THE MISSISSIPPI POULTRY ASSOCIATION’S GROWER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Mississippi Poultry Association’s Grower Advisory Committee is made up of growers from the member companies of MPA. These individuals are dedicated to providing information to the staff at MPA to assist growers in Mississippi.

Some of the areas that the Grower Advisory Committee (GAC) and MPA are working on are Scholarships, Permitting, Regulatory, Legislative, Education, Financial, Insurance, Utilities, and operating efficiency as a whole. These members take time out of their busy schedules to attend quarterly GAC meetings around the state. They also come to special meetings to guide MPA in finding solutions to problems on the farm and what options are best for the farmer. For example, members of the GAC came to meetings with MPA to help decide what could be included as farm implements on a poultry farm. MPA took the feedback from these members and put together a proposal to the Mississippi Tax Commission. The GAC has two $1000.00 scholarships that it gives out every year. These are just a few of the things that the GAC does to help in our industry.

Listed below are some of the members of the GAC. If you know them or happen to see them in town, take the time to let them know you appreciate their hard work. If you don’t know any of them or feel more comfortable calling the MPA staff with concerns, feedback or suggestions. You can contact JD Sumrall at (601) 932-7560 or email at sumrall@mspoultry.org.

THE MISSISSIPPI POULTRY ASSOCIATION’S GROWER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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GAC Active Member
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GARY WEATHERFORD
GAC Active Member
Tyson Foods, Inc.

JON WILSON
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1. Merial Study #00-126.
More poultry growers are members of the Mississippi Poultry Association (MPA) than ever before. If you are not a member, you should consider joining the other 800 poultry growers, who help us keep the priorities that make for a vital poultry industry before the public, policy makers and regulators.

The MPA works in the Legislature and with regulatory agencies to keep you profitable. In our last edition of Emerging Trends, we told you about MPA’s negotiations with the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality to lessen the burden of the new dry litter poultry permit. MPA was also successful getting results for growers in the 2009 legislative session, and that work at the Legislature and elsewhere continues.

Some of those priorities from the 2009 legislative session include:
- Passing legislation to reduce the sales tax on farm implements, replacement parts and their maintenance and repairs. This was a major victory for the state’s farmers who are facing the worst economy in decades. Members of MPA’s Growers’ Advisory Committee (see page 1) worked with poultry supply companies to propose regulations to the State Tax Commission that will implement the legislation. The legislation, which Mississippi Governor Haley Barbour signed into law, lowers the state sales tax on farm implements and logging equipment from 3 percent to 1.5 percent on July 1, 2009. The sales tax on parts and labor used to repair and maintain the implements and equipment will drop from 7 percent to 1.5 percent. The sales tax on farm tractors will increase from 1 percent to 1.5 percent. State law defines “farm implements sold to farmers and used directly in the production of poultry . . . when used on the farm,” as eligible for the lower rate.
- Protecting the poultry industry at the Capitol also requires killing legislation that would have made it more difficult or more costly to operate farms and businesses. MPA helped kill legislation that would have increased existing, or imposed new, environmental permit fees. MPA opposed attempts at overly broad definitions of animal cruelty as a felony. MPA also worked against changes to the state income tax laws that would have prevented you from deducting any losses the last two years.
- MPA works to protect the Emerging Crops Loan program from any changes that would hinder the effectiveness of this unique loan program for poultry growers. Legislators added $1 million to the program this year.
- Helping to keep property taxes from increasing by working in the Legislature and with the State Tax Commission.

In other areas, MPA staff efforts to benefit grower members include:
- Requesting and receiving Internal Revenue Service confirmation that poultry houses are “commercial property” for purposes of a new energy efficiency income tax deduction on property built or improved since 2006.
- Seeking federal funding for a series of seminars to provide the latest energy cost savings ideas to growers.
- Helping sponsor a roving poultry house that will demonstrate efficient operations around the state. Mississippi State University’s Agriculture and Biological Engineering Department and the USDA Poultry Research Unit at Starkville built the house which will demonstrate best practices on ventilation and the importance of maintenance.
- Promoting net metering regulations with the state’s electric cooperatives to allow customers who generate electricity on their farms to sell electricity back onto the grid. This will become more important under the Obama administration’s focus on green energy.
- The recent Poultry Management School, which grower members of MPA attended in Starkville for free. (see article)
- MPA staff visited our state’s Congressional delegation in Washington to explain the importance of the poultry industry to the state’s economy. One of the key issues was an Environmental Protection Agency proposal to increase ethanol in gasoline. This will raise the price of poultry feed and undercut the industry’s profitability.
- MPA staff continues to meet with insurance professionals regarding health insurance options for growers. (See ads in this edition of Emerging Trends.)

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Peter McKinley of Hazlehurst, chairman of the MPA Grower Advisory Committee, and Ken Upton of Kokomo, vice chairman, received commemorative pens from Mississippi Governor Haley Barbour after he signed Senate Bill 2606 at a signing ceremony in the governor’s office after the 2009 legislative session.

Senate Bill 2606, which takes effect July 1, lowers the sales tax rate on farm implements from 3 percent to 1.5 percent and on repairs and maintenance from 7 percent to 1.5 percent. A coalition of agriculture groups pushed for this tax reduction to provide relief for farmers and bring the tax in line with the industrial sales tax rates on manufacturing equipment.

Governor Barbour spent a few minutes afterwards chatting with McKinley and Upton about their farms and the people they knew in common.

After the meeting with the governor, the Grower Advisory Committee, a group of poultry supply company representatives and David Stevens, CPA and senior manager with BKD, LLP, developed a letter to the State Tax Commission asking for a letter ruling on what items would be subject to the new tax rate. A letter ruling states the Commission’s official position on an issue. Most of the items the group proposed will be subject to the lower rate based on STC letter ruling.

A copy of the STC letter ruling is on the top left corner of the MPA website at www.mspoultry.org.

Gov. Barbour signs bill lowering sales tax on farm equipment. Behind Lt. Gov. Phil Bryant (left) and Gov. Haley Barbour, are John Mabry, Miss. Loggers Association (MLA); Tamme Buikin, MLA; Cecil Johnson, Executive Director, MLA; Mark Leggett, President, Miss. Poultry Association (MPA); Ellen Dabbs, President, Mississippi Forestry Association (MFA); Bruce Alt, Executive Vice-president, MFA; Ken Upton, MPA Grower Advisory Committee Vice Chairman; and Peter McKinley, MPA Grower Advisory Committee Chairman.

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6:00-7:30 pm  Diamond Sponsor Poolside Reception

Friday, September 18
8:00 am-12:00 noon  Opening Business Session, Keynote Address and Awards
10:00-11:30 am  Cobb-Vantress Ladies “Brunch on the Bay” on board the Solaris
12:30-5:00 pm  Fishing
1:00-5:00 pm  Vendworks, McNeely Plastics Product Golf Tournament
1:00-5:00 pm  Tennis

Saturday, September 19
8:00-11:00 am  Business/Board Meeting
1:00-5:00 pm  Fishing
1:00-5:00 pm  International Paper Golf Tournament
1:00-5:00 pm  Tennis
6:00-9:00 pm  Gold Star Sponsor’s Awards Reception and the Silent/Live Auction

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Mite Control Application Procedures for EcoExempt®-D In Broiler/Breeder Layer Facilities
By: Robert Rowland - IVESCO Technical Services

Curative: Procedures for mite outbreak during the flock.
1) Apply 50-70 lbs. of EcoExempt®-D in the scratch area of the hen house and use an additional 10 lbs. to lightly dust the nests.
2) Repeat application 7-14 days after the first application using the same amounts of EcoExempt®-D. This second application will help insure the breaking of the mite life cycle and, in most cases eliminate the problem.

Preventative: Procedures for the prevention of Mite populations, conducted during the cleanout process.
1) After the house is cleaned and disinfected and ready to place new flock, apply 8 ounces of Standguard®/5,000 sq. ft. of floor space to every surface in the house. The use of a gasoline or electric powered backpack mist blower will be the quickest method of application.
2) After the shavings have been placed in the scratch area broadcast 80-100 lbs of EcoExempt®-D to the entire surface of the new shavings. A power duster operated at low RPM will be the quickest method of application.
3) The combination of these procedures will help insure the prevention of mite breaks during the flock and the use of Standguard® will aid in the reductions of Fly and Beetle populations during the first 2-3 months of the flock.

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<td>EcoExempt D Dust Inceticide</td>
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The 2009 MPA Poultry Management School was held in May at the College of Veterinary Medicine on the campus of Mississippi State University. It was a fun mixture of growers, allied industry and company personnel totaling 118. Although the numbers were down somewhat this year, everyone enjoyed the networking, reminiscing, and lots of chicken talk.

Dr. Leonard Fussell with Cobb-Vantress gave us a disease update while Dr. Marshall Putnam with Wayne Farms held court on the current field problems. Dr. Scott McKenzie with Ivesco gave us a talk on sanitation solutions and Mike Donohue gave us a cautiously optimistic outlook of the industry. The second day was highlighted by communication exercises presented by various staff, and from what I can tell, this was a hit and will be taken a step further next year. Dr. Jody Purswell and Dr. Jeremiah Davis gave us tips on ventilation and Dr. Chris McDaniel gave some interesting demonstrations on handling the roosters on the farm.

As always, the annual crawfish boil sponsored by the Allied Committee was a huge success. John Autry with Casco also cooked some great barbeque and Jeff Little and Scott Wallace with Merial Select provided the hospitality suite. The MPA allied industry works diligently to put this party together and they never let us down. Bones Crawfish from Tuscaloosa, Alabama cooked again this year so there was not a shortage of crawfish or entertainment.

Steve McLaurin, MPA Chairman of the Board arrives at the crawfish boil.

Dr. Wallace Morgan looks on as Dr. Tim Chamblee and Shelly Harless and others enjoy crawfish.

Dr. Chris McDaniel shows techniques to Sanderson Farms techs.

Dr. Jody Purswell demonstrates ventilation techniques.

The crawfish boil was well attended.

The 2009 MPA Poultry Management School general session.

If you missed the MPA Poultry Management School in May, be sure to attend next year!
EVALUATING TUNNEL VENTILATION SYSTEM PERFORMANCE... ARE YOU READY FOR HOT WEATHER?

by Michael Czarick, Extension Engineer, University of Georgia Cooperative Extension Service, College of Agricultural and Environmental Science

Quite often producers’ ability to keep their market-age birds cool on a hot summer day has more to do with what they did before the chicks rather what they are doing that particular day. The fact is that much of the basic maintenance required to insure maximum bird cooling in a tunnel-ventilated house is difficult to do once the birds are placed, especially once they reach market age. The following provides a guide as to how to evaluate the maintenance status of a tunnel-ventilated house in between flocks so that potential ventilation system problems/weaknesses can be uncovered before it is too late.

1) Check that all tunnel fans are clean and properly maintained. Are the fan shutters, screens, and blades clean? Do the fan belts worn? Does the motor pulley show signs of wear? Does it still have a “V” shape to it or does it have a smooth, mirror-like finish and have more of a “U” shape? If so it may need to be replaced. Consider purchasing an electronic tachometer to verify the fan blades are rotating at the proper speed.

2) Close the tunnel curtain and air inlets and conduct a static pressure test. Turn on one tunnel fan and measure the resulting static pressure. The ideal static pressure is 0.20”; this indicates that for all practical purposes the house has no leakage. To insure maximum bird cooling the static pressure should be at a minimum 0.13”. Not having a tight house can dramatically reduce your ability to keep your birds cool. For instance, let’s say that it takes two of a house’s eight tunnel fans to obtain a static pressure of 0.10”. This basically means that when tunnel ventilating two of the house’s eight fans are pulling hot air through the cracks and not through the pad system. This not only reduces overall bird cooling but can lead to large temperature differences between the pad and fan ends of a house.

3) Repeat the static pressure test with each of the house’s tunnel fans. If the pressure decreases, it means the fan being used is moving less air than the first fan tested and is in need of maintenance. If the pressure increases, it is an indication that the previous fan(s) tested is/are in need of maintenance.

4) Open the tunnel curtain fully, turn all the tunnel fans on and measure the static pressure in the center of the house. Typically this will run between 0.08” and 0.10”. If the pressure is higher than 0.10” it indicates that the tunnel fans are being restricted. It may be as simple as your tunnel curtains not being fully opened. It also could be an indicator that the pads may need cleaning or possibly replacing. A very low static pressure can be an indicator that the fans are not moving the air they should or the house has issues with excessive leakage.

5) Take a close look at the house’s evaporative cooling pads. Are the pads in good shape? Are the flutes clean? Are pad surfaces free of cob webs and mineral build-up? In the center of the pad system, measure the air speed a few inches from the pad with all the fans operating. (This should be done when there is minimal outside wind) For a 6” pad the air speed should be between 350 and 400 ft/min, a 2”pad between 300 and 350 ft/min, and for a 4” pad between 225 and 275 ft/min. If the air speed appears low, take a five-gallon bucket of water and throw it at the pad (the water, not the bucket) where you were measuring air speed. Check the speed of the air coming through the pad once again. If the air speed increases, the pads are in need of cleaning. If the air speed is higher than values listed, you may not have enough pad on the house.

6) In houses with air deflectors, static pressure measurements (with all the tunnel fans operating) should be taken thirty feet past the last deflector with a magnehelic pressure gauge. Ideally, this pressure should not exceed 0.12”. If the pressure is too high, measure static pressure once more thirty feet past the end of the tunnel curtain opening. If static pressure is low near the tunnel curtain opening (i.e. 0.06”) this is an indicator that the deflector curtains are too low and are causing a significant increase in pressure that the fans are working against. Consider raising the deflectors a foot or two. You will often find that raising deflectors will improve air speed significantly between deflector curtains. If the static pressure measured near the pads is also high, it typically indicates that your pads are dirty and are in need of cleaning.

7) Around 100’ from the tunnel fans measure the air speed five feet off the floor roughly half way between the sidewall and the center of the house. Make sure the air velocity meter you are using has an averaging feature and wait at least 30 seconds before noting the air velocity. Turn the meter off and back on and repeat the measurement. Repeat this process on the other side of the house and average the four readings. This should provide a fairly accurate measurement of average house air velocity. Ideally, the average air velocity in a tunnel-ventilated broiler house should be between 500 and 600 ft/min. If it is low, and you have taken all the
above steps, you may not have enough tunnel fan capacity to obtain optimal bird cooling. In houses with air deflectors, air velocity measurements should be taken half way between deflectors roughly 100’ from the tunnel fan end of the house.

8) If you have a 6” pad system turn off the water running to the pad system reservoirs. Empty the reservoirs in all the houses. Turn the water back on to all the pad system reservoirs. Can you maintain 40 psi where the water comes into the house? If not you may not have sufficient water capacity or the size of the pipe running from the well/ street may not be large enough.

9) With the pad system reservoirs full, turn the circulation pumps on. Check to see if the water is spraying up the proper height at the end of the distribution system (Does Your Evaporative Cooling System Circulate Enough Water. Poultry Housing Tips. Vol 14, No 4). If it doesn’t, make sure the filter and water pump impellers are clean and valves are wide open. If it is still low you may need to consider changing the type of filter used or upgrading your circulation pumps.

10) Last but not least, have your standby generator serviced. You may also want to have an electrician check your farm’s electrical system each spring to check for any potential problem areas.

University of Georgia Cooperative Extension Service, College of Agricultural and Environmental Science, “Poultry Housing Tips: Evaluating Tunnel Ventilation System Performance...Are You Ready for Hot Weather?” Vol 19 No 7: June 2007
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The Poultry Research and Diagnostic Laboratory (PRDL), otherwise known as the “poultry lab,” is part of the Mississippi State University College of Veterinary Medicine and is located in Pearl, MS. The poultry lab began operations in November of 2000 with three faculty and one technician. Today the poultry lab, with 5 technicians and 5 veterinarians, is at home in a state-of-the-art facility that was completed in 2006. The poultry lab is one of four labs in the Mississippi Veterinary Research and Diagnostic Laboratory System. The system has recently been granted full accreditation from the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians. Accreditation is required to allow us to meet testing requirements for foreign trade and to maintain our partner relationship with the USDA.

Services provided at the poultry lab include necropsy, serology, bacteriology, histopathology, virology and molecular biology. These tests can be used as diagnostic tools to determine disease presence in a flock. We often receive birds from an affected flock and are asked to run tests to determine their problem. The first step is to necropsy the birds and examine them for signs or lesions of disease processes. Samples are usually collected for further lab tests including blood for serology, swabs for bacteriology, swabs or tissues for molecular biology, tissues for virology, and tissues for histopathology. The veterinarian in charge of the case determines which tests are requested and which samples are collected. This veterinarian follows the progress of these samples through the particular lab tests and reports the preliminary and final results to the case submitter. The poultry lab frequently receives samples (blood, swabs and/or tissues) directly from the field with requests to perform specific tests. These submissions are often made by service technicians following discussions with company veterinarians or one of the veterinarians at the poultry lab. Another use of these lab tests is to identify a potential health problem that may be developing in the field but has not yet reached the level of a disease outbreak. This is a very important use of these tests since it is often easier to prevent a problem than it is to treat it or eradicate it.

Some of the tests at the poultry lab are regulatory tests that are run to help identify and control poultry diseases as well as facilitate the export of poultry products to other states and other countries. The main two such tests performed at the poultry lab are the serological tests for Mycoplasma (Mg and Ms) and for Avian Influenza (AI). These tests are required by the National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP) and the Mississippi Board of Animal Health. The State Veterinarian’s office oversees the compliance with the testing requirements for these diseases.

In addition to the tests provided at the poultry lab, the veterinarians spend a portion of their time in the field visiting farms, hatcheries and processing plants. The purpose of these visits is to assist in the diagnosis of health problems, monitor and evaluate health programs and hatchery sanitation, and generally help improve bird health and production efficiency.

While the duties described above would be considered a full time job, the veterinarians from the poultry lab also teach at the College of Veterinary Medicine and occasionally at the Poultry Science Department. Although the time commitment to teaching for four of the veterinarians is relatively small, they all consider the contact with students to be very important in the training of future veterinarians and service techs who will be responsible for protecting the health of the poultry industry for years to come.
Construction is currently underway on the Mississippi Mobile Environment and Energy Laboratory (MEEL). The MEEL consists of a 45-foot-long enclosed trailer equipped with the latest in poultry housing equipment and will literally operate as a “chicken house on wheels”. It will be used as a teaching and research tool for all aspects of poultry housing. Demonstrations will include evaporative pad operation and maintenance, fan maintenance, and energy consumption of fans, pumps, and lights. The MEEL was displayed at the recent MPA Management School and a formal debut is planned for the fall. The MEEL is a joint project between MSU’s Agricultural and Biological Engineering Department, Poultry Science Department, and the USDA-ARS Poultry Research Unit. Equipment was generously supplied by Hired Hand and Chore Time. For more information, please contact Dr. Jeremiah Davis (MSU ABE Department, 662-325-7347) or Dr. Jody Purswell (USDA-ARS Poultry Research Unit, 662-320-7480).

(Top left) Rendering of finished trailer. (Bottom Left) Cool cell sections and operations room. (Above) Tunnel fans.
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June 9 – Grower Advisory Committee Meeting
10:00 a.m., Morgan’s on Main in Collins

July 31 – Application Deadline for Grants to Assist Poultry Producers with House Upgrades
These grants pay 25% of the eligible costs of retrofits that contribute to decreased energy consumption or the production of energy from a renewable energy source (solar, wood, geothermal, etc.). Over the past six years, more than 100 poultry producers in Mississippi have been approved for more than $4 million in grants under this program available from USDA-Rural Development. For more information and for assistance with the grant application process, contact Southwest Mississippi Resource Conservation and Development, Inc. (RC&D). An application package will be sent to you by mail or email. Simply email RC&D at southwest@msrcd.org or call 601-833-5539 and leave your name, complete mailing address, at least one phone number, and an email address if applicable. Projects with total eligible costs of $80,000 receive bonus points. The application process could take up to 30 days, so make the call now.

September 8 – Grower Advisory Committee Meeting
10:00 a.m., Country Fisherman in Mendenhall

September 17-20 – MPA 72nd Annual Convention
Destin, Florida. See page 7 for details. Call Becky Beard at (601) 932-7560 for more information.

December 8 – Grower Advisory Committee Meeting
Time to be announced, Morgan’s on Main in Collins

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You can send this information by one of the following:
- email: sumrall@mspoultry.org
- mail: 110 Airport Road, Suite C • Pearl, MS 39208
- phone: 601-932-7560
- fax: 601-932-7568

If you want to join the Mississippi Poultry Association as a Grower Member, call the MPA office at 601-932-7560 for more information!