In 2007, the broiler industry demonstrated its remarkable importance to Mississippi’s agricultural (not to mention overall) economy. Preliminary estimates are that the value of broiler production in 2007 reached $2.076 billion, just eclipsing the record set in 2005. The primary factor in last year’s rise in value of production was a significant recovery in wholesale poultry prices. In 2006, poultry prices were down as a result of weak global demand in the first half of the year. The recovery in broiler demand that began in the last half of 2006 carried forward into 2007. At the same time, a reduced pace of poultry production in response to high feed grain prices beginning in late 2006 provided additional support for prices. The combined effect of this situation was a very strong wholesale broiler market. For example, the monthly Georgia dock whole sale broiler price peaked in August at just under 81 cents per pound – up from less than 70 cents in August 2006. Wholesale prices for individual parts were also up, with the greatest increase on leg quarters – largely reflecting the recovery in export demand. Figure 1 shows monthly Georgia dock broiler prices for 2007 compared to 2006.

For most of 2007, USDA projected a decline in annual broiler production for 2007 compared with 2006. This would have been the first year-over-year decline in broiler production since 1973. Strong wholesale product prices and feed prices that were more manageable than expected contributed to a surge in production in the latter half of 2007 that lifted annual broiler production slightly above the level of 2006. Broiler hatchery data from the latter part of 2007 suggests that the increased pace of broiler production will continue through at least the first half of 2008. This – along with increased production of competing meats, notably pork – will put pressure on prices as 2008 unfolds. In fact, as figure 1 shows, prices have already retreated some from 2007 highs. If demand remains healthy, the decline in prices should not be too dramatic. Foreign demand in 2007 was very good, supported at least in part by a very weak dollar that made US product more affordable on the world market. Based on current weakness in the US economy, this situation may well continue for much of 2008. On the domestic front, relatively large total meat supplies may pressure demand, but in an environment of economic uncertainty, poultry’s relative price advantage over other meats could help to support demand.

The biggest challenge for the poultry industry in 2008 will likely come from input markets rather than from the wholesale or retail product market. Oil markets started the New Year by hitting the $100 per barrel mark for the first time. Prices are not expected to moderate a great deal throughout the year. Thus, high energy prices will be a persistent challenge for poultry producers. Likewise, feed prices have shot higher in late 2007 and early 2008 after working lower throughout the 2007 growing season. For 2008, grain prices will remain high. It is possible that grain prices will peak relatively early in year this year – much as the corn market did last year – providing at least some measure of relief. On the other hand, with very good demand for grains rapidly drawing down stocks, any glitch in this year’s production could send prices even higher than current levels. If grain prices rise – actually, even if grain prices hold at the current level through the planting season – integrators will most likely respond with some reduction in production. This would serve to support prices but would, of course, reduce revenues for growers. In short, as was the case last year, much is riding on the behavior of grain markets as we move through 2008. This is true not only for the poultry market but for all livestock markets.

Source: Livestock Marketing Information Center.
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• Sharing ideas
• Unsurpassed personal service
• Delivering great solutions

Jeff Little (Left)
Area Sales Manager

Scott Wallace (Right)
Area Service Technician
Nutrient management plans are based on the fertilizer value of the litter produced on the farm. Do you know how much nitrogen, phosphorus and potash you litter contains? There are two ways of determining this vital information; using published values or having your litter analyzed. The Department of Poultry Science at Mississippi State University has published data indicating the fertilizer value of broiler litter.

Published litter nutrient values

Broiler litter samples were collected from 197 broiler houses in Mississippi. Samples were collected across a wide range of litter ages. Litter samples were collected from houses that ranged from only one flock of broilers produced on the litter up to twenty-eight flocks of broilers produced on the litter. All litter samples were submitted to the Mississippi Chemical Laboratory for determination of fertilizer nutrients. Nutrient levels were determined on an as-is basis. That is, the nutrient content was determined on the litter without correcting for moisture content.

As one might expect, fertilizer values were low in litter collected from houses that had produced one to four flocks, but reached peak levels after five flocks had been produced on the litter. Table 1 contains the average nutrient value for the various ages of litter sampled. The nitrogen content of fresh broiler litter increased from 42 pounds per ton after one flock of production to 60 pounds per ton after five flocks, and it remained constant from five to 28 flocks of production. The average nitrogen content across all ages of litter was 57 pounds per ton. The phosphate level in fresh broiler litter increased from 22 pounds per ton after one flock of production to 29 pounds per ton after three flocks of production. The average phosphate content across all ages of litter was 29 pounds per ton. The potash level in fresh broiler litter increased from 22 pounds per ton after one flock of production to 29 pounds per ton after three flocks of production. The average potash content across all ages of litter was 29 pounds per ton. The nitrogen content of fresh broiler litter increased from 42 pounds per ton after one flock of production to 60 pounds per ton after five flocks, and it remained constant from five to 28 flocks of production. The average nitrogen content across all ages of litter was 57 pounds per ton. The phosphate level in fresh broiler litter increased from 22 pounds per ton after one flock of production to 29 pounds per ton after three flocks of production. The average phosphate content across all ages of litter was 29 pounds per ton. The potash level in fresh broiler litter increased from 22 pounds per ton after one flock of production to 29 pounds per ton after three flocks of production. The average potash content across all ages of litter was 29 pounds per ton. The nitrogen content of fresh broiler litter increased from 42 pounds per ton after one flock of production to 60 pounds per ton after five flocks, and it remained constant from five to 28 flocks of production. The average nitrogen content across all ages of litter was 57 pounds per ton. The phosphate level in fresh broiler litter increased from 22 pounds per ton after one flock of production to 29 pounds per ton after three flocks of production. The average phosphate content across all ages of litter was 29 pounds per ton. The potash level in fresh broiler litter increased from 22 pounds per ton after one flock of production to 29 pounds per ton after three flocks of production. The average potash content across all ages of litter was 29 pounds per ton. The nitrogen content of fresh broiler litter increased from 42 pounds per ton after one flock of production to 60 pounds per ton after five flocks, and it remained constant from five to 28 flocks of production. The average nitrogen content across all ages of litter was 57 pounds per ton. The phosphate level in fresh broiler litter increased from 22 pounds per ton after one flock of production to 29 pounds per ton after three flocks of production. The average phosphate content across all ages of litter was 29 pounds per ton. The potash level in fresh broiler litter increased from 22 pounds per ton after one flock of production to 29 pounds per ton after three flocks of production.

Table 1. Fertilizer Nutrient Content of Mississippi Broiler Litter.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Litter Age</th>
<th>Nitrogen (N) (lbs/ton)</th>
<th>Phosphate (P2O5) (lbs/ton)</th>
<th>Potash (K2O) (lbs/ton)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Flock</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Flocks</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Flocks</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Flocks</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Flocks</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Flocks</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Flocks</td>
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<tr>
<td>8 Flocks</td>
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<td>9 Flocks</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 Flocks</td>
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<td>23 Flocks</td>
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<td>25 Flocks</td>
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<td>28 Flocks</td>
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<td>29</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>59</td>
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</table>

How do I sample my litter?

A broiler litter sample submitted for laboratory analysis to determine its fertilizer value must be representative of all of the litter in a broiler house, not one small area of the house. In order to collect a litter sample that is representative of the entire house, a minimum of fifteen random samples should be taken throughout the broiler house. These samples should all be placed in a large plastic container, and thoroughly mixed together. After thoroughly mixing the samples, collect one quart of the litter from the container and place in a sealable plastic bag. Label the bag and store the litter sample in a cool dry place until it is submitted to the laboratory for determination of the fertilizer nutrient value.

How much litter do I have in my house?

Litter production was measured at the end of one year of production. Litter was produced at a rate of 1.6 tons per 1000 birds placed in the house. After two years of production, litter was produced at a rate of 1.0 ton per 1000 birds placed. Why does the rate of production decrease in older litter? Have you ever noticed that as your litter gets older, you cannot see any shavings? Microorganisms in the litter breakdown and degrade the shavings that were placed in house as new litter. In addition, these microorganisms continue to breakdown the litter after the shavings have been degraded.

Should I use published values or sample my own litter?

Growers often wonder which litter nutrient values are best for them. The published values give you a starting point, but you should have your litter analyzed. Without a doubt, sampling your litter and determining the fertilizer value allows you to develop a nutrient management plan tailored to your farm.

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would like to thank Skye Jones from UBS
Financial Services for the information
shared to attendees of our grower
meetings last fall. Valuable insight was
discussed about retirement options,
various plans and educational saving
opportunities. Everyone present also
received a great tasting meal prepared
by Skye. Again, we thank him for all the
hard work in attending these meetings
around the state and the wonderful meal.
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Projected Confined Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO) Permit Requirements for 2008

The Confined Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO) steering committee met in December and has recommended that the hours required of eligible growers for technical training be reduced from six to two hours. Years ago, the Department of Environmental Quality approved that poultry growers with at least 125,000 broilers and layers with at least 30,000 hens be required to have technical training.

The two hours required for 2008 will be on the recent changes in the nutrient management program. This will enable growers a better understanding of the current changes and how they affect the grower. The CAFO steering committee approved that NRCS (Natural Resource Conservation Service) be responsible for the content of these hours. NRCS’s John Lee, Project Manager, is going to teach the bulk of the hours.

The MPA (Mississippi Poultry Association) will take an active role in planning dates, locations and times of the meetings for John and/or his colleagues to present technical training hours this year. Please note any changes in this program in future newsletters of Emerging Trends or our website at www.mspoultry.org.
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- Priefert Headgate
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- Brooder for Poultry House
- DeWalt Cordless Heavy Duty Drill
- Tractor Boom Sprayer will be given at the end of the Expo

Contact your local Extension office or Community Bank for an agenda of the event.

Thursday, April 10, 2008
9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

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- O-rings: EPDM
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- Maximum temperature: 175° F @ 80 psi
- Maximum pressure: 125 psi
- Pressure drop @ 100 gpm: 5 psi
- Inlet (1) & Outlets (2): 2” slip
- Shipping weight: 47 pounds

FILTER SPECs:
- Micron rating: 20 micron @ > 95% efficiency
- Media material: Polyester
- End caps: Polypropylene/Fiberglass
- Center tubes: Polypropylene
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- O-rings (dual): EPDM
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM #</th>
<th>PRODUCT DESCRIPTION</th>
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<tr>
<td>48658</td>
<td>Farmguard Filter 20 Micro</td>
<td>Each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48657</td>
<td>Farmguard Filter Housing</td>
<td>Each</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Be on the lookout for more information about this year’s Poultry Management School. Don’t miss these great opportunities to hear professionals in the industry talk about what is important to your company. Pictured (left) is Dr. Regan Sadler during a wet lab breakout and Mike Donahue (right) from Agri Stats discuss recent poultry industry trends during our 2007 Poultry Management School.

“I wanted a banker who realizes that nutrient management has a direct effect on my financial management.”

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Proper nutrient management is a vital part of any agricultural enterprise, particularly for those utilizing manure nutrients. Advances in soil, plant, and environmental sciences and nutrient management techniques have enhanced our ability to develop nutrient management plans that enable producers to maximize the use of manure nutrients and minimize potential risks to water and soil quality. Proper utilization of nutrients from animal manures is not only important for preserving soil, water and environmental quality, but has become important for economic reasons as the cost of commercial fertilizers continues to increase. Application of nutrients beyond crop needs not only increases the potential for nutrient loss from fields, it is also an inefficient use of a valuable fertilizer product that could be sold off the farm and generate revenue. Therefore, calibrating litter spreaders (i.e., knowing the rate of litter application under certain conditions) is important to assure proper nutrient management and maximize the economical use of manure nutrients.

Calibration of manure and litter spreaders is typically done using techniques designed for the calibration of commercial fertilizer spreaders. Precision calibration for commercial fertilizer spreaders is very important for obvious economic reasons. However, calibrating litter spreaders can be quite different due to the differences in material density, handling and flow characteristics and particle size, especially when spreading cake-out litter. One of the most commonly recommended methods of litter spreader calibration is referred to as the “tarp method”. The procedure outlined below is a “modified” version of the tarp method that works well for poultry litter spreader calibration. Spreader calibration can easily be done by one person in only a few minutes.

**Calibrating Poultry Litter Spreading Equipment**

**Materials needed:** Six small plastic tarps of the same size (most common sizes, such as 8’ x 8’, 8’ x 10’ or 10’ x 12’, will work), a bucket or other weighing container, a scale and a calculator.

**Step 1:** Place the six tarps in a row on flat area. Pin the corners and centers of the tarps where they meet with spikes or heavy weights. Do not overlap the tarps.

**Step 2:** Drive the spreader over the center of the six tarps (where the 3rd and 4th meet). Operate the spreader several yards before and after you drive over the tarps. Operate the spreader as you would in the field, and record gear selection, engine RPMs, spreader gate opening, spreader hydraulic flow control setting, or any other information that could affect the rate of litter application.

**Step 3:** Assess the spread pattern of litter on the tarps. Estimate the width of the area of heaviest application and the width of lesser application on the edges of the spread pattern. Use this information to estimate the distance needed between spreader passes to achieve a uniform application over all tarps. On subsequent passes, overlap the thin edges of the spread pattern, but do not overlap the areas of heaviest application. Practice trials conducted at Mississippi State University show drastically different spread patterns and rates of application for dry litter from complete clean-out and caked litter between flocks. Be sure to calibrate equipment using the type of litter that will be applied.

**Step 4:** Make a pass on each side of the first pass at the appropriate distance estimated in Step 3. If done at the correct distance, an even application of litter should be achieved across all areas between the centerline of the 2nd and 3rd pass.
Step 5: Collect the litter deposited on each of the four middle tarps individually. The litter can be poured into a bucket (pictured above), or simply fold the tarp up with the litter inside and place the tarp and litter in the bucket. If this is done, be sure to weigh and record the weight of the bucket and tarp together before spreading the litter on the tarps. The four middle tarps represent what the average application rate would be in the field when overlapping passes are taken into consideration. The outer two tarps are for helping to evaluate spread pattern width, particularly for caked litter, which is often wider than the middle four tarps.

Step 6: Weigh the bucket and litter (or bucket, tarp and litter). Record the empty weight of the bucket before collecting the litter on the tarp. Subtract the weight of the empty bucket (or bucket + tarp) to get the weight of the litter only. Do this for each of the four middle tarps.

Step 7: Calculate the rate of application for each of the four middle tarps. Use the following equation:

\[(\text{pounds of litter on tarp}) \times 21.78 = \text{tons of litter/acre} \]

\[\text{area of the tarp (square feet)}\]

Example: The bucket and the litter in the picture weigh 9.75 lbs., and the empty bucket weighed 1.75 lbs. Therefore, 8 lbs. times 21.78, divided by 80 (our tarps were 8’ x 10’) = 2.18 tons/acre.

Step 8: Repeat the procedure several times to get a reliable average. If the rate of application is higher or lower than the desired rate based on nutrient management planning, then make equipment adjustments (RPMs, flow controls, gate opening, etc.) and/or drive the equipment faster or slower.

Cost: The procedure is very inexpensive. The tarps used in our calibration trial cost $5 each, for a total of $30. The small dial scale was purchased at the local cooperative for $35; however, you can use any reliable scale you may already have. Most people have buckets around the farm, and most people already own a simple handheld calculator. Most cell phones also have built in calculators. Therefore, total costs should be less than $70, and the tarps and scale can be reused over and over to do future calibrations if equipment, litter type or desired rate of application changes.

**WHY DID THE CHICKEN FARMER CROSS THE ROAD?**

**TO RETURN THEIR 2007 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE FORM**

It’s not every day that a walk to your mailbox leads to an opportunity to shape the future of the agricultural industry. But for Mississippi’s poultry farmers, that opportunity has now become a reality. The 2007 Census of Agriculture, the only source of consistent and comprehensive agricultural data for every state and county in the nation, has been mailed out to agricultural producers across the nation.

Conducted every five years by the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), the Census provides detailed data covering nearly every facet of U.S. agriculture. Government organizations, lawmakers, town planners and individual farm operations can use this vital information to help them plan for future facilities, services and community growth.

“The 2007 Census of Agriculture provides poultry farmers with a powerful voice. The information gathered through the Census influences policy decisions and programs that can have a tremendous impact on farmers and their communities,” said Thomas Gregory, director of the NASS Mississippi Field Office. “For example, Census data is a valuable tool when mapping out future business strategies and when planning responses to potential disease outbreaks and other adverse events.

“I strongly encourage all Mississippi poultry producers to promptly complete and return the Census, so they can voice to the state and nation the value and importance of the poultry industry,” added Gregory.

Today, less than two percent of Americans reside on farms. Only through the collective voice of agricultural producers, can the non-farming population understand the scope and importance of agriculture. Farmers are required by federal law to complete the forms and return them. United States law (Title 7, U.S. Code) requires all those who receive a Census report form to respond even if they did not operate a farm or ranch in 2007.

Completed forms are due by February 4, 2008. Producers can return their forms by mail or, for the first time, they have the convenient option of filling out the Census online. For more information about the Census, visit www.agcensus.usda.gov. The Census is your voice, your future, and your responsibility.
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Steve Bonasio (left), Corporate Chef for Sanderson Farms, and Mike Pepper (right), Mississippi Poultry Association, promote chicken and Mississippi’s poultry industry at the recent American Farm Bureau Convention. Attendees from all over the nation sampled chicken produced and processed from Mississippi.

Amber Culpepper is the recipient of the Mississippi Poultry Association’s Grower Advisory Committee Scholarship for a non-poultry science major. Each year the association awards two scholarships to a child or grandchild of a Mississippi Poultry Association member. These scholarships are awarded annually to a full-time student majoring in poultry science and the other awarded to a full-time student of any major.

Amber was selected based on her academic achievements and community service. She is currently a full-time student at Jones County Junior College with plans to continue her education in the medical field. She is the daughter of Bob and Sandy Culpepper of the Union community in Jones County who grow broilers for Sanderson Farms. Amber is pictured with J.D. Sumrall (left), MPA Grower Relations Coordinator, and Mike Pepper (right), MPA President.

Please contact the Association office for any information on 2008 scholarships. The deadline for this year’s scholarship will be May 31, 2008. You can also visit our website for additional information at www.mspoultry.org.
I would like to thank all of you who were Mississippi Poultry Association members in 2007 and for your support. I appreciate everyone who has provided input – whether positive or negative – in my first year in the position as Grower Relations Coordinator. You have helped me understand more fully the challenges that you face as a poultry grower. Hopefully we have been able to work together to find solutions and answers. I look forward to serving you in 2008 and will continue to seek your guidance and opinions. Please continue to provide your Association with input.

The Mississippi Poultry Association membership drive is already well under way for 2008. Many of you have already been contacted by letter and/or through your service tech. We want to make sure everyone has the opportunity for their voice to be heard and to take advantage of membership opportunities. Just a few of these are making sure you are represented in regulatory and legislative matters. If the Association has missed making contact with you, you can become a member by simply filling out the form below and returning it to us. If you have any questions about our organization and membership, please feel free to call me at 601-942-9269 or email me at sumrallmpa@bellsouth.net.

It’s time for grower membership renewals! Please complete the following form and return it to the MPA Office.

NAME ________________________________________________________ COMPANY I GROW FOR _________________________________

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UPCOMING EVENTS

MARCH 11, 10:00
Grower Advisory Committee at the Western Sizzlin in Magee.

MARCH 27, 9:00 TO 4:00
Community Bank Poultry Expo at the Magnolia Center, Laurel Fairgrounds in Laurel. This meeting is worth two hours of Confined Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO) technical training.

APRIL 10, 9:00 TO 4:00
Magnolia Beef & Poultry Expo at the Smith Country Agricultural Complex in Raleigh.

MAY 13 – 14
Mississippi Poultry Association Poultry Management School at Trustmark Park (Mississippi Braves) in Pearl.

JUNE 10, 10:00
Grower Advisory Committee at the Western Sizzlin in Magee.

SEPTEMBER 9, 10:00
Grower Advisory Committee at the Western Sizzlin in Magee.

SEPTEMBER 18 – 20
Mississippi Poultry Association 71st Annual Meeting at the Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort in Destin, Florida.

Grower Advisory Committee

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Peter McKinley</th>
<th>Jon Wilson</th>
<th>Todd Dupré</th>
<th>Steve Holloway</th>
<th>Donna Ward</th>
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<td>Sanderson Farms</td>
<td>Peco Farms</td>
<td>Tyson Foods</td>
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<td>Michael Magee</td>
<td>Kenneth Upton</td>
<td>Danny Thornton</td>
<td>Deborah Sumrall</td>
<td>Gary Weatherford</td>
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If you want to join the Mississippi Poultry Association as a Grower Member, call the MPA office at 601-355-0248 for more information!