Mississippi's population has grown from the 1.8 million people in 1910.

The change in the population of Mississippi's four Congressional districts will change only slightly, dropping from 744,560 per district in 2010 to 740,979 in 2020. Later this year, the Census Bureau will release the detailed population numbers to show how the population has changed among districts, counties, cities and precincts.

The Legislature could draw new Congressional district lines later this year, when the Census Bureau releases more detailed data. ■

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VIRTUAL POULTRY MANAGEMENT SCHOOL STRESSED BASICS IN ABF ENVIRONMENT

Mark Leggett - President, Mississippi Poultry Association

The first Mississippi Poultry Management School presented virtually stressed some basics on enduring issues that require closer monitoring in today's antibiotic free environment.

A total of 90 people participated in the two-day school on May 12-13. MPA would like to thank all of the sponsors and the speakers for helping make this year's event a success. Last year's school was cancelled soon after the COVID-19 outbreak.

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Dr. Tom Tabler led off with a little history on problems with wet litter. He said wet litter was noted as a problem in a 1923 scholarly article. *Dr. Tabler, MSU extension professor*, said moisture and humidity are the grower's enemies. He said relative humidity should be kept between 50-70 percent and litter moisture less than 25 percent.

Wet litter increases ammonia, pointing out that damage to a bird's respiratory system can begin at 10 parts per million of ammonia. He also noted that moisture problems not addressed in one flock can carry over to the next flock.

Dr. Blair Telg, Phibro Animal Health, said the first case of IBH was recorded in 1963. Yellow droppings are a sign to look for while a swollen liver is evident in a necropsy. The disease can be spread vertically and horizontally and one emergency solution can be to bring infected litter from one farm to another to build up the birds' immunity. The highest mortality is in younger birds. Dr. Telg said a strategy for combatting IBH is built on the idea that protected pullets = protected hens = protected broilers.

Wayne Farms Corporate Veterinarian Dr. Joel Cline used necrotic enteritis as an example of a disease that is the result of many factors coming together and resulting in sick chickens. He demonstrated a processes focused approach to managing and preventing disease by identifying all the contributing factors and controlling what can be controlled.

Dr. David French, formerly at Sanderson Farms, now at the University of Georgia, said that there are numerous possibilities for leg issues in broilers. Just about anything that causes birds to have difficulty moving about, can be mistaken for leg issues. Causes that one should consider should include: airsacculitis, management-related issues (like over-heated birds with tendon slippage), bacterial disease, viral disease, mycoplasma, metabolic, nutritional and toxicities. A systematic approach to diagnosis can help you get to the bottom of the real cause behind leg issues.

Dr. Sue Ann Hubbard with Merck addressed seven-day mortality. Her advice

was to watch for panting chicks because the cause is dehydration and overheating. She said good airflow is required from the hatchery to the chick truck and on the farm.

Another sign to look for in the first seven days is red hocks indicating the chick had a difficult time breaking out of the egg. She stressed the increased importance of hatcheries monitoring for cleanliness and following up to "inspect for what you expect." Also, dirty eggs coming from the breeder farm are of greater concern in an antibiotic-free world.

Dr. David Smith, with Huvepharma, citing annual surveys of industry professionals said the two diseases that most concern those polled are cocci and necrotic enteritis. Cocci costs the industry the most money and the lack of options to treat it are a continuing concern.

He said the percentage of broilers by production scheme, the percentage that is produced NAE/ABF went from 3% in 2014 to 52% in 2020 which has made farm management more important. He said cocci opens the door to clostridium.

On the second day, *Dr. Tim Cummings with Zoetis*, said bronchitis is still the primary respiratory pathogen for chickens and IBV 1639 has emerged as the most common field strain in most regions. He said Bronchitis 1639 was first found in 2011 in the Delmarva area and there is still no live commercial vaccine for 1639, but there are available commercial vaccine combinations (particularly Mass/GA08) that have proven to provide good cross protection. It is mainly a problem in broilers and has not yet caused a lot of problems in broiler breeders.

Dr. Jody Purswell, new research head at the USDA Agricultural Research Service office in Starkville, said he is in the process of hiring a nutritionist, a hatchery specialist, an immunologist, a gut-health specialist and a microbiologist to assist the industry.

He gave the latest research on evaporative cooling management and design. He said that research has shown that half the air comes through the first third of the cool cell pad and a taller, six-foot pad with a shorter horizontal



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length would be more efficient but would increase water costs.

Pads covered in dirt, grass clippings and minerals reduce the wind velocity and cooling. He concluded with a photo of a dirty sump, adding “if nothing else, dump the sump. You’ll see a lot better performance.”

This year’s Management School allowed participants to earn PAACO (Professional Animal Audit Certification Organization) credits. PAACO Director Collette Kaster said the demand for audits continues to grow adding that PAACO does not employ auditors, schedule audits, or author audits. She said auditors look for good animal husbandry practices, humane handling, absence of pain, illness or injury and timely and effective treatment.

Dr. Scott McKenzie with Sterilex, said growers should periodically disinfect their water lines between flocks to remove biofilm which can grow in the lines

and encourage the growth of bacteria that increase seven-day mortality. He said growers should look at and smell water samples that come from the end of the line. Using products that remove and kill the bacteria will “put money back in your pocket.”

Darrell Nevins with Cumberland, explained the innovations in controllers including improved sensors and greater redundancy in controllers to keep them operating if there is a problem in one house or one controller. He said improvements in sensors drives the innovation much like sensors added to cars and trucks over the last few years have improved automobiles’ recognition of hazards.

Finally, **Will Coggin with the Center for Consumer Freedom**, laid out the tactics and goals of the animal rights movement which meshes with the aims of what he called the “fake meat” industry. CCF goes on the offensive against the activists such

as the Humane Society of the U.S. and PETA.

The activist groups pressure retailers who mistakenly think they can negotiate with the activists but the activist organizations are only fundraising and propaganda organizations that will come back with more demands. CCF runs ads pointing out that HSUS gives only 1 percent of funds it raises to animal shelters which when people find this out, 71 percent have a negative view of HSUS.

He said that the creator of Impossible Burger said his aim was to replace all animal agriculture. CCF ads have pointed out that these “plant-based” alternatives are really “ultra-processed foods formed in industrial settings. Coggin said that the dairy industry two decades ago did not take plant-based competitors seriously and now they are 15 percent of the market. ■

READY TO RE-SET YOUR CLOCK TO BEACH TIME?

We know you are ready for a return to normal! The Mississippi Poultry Association’s 2021 Convention is on for the Hilton Sandestin Beach Golf Resort & Spa on Florida’s Emerald Coast on September 16-19.

After missing 2020, we are following as close to the schedule of 2019 as possible. The sponsorship levels are the same, the registration and activity fees for golf and fishing are the same, and the events are the same.

Our speakers are familiar to many of you and the schedule is the same as in prior years.

EVENTS

We are excited to welcome this year’s keynote speakers,

Business Sessions:

Dr. Ashley Peterson, National Chicken Council, on Friday

Will Coggin, Center for Consumer Freedom on Saturday

Brief updates on their poultry related work from: Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Andy Gipson, MS Board of Animal Health, MSU Extension Service, MSU Dept. of Poultry Science, MSU College of Veterinary Medicine, USDA Agricultural Research Service.

Friday Ladies Program

Cobb-Vantress, Inc. and **Huvepharma** are sponsoring Jackson, MS TV Personality and Author Barbie Bassett as the speaker. We hope you will join us at 10 a.m.



Friday Golf Tournament

The **International Paper** and **McNeely Plastics** Golf Tournament is on Friday at the Raven Course with a shotgun start at 1:00 p.m.

Friday Fishing Tournament

The **American Packaging / Deep South Equipment** Fishing Tournament begins Friday at noon at the Destin Harbor. International Paper will provide lunches at the dock. Coolers with refreshments will be sponsored by QC Supply. IT IS IMPORTANT TO PREREGISTER IF YOU PLAN TO FISH SO THAT WE HAVE ENOUGH BOATS.

Saturday afternoon

Free time to visit the beach, go shopping, watch football, or do whatever you like.



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Saturday night

Mississippi Poultry Foundation Silent/Live Auction using Handbid.

Televisions in the Lobby provided by International Paper.

Diamond & Gold Sponsor's Awards Reception

Award Golf and Fishing Prizes

Again, this year MPA will be using Handbid. We hope you will join us this year. It is important that the auction contributors get their auction items in early so the staff will have time to make photos and upload them to the Handbid application. We will have instructors to help with anything you might need to bid on items.

ROOM RATES & RESERVATIONS

MPA has reserved a block of rooms at the Hilton Sandestin. Please mention MPA when you call the group reservationist. You may reach the Hilton in Destin directly by calling 850-267-9500. Ask for in-house reservations.

If you want to reserve your room online, call Reed at MPA 601-932-7560 or email him wade@mspoultry.org and he can send you the link.

The room rates are:

\$205.00 for SPA & Emerald Tower Partial View rooms and Emerald Deluxe Jr. Suite Partial View Rooms. Attendees can confirm upgraded accommodation through the reservation department if you require or want an upgraded room or suite. See the listings below.

\$225 Spa Tower Beach View Rooms

\$395 King Deluxe 1 Bedroom Family Suite

\$225 Emerald Tower Deluxe Junior Suite Beach View

If you do not stay at the Hilton it does not help MPA sell the required number of blocked rooms, so we encourage you to stay at the Hilton. The cutoff date for reservations in the MPA block is Thursday, **August 19, 2021**. After this date rooms will be sold at the regular hotel rate.

MPA WILL NOT BE MAKING RESERVATIONS. YOU MUST MAKE YOUR OWN RESERVATIONS DIRECTLY WITH THE HOTEL. ■

*You can register for the convention
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Registration

- Formula/Allied Members Single or Couple \$375
- Member Single or Couple \$475
- Grower Member Single or Couple \$50

Sponsorship Levels

- Platinum Sponsor \$4,000 and over
- Diamond Sponsor \$2,000 - \$3,999
- Gold Star Sponsor \$1,000 - \$1,999
- Silver Star Sponsor \$500 - \$999
- Sponsor - Less than \$500

Activity Fees

- Golf Tournament \$175
- Mulligans (4 for \$25, each golfer can only use 2)
- Fishing Tournament \$250

A \$100 late registration fee will be charged on registrations received after August 31, 2021. Registration fees will not be refunded after September 1st due to contractual obligations with the resort. It is important that you preregister for the activities in which you wish to participate. We must give the resort guarantees on all events.

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- WHY:** To raise funds for scholarships for future industry leaders
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Wade@mspoultry.org to donate an auction item
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Ends September 18 at 7:30 p.m.
Live Auction at the Hilton begins at 7:30 p.m.
- WHO:** Anyone who likes auction action or wants to help kids



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THE SURPRISING POWER OF CHICKEN MANURE

Eric Hamilton, Soil Science Society of America - Published in Soil Science Society of America Journal

Each year, American farmers raise billions of chickens, more than enough for a “chicken for every pot,” as Herbert Hoover’s campaign once promised.

But all those birds mean a lot of something else: manure. Poultry litter is the mix of manure and bedding materials coming from the poultry industry. Farms produce millions of tons each year.

Like other animal wastes, poultry litter is a natural choice as farm fertilizer. Although it’s widely used, there’s still a lot we don’t know about how — and if — poultry litter helps crops.

In new research, scientists in Mississippi tested just that. They looked at how applying poultry litter to fields over several years would affect the soil and crops grown afterward. The work was recently published in Soil Science Society of America Journal.



Soybeans growing in 2017 in the test fields after five years of poultry litter application. Poultry litter increased soybean yields for three years after litter application was stopped. A datalogger and soil moisture sensors continuously monitored the field. Credit: Gary Feng

“Our goals were to develop sustainable management practices and guide farmers to increase row crop production while keeping nutrients in the field and improving soil health,” says Gary Feng, member of the Soil Science Society of America and lead author of the new study.

Farmers often come to Feng and his colleagues asking how to best use poultry litter. So the team has been researching the best answers.

On Mississippi State University test fields, they came up with three fertilizer treatments. In one, they would apply

poultry litter. In another, they would use commercial chemical fertilizers. The control treatment received no nutrients.

After five years of these treatments, they planted soybeans for three years and measured how well they grew. The scientists also tested the soil, which has a big effect on crops.



A cotton harvest in Noxubee County, Mississippi. This farm applied 2 tons/acre of poultry litter to the field in each fall for 10 years, which improved cotton yield. Credit: Gary Feng

Feng’s group found poultry litter has a significant impact on the soil. The soil that received poultry litter was less compacted. Soil compaction is a common problem that can reduce how well water moves through the ground.

The soils with poultry litter also had the ability to hold a lot more water, and they allowed water to soak into the ground quicker.

The upshot was that soil receiving poultry litter could save farmers about one watering event a season. That means money saved.

“In other words, the soil could let more rainwater get into soil and hold more rainwater for rainfed crops to use when the field is dry or save irrigation costs for irrigated land,” says Feng.

Another important component of soil is how much carbon it holds on to. Carbon-based organic matter usually improves soil.

Although the poultry litter added a lot of carbon over the years, that carbon tended to evaporate as carbon dioxide in the hot and humid region. So at the end of the experiment, the soil carbon didn’t change a lot.

Because carbon dioxide is a greenhouse gas, tracking soil carbon also gave the scientists insight into greenhouse emissions.

“Our results overall provide bases for developing guidelines for greenhouse gas emission predictions and for more realistic expectations of soil carbon improvement from applying poultry litter,” says Feng.

Soybeans planted in the fields grew better in the years after poultry litter was added to the soil. One year later, soybean yields were 8% higher. And three years later, yields got even better. They were 11% higher than in fields that received synthetic fertilizers.

“Left over nutrients from litter in the previous consecutive application can maintain higher soybean yield for three more years after stopping litter application,” says Feng.

Because a large portion of poultry production takes place in the Southeast U.S., this research on local crops and soils is especially valuable to farmers in the region.

“These results are useful for development of management practices that improve soil health and function,” says Feng.

These findings could be helpful to crop farmers deciding how to fertilize their fields. And poultry farmers can get a clearer picture of the value of the litter they produce.

Gary Feng is a soil scientist with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. This research was supported by the Mississippi Soybean Promotion Board. ■



Scientists Gary Feng and Haile Tewolde test how fast water can infiltrate into soils that were fertilized by commercial inorganic fertilizer and manured by poultry litter. Credit: Gary Feng

LEGISLATURE ALLOCATED EXTRA ROAD AND BRIDGE FUNDS IN 2021 SESSION, NUMEROUS ISSUES TO BE STUDIED BEFORE 2022 SESSION

Mark Leggett - President, Mississippi Poultry Association

In the 2021 session, legislators continued their commitment to funding transportation improvements around the state.

In Senate Bill 2825, the Legislature diverted \$89 million in federal funds to the Emergency Road and Bridge Repair fund. The bill also raises the tolerance for a harvest permit from 5 percent to 10 percent starting in 2022. The \$89 million follows \$250 million put into the ERBR fund in 2018, which has now been committed to 168 projects.

The bill would also allow live haul and feed trucks to carry 88,000 pounds. The bill also moves the truck weight enforcement division from the Miss. Department of Transportation (MDOT) to the Department of Public Safety and raises the fines for overweight trucks.

MPA has a seat on the ERBRF Advisory Board composed of business and agricultural groups that was created in 2018. MPA was also given a seat on the Harvest Permit Transportation Stewardship Council created under the 2021 bill.

This summer and fall, the Senate will study a tax bill that the House passed that died in the Senate. The House bill, which House leaders will push again in 2022, would have:

- Phased out the personal income tax if revenue grows by 1.5 percent each year. Individuals, partnerships, LLCs, PLLCs would have paid no income tax but corporations would have continued to pay income tax.
- Reduced the 7 percent sales tax on groceries to 3.5 percent over several years.
- Increased the general sales tax 2.5 percent to 9.5 percent.

- Raised the sales tax by 2.5 percent on cars and trucks, mobile homes, farm, manufacturing, and logging equipment.

The tax bill also contained the section of law that exempts electricity, propane, natural gas for farms and plants from sales tax but did not change that exemption.

Tax revenues for the state general fund did not fall as steeply as expected after the start of the coronavirus lockdowns in March 2020 and they have recovered massively. Revenues were coming in greater than expectations, allowing the Legislature to restore funding for some agencies that saw reductions during the 2020 session. The state had its largest month ever in tax collections in April 2021 at \$955.7 million. This is out of a general fund budget of \$6 billion.

LARGEST MONTHLY GENERAL FUND RECEIPTS

2021	APRIL	\$955.70
2019	APRIL	\$881.36
2019	JUNE	\$780.44
2017	APRIL	\$778.67
2018	APRIL	\$767.82
2020	JUNE	\$766.50
2018	JUNE	\$727.72

Source: Legislative Budget Office

The budgets for the Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Experiment Stations, the College of Veterinary Medicine, the MSU Extension Service, the Board of Animal Health, the Department of Agriculture & Commerce, and the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality all saw budget increases. The increases ranged from 1.6 percent (MAFES) to

14.2 percent (Animal Health) for FY22 beginning July 1. The agencies have experienced roller coaster funding over the last 25 years.

The improved revenue flow allowed legislators to divert funds to city and county construction or repair projects through state agencies. These include the:

- Department of Finance and Administration appropriation with 104 projects (all but 15 are local in nature) totaling \$97.6 million. A total of \$14 million were road and street projects. Others were water and sewer, fire protection, parks, sidewalk and tourism projects.
- MDOT budget that included 46 projects totaling \$30.2 million selected by legislators in various parts of the state. Gov. Reeves vetoed one in Attala County for \$4.5 million. The \$30.2 million is part of the \$121 million that MDOT received from the federal government as coronavirus aid, from which the \$89 million mentioned earlier was taken.
- Miss. Development Authority. There is \$5.5 million for transportation projects in this agency's budget.

In addition to these appropriations, lawmakers issued bonds for construction or repair and renovation for universities, community colleges and state agencies. The 2021 bond bill totals \$298.4 million for 136 projects, most are local projects, including \$49.4 million transportation projects.

One other source of transportation funds is the state lottery, which topped \$100 million in revenue through March. The law creating the lottery diverts the first \$80 million to MDOT,



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which the agency is using to repair two-lane highways. The lottery began selling tickets on Nov. 26, 2019.

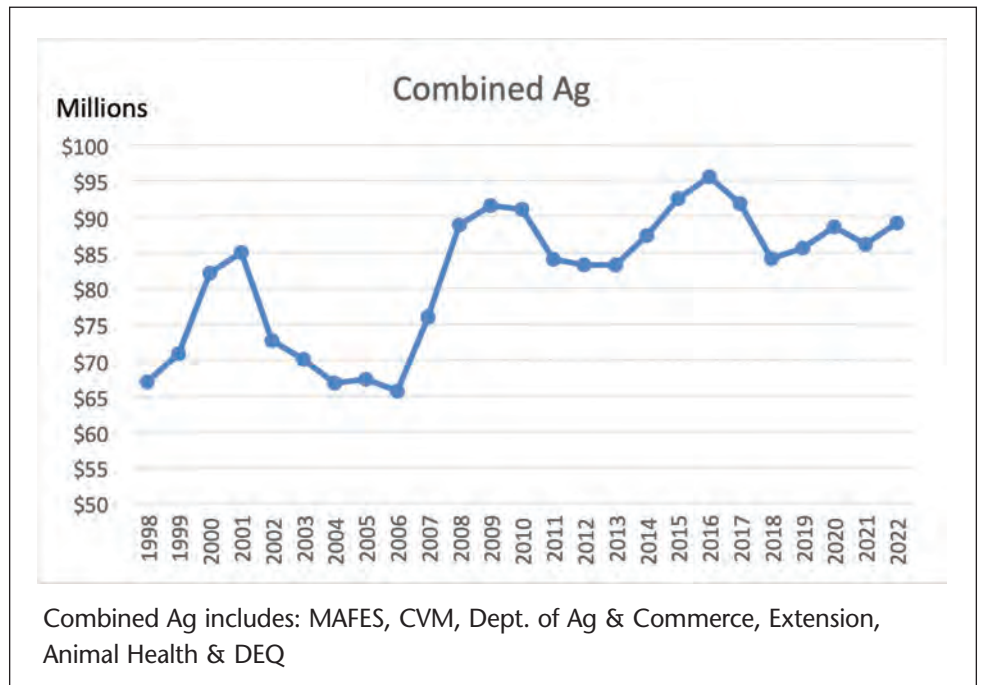
While the Legislature adjourned April 1, there is a lot to keep legislators busy until the 2022 session begins, including:

- Congressional Redistricting. The Census Bureau is scheduled to send the Legislature the population counts to draw the boundaries of the state's four districts based on the 2020 Census. The data is due in September from the Census Bureau. Candidates can start qualifying January 1, 2022.
- Medical Marijuana and the ballot initiative process. The Mississippi Supreme Court in April ruled that the medical marijuana initiative voters approved in November was invalid because the constitutional section on the initiative process uses the old five congressional districts, not the current four districts. Gov. Tate Reeves has said he will call legislators into a special session to pass a medical marijuana

law if there is an agreement on the legislation beforehand. A new initiative procedure could wait until the 2022 session.

- The portion of the American Rescue Act funds coming to Mississippi state government and

non-metro cities is to be allocated by the Legislature. Larger cities and all counties received a direct payment of federal funds. State government has received the first half of the \$1.81 billion coming for state government. ■





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IN 2020, SOME STATES SAW BROILER PRODUCTION INCREASE, OTHERS SAW DECREASES, USDA REPORT SHOWS

Mark Leggett - President, Mississippi Poultry Association

The COVID lockdowns jumbled poultry production statistics from 2020 with some states producing more and others less than the year before. Over the last two decades, Mississippi production has held steady.

The value of broilers produced in the United States during 2020 was \$21.7 billion, down 23 percent from 2019. The total number of broilers produced in 2020 was 9.22 billion, up half a percent from 2019. The total live weight of broilers produced in 2020 was 59.4 billion pounds, up 2 percent from 2019.

The changes by state varied widely, according to the 2020 annual report from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) released in April 2021. All three categories - pounds, head, and dollars - were down from 2019 in Mississippi. In 2020, Mississippi produced -8 percent fewer head, -5 percent less pounds and saw -20 percent less in value.

Mississippi in 2020 produced 4.6 billion pounds liveweight from 732 million head for recorded value of \$1.68 billion. The dollars per pound dropped from 48.6 cents in 2019 to 36.5 cents in 2020 for Mississippi and the nation.

Looking at other states' production in 2020 compared to 2019, Georgia (-2.6 percent), Arkansas (-1.0 percent) and Virginia (1-8 percent) processed fewer pounds. On the other hand, North Carolina (6.2 percent), Alabama (5.8 percent), Texas (4.1 percent), South Carolina (2.0 percent) and Kentucky (1.5 percent) reported more pounds in liveweight in 2020.

Mississippi's ranking among broiler producing states fell one notch from 5th in 6th in pounds and value but the Magnolia state held onto 5th in head count. Georgia led, followed by North Carolina, Arkansas, Alabama, and Texas now in 5th place. North Carolina jumped ahead of Arkansas and Texas passed Mississippi in head count.

Over a longer period after rising from two billion pounds produced in 1992, Mississippi has held between four and five billion pounds since 2003.

Looking further back to the turn of the century, the changes in two decades are shown below.

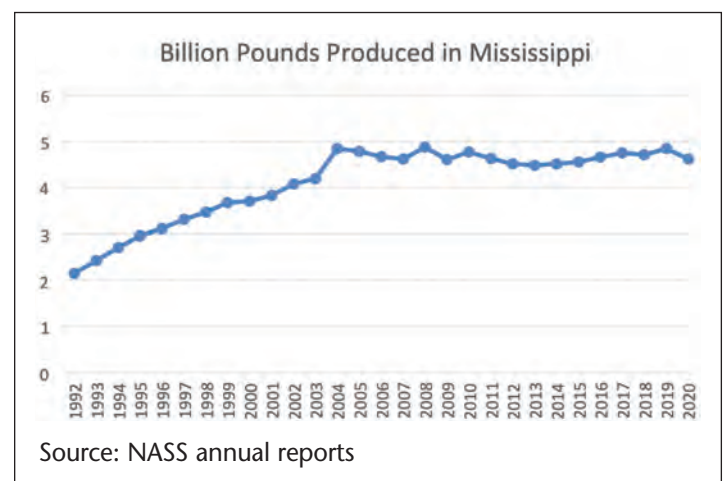
In 2000, a dozen states produced more than a billion pounds of broilers, but in 2020, it had risen to 15 states. Five states had \$1 billion in production in 2020 and in 2020 it is six. There were six states in 2000 and in 2020 that produced more than 500 million head.

As other states have grown in poultry production, Mississippi's production as a percentage of the national total has declined over 20 years, falling from around 10 percent in pounds, head, and dollars to around 7.8 percent in all three categories in the latest NASS report.

In 2000, Mississippi averaged 5.0 pounds liveweight per head which rose to 6.3 pounds per head in 2020.

In 2000 in Mississippi, the cents per pound of liveweight was 33 cents. It rose as high as 64 cents per pound in 2014 and ended 2020 at 36 cents. ■

2000 RANK	(2020 RANK)	CHANGE FROM 2000 TO 2020
POUNDS		
1. Georgia	(1)	31.5 percent
2. Arkansas	(3)	25.8 percent
3. Alabama	(4)	24.7 percent
4. North Carolina	(2)	94.6 percent
5. Mississippi	(6)	24.7 percent
6. Texas	(5)	79.0 percent
United States		63.1 percent
VALUE		
1. Georgia	(1)	45.4 percent
2. Arkansas	(3)	39.2 percent
3. Alabama	(4)	37.9 percent
4. Mississippi	(6)	37.9 percent
5. North Carolina	(2)	102.9 percent
6. Texas	(5)	92.2 percent
United States		77.0 percent
HEAD		
1. Georgia	(1)	7.8 percent
2. Arkansas	(2)	-11.9 percent
3. Alabama	(3)	15.6 percent
4. Mississippi	(5)	-1.0 percent
5. North Carolina	(4)	37.6 percent
6. Texas	(6)	27.5 percent
United States		28.3 percent





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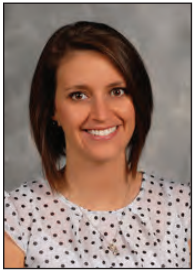
Tom Tabler, PhD, Extension Professor, Mississippi State University Extension Service

Jessica Wells, PhD, Assistant Clinical/Extension Professor, Mississippi State University Extension Service

Jonathan Moon, Poultry Operation Coordinator, Poultry Science, Mississippi State University Extension Service



Issues with LED lamps and light dimmers in poultry houses continue to plague the poultry industry. It's time to get past the finger-pointing stage and solve the problem. And the problem can be solved. However, everyone from both the lamp and dimmer sides needs to work together to educate integrators, distributors, and growers on what combinations will and will not work in a poultry house situation. **A variety of different light dimmers and a multitude of different LED lamps are used in poultry houses today.**



Unfortunately, the fact is that many of these various combinations in use today were never meant to be combined in the first place. Some combinations of lights and dimmers work well together. However, many combinations are not working and are leading to premature lamp failures, flickering, ghosting, dead travel, etc., resulting in unhappy growers and integrators. The main point of emphasis that integrators, growers, and distributors must understand is that we can spend good money once, address the issue, and move on to something else, or continue to spend bad money over and over again and still not solve the problem.



Some Facts

First of all, incandescent lamps are nothing like LED lamps. Leading-edge light dimmers are nothing like trailing-edge light dimmers. The two dimmer styles and the two lamp styles are so different that they are practically total opposites. Incandescent lamps and leading-edge light dimmers work well together. LED lamps and trailing-edge light dimmers work well together. However, **leading-edge light dimmers and LED lamps are NOT compatible and do NOT work well together.** It is that simple.

Fewer than 15 years ago, there were basically no LEDs in use in poultry houses, but today, we are using a wide variety of LED lamps. Many of these lamps have an excellent track record in agricultural settings. Unfortunately, however, many more have no place in a poultry house environment. While these may be less expensive than LED lamps rated for agricultural applications, they are LED lamps made for less demanding, residential applications and will simply not hold up in a harsh chicken house environment, regardless of the light dimmer being used.

Poultry growers continue to see too many lamp failures long before their time. There are now a handful of folks with a pretty good understanding of why this is happening, but most poultry

growers, integrators, and distributors that market both the lamps and the light dimmers are still trying to grasp what the problem is. If we are ever going to turn the corner on this issue, there are some terms and definitions that all of us need to be aware of and understand.

Omni-directional lamp (omni) – A residential-grade lamp that gives off light in all directions—top, sides, and bottom of the lamp. A good lamp in a chicken house puts light directly on the floor where the chickens are located. Most of the light directed to the walls and ceiling is wasted in a chicken house because the chickens are on the floor. The net effect is that only 50–60 percent of an omni's light output reaches the birds.

Directional lamp – Emits a wall of parallel rays in the direction that the light is facing. A light hanging from the ceiling puts almost all its light on the floor.

Beam spread – The amount of effective space a light covers from different distances.

Watt – The basic unit of electrical power; amount of energy an item needs to function; equal to current (amps) multiplied by voltage (volts). Wattage is **not** a measure of light output.

Lumen – The total amount of visible light output from a lamp (brightness).

Foot candle (fc) – A non-metric unit of light intensity defined as 1 lumen per square foot. (1 fc = ~10.76 lux).

Lux – Metric unit of light intensity defined as 1 lumen per square meter.

Dead travel – When changing the light dimmer setting produces no visible change in light level. This happens because, unlike incandescent lights, LEDs do not dim in a linear fashion.

Ghosting – When light is still visible from the LED lamps even when the dimmer is fully off. This can occur because LEDs operate on DC instead of AC power. The driver in the lamp is trying to find enough current, even though the dimmer switch may be off, to keep the lamp burning. It may also occur if the circuitry is too old or poorly maintained to properly regulate smooth current flow.

Drop out – When the LED lamp shuts off completely at a low dimmer level instead of continuing to dim down.

Pop on – When the LED lamp suddenly turns on completely instead of gradually coming on as the dimmer switch is raised from the fully off position.

Flicker – Results from a limited amount of current being applied by the driver that is not enough to keep a constant current flow to the individual LEDs in the lamp.

Leading-edge dimming – Uses a current that is turned off as the AC waveform begins, right **after** it crosses zero. It is commonly used with incandescent lamps and produces a rush of voltage every half cycle, resulting in a high inrush of current to the light source.



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Trailing-edge dimming – Uses a current that is turned off as the AC waveform ends, just **before** it crosses zero. This type of dimming is designed for lamps with electronic drivers (CFLs and LEDs) and does not result in a rush of voltage (and, in turn, an inrush of current) to the light source.

Triode alternating-current (TRIAC) dimmer – Designed for resistive loads such as incandescent or halogen lights. Leading-edge dimmers typically use TRIAC switches to control power. Unfortunately, these dimmers are not compatible with LEDs because LEDs do not appear as a resistive load to the dimmer, and the LED drivers will not perform as expected with TRIAC dimmers. LEDs are a capacitive load, not a resistive load.

Metal oxide semiconductor field effect transistor (MOSFET) dimmer – A semiconductor device widely used for switching purposes. MOSFET devices can control the voltage and current flow between the source and drain terminals. Trailing-edge dimmers often use MOSFET rather than TRIAC switches. Trailing-edge dimmers are much newer than leading-edge dimmers and were developed, in part, to eliminate the high inrush current when dimming low-voltage lamps. MOSFET dimmers offer better performance with the capacitive nature of LED drivers.

Determining proper light level in a broiler house is difficult without a light meter (Figure 1). Many service technicians now carry light meters. LED light meters cost less than \$150. Take light measurements at bird level at various locations (directly under a lamp, between lamps, at a wall, etc.) to determine light levels in the house (Figure 2). Different **light dimmers often dim differently because of how the lighting curve in the dimmer responds**. As a result, light levels may be different between houses even though the dimmers may all be set at the same dimming level, making a light meter a critical piece of equipment.

Issues often occur in certain low-end lighting situations found in today's broiler houses. In these situations, very low light output is required when the dimmer is set at a low level. However, the lamp's dimming performance depends on how well the dimming range of the dimmer matches the dimming range of the drivers in the LED lamp. Problems occur when the two do not closely match. Unfortunately, even though LED lamps must be compatible with phase dimmers, **there is no industry standard that defines characteristics of light dimmers on the market today**. Therefore, we are seeing compatibility issues between the variety of dimmers on the market and the multitude of LED lamps on the market. As a result, we may see one brand of dimmer work with one brand of LED lamp but not work with another.



Figure 1: LED light meter used to measure light level.

As a general rule, **only trailing-edge dimmers should be used with any dimmable LED lamp**. Because leading-edge dimmers cut the front edge of each AC sine wave's half-cycle, a huge inrush of current flows through the lamp's circuitry, eventually damaging the electronic drivers and LED chips, leading to premature lamp failure. Trailing-edge dimmers, on the other hand, cut the back half of the AC sine wave, where the output voltage rises relatively slowly and avoids the huge current spikes that leading-edge dimmers send into capacitive-load LEDs, thereby reducing stress on the electronic drivers and LED chips and extending lamp life.

What does this all mean for the chicken grower, integrator, and lamp and dimmer distributor? Perhaps most important, **if you are using LED lamps in the chicken house, you should be using a trailing-edge dimmer to dim those lamps**. If you aren't, expect problems. If your dimmer has both leading-edge and trailing-edge capabilities, be extra cautious that someone (you, your service tech, the catch crew, etc.) does not switch the dimmer to a leading-edge channel and then fail to switch it back. Preferably, use directional LED lamps with an agricultural rating that indicates they are designed for chicken house applications.

If you are using omni-directional LED lamps with a smaller heat sink and lesser craftsmanship in a chicken house, expect problems. **We can't haphazardly throw together a hodgepodge of lamps and dimmers and expect not to have issues**. Unknowingly however, that is exactly what we have done. And **until we take the necessary actions to correct those missteps, lamp failures will continue**. Using the right LED lamp in combination with the right light dimmer will solve many of the issues currently being experienced with premature lamp failures and erratic dimming behavior.

The Bottom Line

Any combination of lamps and dimmers that delivers improper lighting and dimming does nothing but "cheat the chickens." Cheating the chickens comes with a price that always seems to be reflected on the settlement sheet. ■



Figure 2: Light level at feed pan (0.68 foot candles) in a broiler house.



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INFECTIOUS BURSAL DISEASE: A HIDDEN ADVERSARY

Dr. Natalie K. Armour, BVSc, MAM, PhD, dACPV

Associate Clinical Professor, Avian Medicine

Poultry Research and Diagnostic Laboratory, College of Veterinary Medicine, Mississippi State University



Infectious Bursal Disease (IBD, “Gumboro Disease”), a highly contagious immunosuppressive disease of young chickens, is one of the global poultry industry’s most economically important yet overlooked adversaries. The causative agent of this disease, Infectious Bursal Disease virus (IBDV), a double-stranded RNA birnavirus, targets B cells in the bursa of Fabricius, causing severe immune suppression, with consequent increased susceptibility to other diseases, poor responses to vaccination and decreased productivity (1, 2). Because of its propensity to cause “under the radar” immune suppression without overt clinical disease, the impacts of this hidden adversary, while significant, are often underappreciated.

IBDV is a very resistant virus, and is capable of surviving for long periods of time in the environment. IBDV-contaminated houses were reported to remain infectious for at least 122 days after infected birds were removed (3). IBDV infects chickens via the oral route, and can be spread by fomites (contaminated inanimate objects like equipment, clothing and shoes). Litter beetles, mosquitoes and rats can also act as mechanical carriers of the virus (1). After being swallowed by a susceptible chicken, this virus quickly enters the blood circulation and, like a crafty invader seeking to disarm its opponent, targets one of the chicken’s primary immune defenses - the cloacal bursa (bursa of Fabricius) (2). The bursa is a critical part the bird’s immune system, as it is the site of the development of B lymphocytes (B cells), the antibody producing cells.

The destruction of B cells makes chickens more susceptible to a number of diseases. IBDV infection has been linked to outbreaks of Gangrenous Dermatitis, Salmonella, Campylobacter, E. coli, Marek’s Disease, Inclusion Body Hepatitis (IBH), Chicken Anemia Virus (CAV), Infectious Bronchitis (IBV) and coccidiosis, to name but a few (1). The consequence of these diseases is, of, course, mortality, decreased productivity and increased costs. Control efforts tend to focus heavily on these diseases (which are often just the tip of the iceberg) neglecting the iceberg below the surface – IBDV. Figure 1 shows diseases diagnosed in birds with underlying confirmed IBD from January 2020 to May 2021 at the Poultry Research and Diagnostic Laboratory (PRDL), Mississippi State University. A significant percentage of cases with active IBDV infections were diagnosed with coccidiosis, E. coli infection, IBH, IBV, Viral Arthritis (reovirus), *Enterococcus cecorum* infection and Necrotic Enteritis had underlying active IBDV infection.

Another important nefarious effect of IBDV is its ability to cause vaccine failures. No matter how good a company’s vaccination program and vaccine application procedures are, if the immune system is weakened by IBDV, the birds will not be able to mount an adequate immune response to the vaccine. In this scenario, birds have been *vaccinated* but not adequately *immunized*. A red flag for vaccine failure on serology is the presence of unexpectedly high IBDV titers with unexpectedly low titers to other diseases vaccinated against (such as IBV and Newcastle Disease virus).

In order to adequately deal with the threat posed by IBDV, it’s important to understand this enemy. IBDV has two different serotypes, serotype 1 and serotype 2. Within serotype 1 (the disease-causing serotype) are classic/standard, very virulent and variant IBDV antigenic types (4). Classical viruses, which are more prevalent outside of the United States, cause high mortality in susceptible chickens (10-50%), while very virulent strains (vvIBDV) cause severe bursal inflammation (see Figure 2) and up to 50-100% mortality (1). **In the US, we primarily deal with variant strains of IBDV, which cause little or no mortality, but have the potential to cause significant bursal damage and permanent immune suppression.** The ability of IBD viruses to mutate has led to the emergence of multiple strains with differences in antigenicity and virulence, complicating IBD control by vaccination (5).

These subversive variant IBDV strains infect birds early (typically less than 2 weeks of age), causing extensive bursal atrophy and permanent immune impairment, without obvious clinical signs. Bursal atrophy leads to a decrease in the bursal size and weight (see Figure 3), with consequent reduced bursa to body weight ratios. Variant IBDV infection

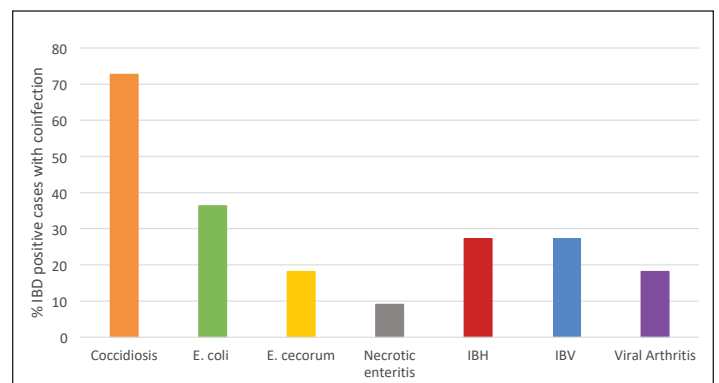


Figure 1: Percent confirmed IBD positive cases with other co-infections diagnosed January 2020 to May 2021 at the PRDL, MSU



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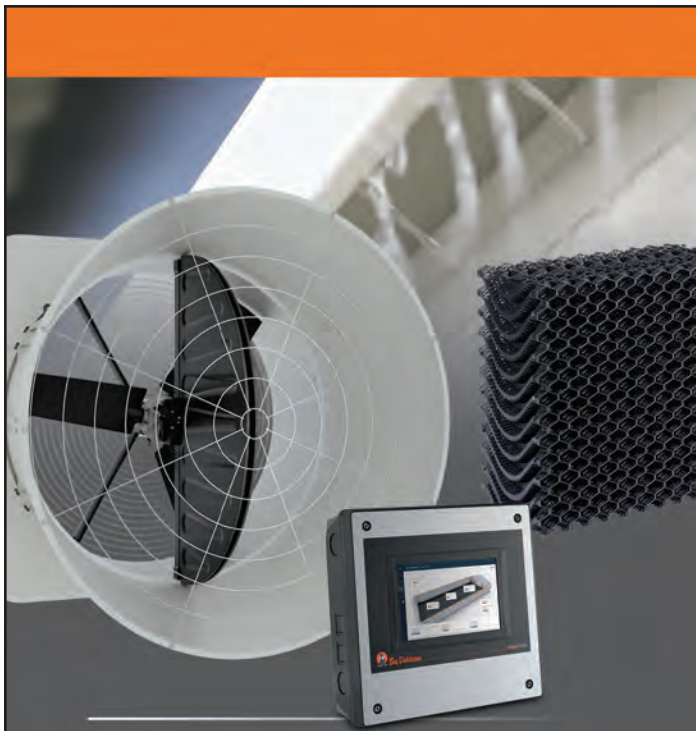


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and resultant atrophied bursas are so prevalent in US flocks that many in the poultry industry seem to be desensitized to the harmful effects of this insidious pathogen, overlooking atrophied bursas because they are “what we normally see”. Perhaps this approach worked in the past, but nowadays, with higher producing birds with greater genetic potential, more intensive production, and the removal of antibiotics, the importance of the immune system and of preventing diseases which suppress it cannot be overstated.

Thankfully, the poultry industry is not without weapons to combat this formidable foe. Vaccination is the primary intervention to control IBD. Live IBD vaccines vary in virulence, with vaccines currently available including mild, mild intermediate, intermediate, intermediate plus and “hot” strains. Variant IBD vaccines and variant/classic combinations are also available in the US (1). Hotter live vaccines are more effective at combating more virulent field challenges, but these vaccines also have the potential to cause some collateral bursal damage (2), so it’s important to match vaccine firepower with the disease challenge at hand. The advent of recombinant IBD vaccines comprised of the Marek’s HVT vaccine vector genetically engineered to express the VP2 surface protein of IBDV has been a helpful addition to the IBDV protection arsenal, inducing IBDV immunity without the introduction of live IBD virus.

At the breeder level, a prime-boost regimen of a series of live vaccines followed by one or more inactivated (killed) IBD vaccines ensures, respectively, early protection of the pullets against IBD and later, the generation of antibodies which will be transferred to the progeny. Both classic and variant inactivated IBD vaccines are available. Autogenous inactivated IBD vaccines are sometimes used to generate immunity to pathogenic variants not included in commercial vaccines (4). The ultimate objective is immunization of the breeders to achieve uniform, high, sustained IBD antibody titers, which will be transferred through the egg to the progeny as maternally-derived antibody (MDA), providing early protection to chicks against IBDV infection.

Broiler vaccination may be needed to augment maternally-derived immunity against IBDV. In the US, for practical reasons, broiler vaccines are typically applied in the hatchery, with mild live attenuated and/or recombinant HVT-IBD vaccines administered *in-ovo*. The rationale behind applying live attenuated IBD vaccines in the hatchery is to protect birds with low MDA against field challenge, and provide early protection until immunity against the recombinant HVT-IBD vaccines is developed (which takes about 3-4 weeks). A drawback with the early use of live IBD vaccines is interference of MDA with the replication of these viruses (4, 5). To overcome this, immune complex vaccines comprised of a combination of live attenuated IBDV and IBDV-specific antibodies were developed. These vaccines are effective in the presence of MDA and are available for *in-ovo* or day-of-age application (2, 4, 5). Field IBD vaccination of broilers with live vaccines is often necessary to protect against IBD viruses in countries where vvIBDV is endemic, since more virulent IBD

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viruses have the ability to overcome or “break through” even high maternal antibody levels.

Besides vaccination, general biosecurity and management interventions to reduce disease introduction and transmission should be implemented. As already mentioned, IBDV is a very hardy virus which is capable of surviving for extended periods of time in the environment, highlighting the importance of hygiene and biosecurity measures. Cleaning and disinfecting, litter composting and increasing downtime between flocks will reduce IBDV levels in the poultry house environment, but likely not completely prevent this carryover. **Strict attention to biosecurity will reduce the risk of introducing IBDV (and other pathogens).** In addition to interventions such as controlled farm access, strategic personnel movements, PPE and footbaths, **efforts should be made to control insects and vermin (including litter beetles, mosquitoes and rats) which have the potential to act as mechanical carriers of the virus.**

In order to protect the health and productivity of our flocks against the harmful effects of this unseen enemy, constant surveillance should be performed. At the breeder level, serologic monitoring of young pullet flocks by IBD ELISA will facilitate evaluation of the efficacy of vaccination and detection of field challenge. Pullet titers should be checked prior to transfer to the hen house, 2-3 weeks after the last inactivated vaccines are applied to confirm uniform high IBD titers required for early protection of the progeny. At the broiler level, evaluation of preslaughter IBD titers will allow detection of field challenges. In addition, bursal size should be evaluated at posting sessions, and bursal scores and/or bursa to body weight ratios monitored. Atrophied or inflamed bursas can be submitted for to the laboratory for IBD PCR testing to confirm the presence of the virus. IBDV genotyping can also be performed, to determine the viral strain involved, if desired.

To allow flocks to perform at the peak of their genetic potential, it is crucial that we ensure that their immunity is not compromised. **IBD virus has the potential to strike at the heart of the chicken’s immune defenses, significantly impacting the health and productivity of our flocks.** Vaccination at both the breeder and broiler levels is a key defense mechanism, and strict hygiene and biosecurity interventions are required to combat this resilient pathogen. Constant monitoring should be performed to evaluate the efficacy of IBD vaccination and control interventions and to ensure that this hidden adversary does not gain the upper hand. ■

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Figure 2: Severe bursal damage caused by vvIBDV

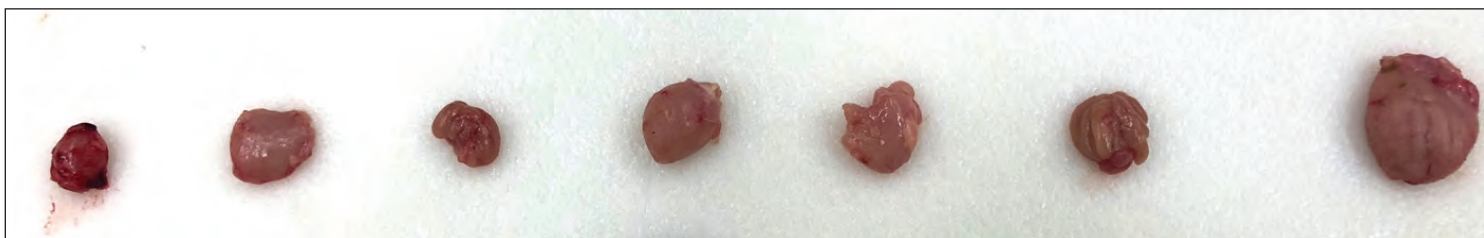


Figure 3: Various degrees of bursal atrophy in 4 week old broiler chickens

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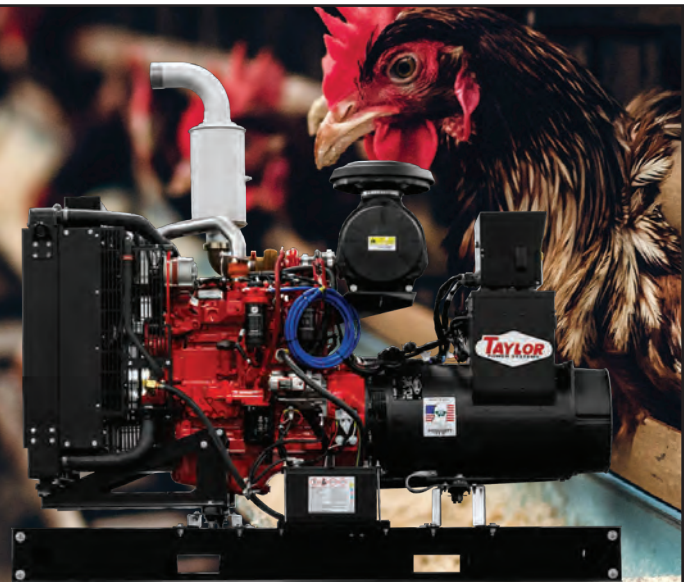
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Mike Catangui, Entomologist, Parasitologist

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Dr. Catangui provides readers with science-based recommendations and strategies for the profitable and environmentally responsible implementation of integrated pest management programs, including best management practice recommendations on the effective, safe and responsible use of synthetic and organic insecticides and miticides on the farm. He also manages MWI's pesticide resistance testing laboratory.



Danny McDonald, Entomologist

Ph.D., Entomology, M.S. Agriculture, B.S. Horticulture

Dr. McDonald brings several years of expertise in invasive species ecology and integrated pest management (IPM) of crawling insects to the poultry and livestock industries. His efforts are focused on data-driven solutions to insect challenges facing the poultry business sector, including litter beetles, mites, fire ants and flies. Dr. McDonald has shared his IPM expertise of insect baits, sprays and granules with end users for many years. He helps direct field sampling of insects for insecticide resistance testing in MWI's entomology laboratory.



Jake Anderson, Water Quality Specialist

B.S. Animal Science

Jake combines a strong, practical field background in poultry production with a major Midwestern poultry integrator. He holds a bachelors of science in animal science from the University of Minnesota where he completed his academic program via the cooperative Midwest Poultry Consortium Poultry Center of Excellence through the University of Wisconsin. Jake focuses his technical efforts on water treatment for MWI's production animal customer base and supervises water sample analysis, customer education, and water treatment systems installation in the United States.



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MISS. SUPREME COURT UPHOLDS RIGHT TO FARM STATUTE AS ABSOLUTE DEFENSE AGAINST NUISANCE SUIT

Mark Leggett - President, Mississippi Poultry Association

The Mississippi Supreme Court on May 6 ruled in favor of farmers in a Madison County lawsuit involving the state's right-to-farm statute.

The 9-0 judgment to affirm the lower court decision strengthened the rights of farmers. Nearby neighbors complained about two farmers use of propane cannons to keep deer out of their cotton and soybean fields and filed a nuisance lawsuit. Two of the nine justices affirmed the decision but raised other issues.

The Miss. Poultry Association joined in a friend of the court brief initiated by the Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation on the side of the farmers. The Miss. Cattlemen's Association, the Delta Council, the Miss. Loggers Association and the Miss. Forestry Association were other agricultural groups that joined in the brief.

The MPA Board of Directors in joining the friend of the court brief reasoned that a lawsuit over noise today could

become one against smell in the future. The Court's decision written by Justice James D. Maxwell II strongly states that the right to farm statute is an absolute defense against nuisance suits if the farm has been in operation for more than one year.

The lawsuit was brought by former Lt. Gov. Eddie Briggs and other neighbors of Will Hughes and Chad Penn in Madison County. A Madison County Chancery Judge ruled in favor of Hughes and Penn, then Briggs and the neighbors appealed.

Briggs argued that while the farm had been in operation for more than a year that the cannons were new and were not covered by the right to farm statute.

Justice Maxwell noted that in 2009, the Legislature amended the right to farm statute to remove language that limited the protection to "substantially unchanged since the established date of operation." Justice Maxwell also said of the statute, "the legislature in fact did intend to protect

existing agricultural operations from nuisance actions based on the use of new farming equipment, devices, chemicals, materials and structures if that use accords with best agricultural-management practices."

Justices Leslie King and Jim Kitchens affirmed the decision but raised other points in King's opinion concurring in part with the other seven justices. King said the court must look at the agricultural operation and asked if the cotton and soybean farm had been converted to a hog farm, would that not change the operation. He wrote that the Texas Supreme Court had ruled a change in conditions on the farm changed the nuisance protection

Maxwell noted that the question of converting a hog farm was not the issue before the court and that the Texas Supreme Court's decision was not based on the plain language of Mississippi's law. ■

LIGHTENED-UP CHICKEN NACHOS

Mary Alice Cain, M.S., R.D., L.D., USAPEEC's Registered Dietitian

PREPARATION

1. Start by preparing your baked tortilla chips. Slice tortillas into triangles and spread evenly over a baking sheet. Lightly drizzle with olive oil, then sprinkle on salt, pepper, and chipotle powder to your liking.
2. Bake in a 375 degree F oven until crispy. Squeeze fresh lime juice over chips after pulling out of the oven.
3. Place a layer of chips in a cast iron pan or other baking dish. Top with shredded chicken (or duck or turkey) and bell pepper, then sprinkle cheese over the top. Place under the broiler for a few minutes until cheese melts.
4. Remove from oven and let cool slightly. Spoon salsa, avocado, and radishes over top. For extra heat, add some hot sauce or red pepper flakes. Squeeze a lime over your nachos and enjoy. ■

*While nachos do not typically top the charts as the "healthiest" of dishes, they still rank high as a crowd favorite. My "lightened-up" chicken nachos - made with homemade baked tortilla chips - are a great way to enjoy this special treat and still eat your veggies! Any why stop at chicken? *Also try topping with shredded duck or turkey meat OR a fried egg!*

INGREDIENTS

- 1 package corn tortillas
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 2 Tbsp chipotle powder
- Olive oil for drizzling
- 2 Limes
- Pre-cooked shredded chicken*
- 1 avocado, sliced
- 2 radishes, sliced then soaked in water
- 1 bell pepper, chopped
- Shredded cheese of your preference
- 1 jar salsa
- Hot sauce/red pepper flakes (optional)



Recipe and photo copyright March 22, 2021 issue of USAPEEC's "Monday Line".

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