THE POULTRY MARKETS: TEMPERED OPTIMISM FOR THE YEAR AHEAD

By Terry N. Barr, Senior Director of Industry Research, CoBank ACB

While the year ahead offers the poultry industry some tempered optimism, it will not be without its challenges and opportunities. Wildcards abound on both the demand and cost sides of the marketplace as the global economy begins to recover from a major recession.

From a demand perspective, the U.S. economy is now beginning an economic recovery from the worst post-WWII recession on record. However, all indications are that it will be a modest recovery by historical standards with U.S. consumer spending being constrained by rising unemployment rates and the need to sharply reduce debt. At the same time, the economic recovery in the emerging markets of Asia appears very robust, and along with the weak U.S. dollar, offers optimism in terms of export markets. Continued strong oil and commodity prices will also support recoveries in resource-rich economies such as Russia.

From a cost perspective, weather has delayed the U.S. corn and soybean harvests, and this will impact the yield, quality, and price of commodities. This may be somewhat countered if large harvests in South America materialize and provide some price relief in early 2010. Rising oil prices have already pushed energy costs higher, but natural gas price increases will be tempered by increasing supply availability. Access to capital will improve as we enter 2010, but the degree of permitted leverage will be sharply reduced, and costs will rise. Environmental regulatory activities related to air and water will also have to be monitored carefully since the regulatory agencies have become much more proactive.

In this environment, the entire meat industry will be very cautious about increasing meat output. Total red meat and poultry output in 2009 will be down by 3%, and there will be only limited increases in 2010. The hog sector is in the midst of a major liquidation in response to the H1N1 (swine flu) impacts on their export market, and that will carry into 2010. Broiler output will likely decline by 4% in 2009 with only a 1-2% increase expected in 2010.

The combination of a very value-conscious consumer and limited meat supplies should work to the benefit of the poultry industry in the year ahead. At the same time, the continued weak dollar and renewed global growth should boost some strategic poultry export markets. However, this will not be a forgiving economic environment with continuing tightness in capital and credit markets. Success or failure for companies and producers in this environment will likely turn on how well they manage the emerging risks, reduce leverage in their operations and rebuild their working capital.
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I was an observer recently (definitely not a participant) in hallway conversation between Dr. Phil Stayer, Sanderson Farms corporate veterinarian, and Dr. Michael Kidd, chairman of Mississippi State University’s Poultry Science Department. The best I could determine, it was a discussion about coccidiosis (an intestinal parasite) and the absorption of various nutrients in the intestines of chickens and what the latest research showed.

Why is this important enough to tell you? Because it answers another question I have been asked repeatedly in my first year as MPA’s president: “How do those chickens get so big so quickly?” The answer was in that conversation between Dr. Stayer and Dr. Kidd. The research done at the university reaches feed mills and chicken houses throughout Mississippi. I have learned that university research travels quickly to the real world in the poultry industry, and we need to ensure that process continues.

You may have heard that your state government is in a financial bind and facing the need to cut hundreds of millions of dollars. State leaders are saying that everything is on the table, but this is one case where poultry does not need to be on the table. Trimming costs is sorely needed in state government, and legislators could take some advice from the poultry industry where squeezing pennies is a way of life. What we don’t need is to sever that tie between MSU and the state’s largest agricultural industry that generates between $6 billion and $9 billion in economic impact in Mississippi.

There are seven poultry science departments left in the United States. There were more, but the others fell victim to budget cuts in earlier economic downturns. In 2006, WorldPoultry.net noted that “there has been a considerable expansion in the global poultry industry over the past few years, but at the same time, the number of active academic departments of Poultry Science declined.” The article goes on to state that poultry research is a lower priority at a university without a Poultry Science Department.

MSU has the smallest Poultry Science Department of the seven departments in the nation with six full-time equivalent faculty. The others are at Auburn (17.5 FTEs), North Carolina State (19.5), Texas A&M (12.7), Arkansas (16.0), Georgia (18.5) and Penn State University (7.25). Mississippi’s poultry industry is a larger share of our state’s agriculture than all of the other states with poultry science departments except Alabama and Georgia. MSU’s Department of Poultry Science has had an unbroken record of 100% job placement of seniors since 1950.

Mississippi’s poultry industry has seen significant growth since 2000. If forestry is included as an agricultural crop, poultry has jumped from 32% of the farm production in the state to 40% in 2008. And, more Mississippi poultry is headed to international destinations. Exports rose from $149 million in 2000 to $354 million in 2008.

Let your legislators know that MSU’s Poultry Science Department is a key ingredient in your continued success and in the growth of Mississippi’s poultry industry here and globally.
GRANTS AVAILABLE TO ASSIST PRODUCERS WITH POULTRY HOUSE UPGRADES

Grants for making energy efficiency improvements are now available from USDA-Rural Development. Eligible energy efficiency improvements are any improvements to a facility, building or process that reduces energy consumption.

For poultry producers, eligible improvements might include any work to poultry houses, including better insulation (walls, doors, ceilings), improved brooders (radiant, direct-spark or tube), lighting, computer controllers, vent doors, curtain improvements, interior stir fans, exhaust fans, water/drinking systems, baffles, insulated brood curtains, etc. Eligible improvements include just about any upgrades to a poultry house except feed systems and generators.

The grant funds may be used to pay 25% of the eligible project costs with a minimum grant request of $1,500 (total project cost of $6,000) and maximum grant request of $250,000 for energy efficiency improvement and $500,000 for renewable energy systems. Projects with total eligible costs of less than $80,000 receive priority for funding. Projects costing less than $200,000 are given the next level of priority. Projects exceeding $200,000 receive lowest priority, but applications are still encouraged.

The same grant program also assists with the installation of renewable energy systems. Eligible renewable energy systems must produce usable energy from a renewable energy source. These may include biomass, methane digester, solar, wind, geothermal, gasification, hydroelectric, etc.

Only costs of eligible improvements purchased and installed after the date of complete application being received by USDA Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBCS) state office are eligible for grant reimbursement—assuming the grant is eventually funded. Applications go through a national competitive process, and final approval is based on how your application competes against others across the U.S. Approval is not guaranteed and final word of the funding status may not be received until 2-3 months after submitting your application. An applicant may begin their retrofits as soon as the final grant application is sent to RBCS. However, incurring expenses prior to funding approval would be at the applicant’s own risk.

For more information and for assistance with the grant application process, contact Southwest MS Resource Conservation and Development, Inc. (RC&D). RC&D has assisted more than 120 agricultural producers in Mississippi...
in securing grants in excess of $5 million for energy efficiency improvements in 2003-2009.

Interested producers should contact RC&D to have an application package sent by mail or e-mail at southwest@msrcd.org or call 601-833-5539.

BROILER PRODUCER NEEDED FOR WOOD HEATING DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

Southwest MS RC&D is offering to pay 50% of the cost of installing a demonstration biomass (wood) heating system on a typical Mississippi broiler farm. RC&D will also provide technical assistance in designing the appropriate system that will be intended to burn local wood residue with the potential for adding broiler litter as part of the fuel. The intent is to install the latest state-of-the-art system to demonstrate the potential for replacing propane heating systems.

Green wood chips have an energy value of 8.5 million Btu per ton. At a typical cost of $35 per ton, this translates to an energy cost of $4.10 per million Btu. Propane has an energy value of 91,600 Btu per gallon. At a cost of $1.50 per gallon, this translates to an energy cost of $16.30 per million Btu or four times that of wood.

Wood heating systems for poultry houses are being used successfully in other states. We want to take their experiences—combined with the latest technology—and demonstrate the feasibility for similar systems in Mississippi to help reduce the energy cost to poultry producers. These modern systems include automated fuel feed and may be integrated with existing broiler house computer controller systems to maximize efficiency and facilitate nearly automatic operation.

Any broiler producer interested in being considered for this demonstration project should contact Southwest MS RC&D. Producers will be provided with selection criteria, cost estimates, etc. RC&D has approximately $160,000 for this demonstration project. The selected producers will be required to provide 50% of the total cost of the biomass heating system, but half of this producer cost may be in-kind contributions (labor, equipment, supplies, etc.).

For more details, contact Bennie Hutchins at Southwest MS RC&D at 601-833-5539 or 601-757-1303 or e-mail bennie.hutchins@ms.usda.gov.
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A group of 283 members and supporters of the Mississippi Poultry Association attended our 2009 convention in September at the Hilton Sandestin Golf & Beach Resort. Attendees participated in golf, tennis, and fishing, but we also heard great speakers who were very informative. Among the speakers were Congressman Gregg Harper who talked to us about cap-and-trade and healthcare legislation, and keynote speaker Lt. Governor Phil Bryant gave us an update on state affairs. We also enjoyed hearing from Mike Roberts with Perdue Farms and Representative Greg Ward.

Cobb-Vantress once again provided the ladies a great time sailing the bay onboard the Solaris. We enjoyed being entertained while receiving some wonderful gifts. Ladies, please start making your plans to join us next year as we have already begun collecting gifts and looking for a fun venue.

MPA would like to take this time to thank all of our sponsors for providing fishing prizes, tennis tournaments, golf tournament prizes, and so many other things that made this meeting successful. Our allied industry is the driving force behind our meeting, and we appreciate their generosity.

The allied and company members of our Mississippi Poultry Foundation made our third annual auction a great success. A record number of items were donated, and attendees were generous with their bidding. The Foundation is well on its way to providing scholarships to Mississippi students who are interested in pursuing a career in our industry.

Please mark your calendars for September 16-19, 2010, and plan on joining us at the beautiful Hilton Sandestin.

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Water has been described as one of the most precious resources. It is not only necessary to sustain life, but it also supports and operates industry and agriculture. The Clean Water Act (CWA), passed by Congress in 1972, has operated over the last 27 years to "restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the Nation's waters."

Through the efforts of federal agencies, state agencies, and local government, the CWA is an example of how regulation and cooperation between federal and state entities may result in a successful outcome. Nevertheless, proponents of a new bill introduced in Congress believe more regulation by the federal government is needed to further the goals and objectives of the CWA.

Supporters of the Clean Water Restoration Act (CWRA, S. 787) claim that more federal control is necessary, because state agencies often fail to adequately enforce current regulations. The CWRA's purpose is "to clarify the jurisdiction of the United States over waters of the United States." Passage of this legislation would likely result in federal control over any body of water anywhere that is identified as "waters of the United States," including a pond or lake on a private piece of property. Efforts to block this bill from a formal Senate vote are presently gaining strength. Now is the time to voice objections and concerns about the proposed bill to preserve the integrity of state regulations and private industry.

Interestingly, this is not the first time that the Clean Water Restoration Act has been introduced to Congress. During the 110th Congress, Sen. Russ Feingold (D-WI) first introduced a bill to protect a broader range of waters under the Clean Water Act. The earlier legislation failed largely because there were no exemptions for agriculture or industry. Yet, even though Feingold reformatted the present bill to include such exemptions, the bill still allows the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) to regulate waters "to the maximum extent."

The CWA prohibits unpermitted discharges of pollutants to "navigable waters." Presently, "navigable waters" is defined to mean "the waters of the United States, including the territorial seas." The intention of the new CWRA is to remove the term "navigable waters" from the CWA resulting in the EPA and Corps having the ability to identify any type of body of water as "waters of the United States."

Opponents to the CWRA are concerned that even with the new exemptions listed, the federal government would gain too much control over any body of water in any part of the United States. Opponents fear that the broad scope allowed by the new bill would increase regulation and enforcement in industry and agriculture in areas never intended by Congress when passing the original Clean Water Act.

Some analysts believe the new CWRA would prove to be the "most dangerous federal intrusion on private property rights" in history. Others comment that once new bodies of water are identified as "waters of the United States," new federal regulations and enforcement requirements would result in astronomical costs for agriculture and industry already struggling in a strained economy.

The term "navigable waters" should be retained in the Clean Water Act to allow states' continued oversight of local waters. If the Clean Water Restoration Act (S. 787) is passed in the 111th Congress, the federal government will likely gain unlimited control of all bodies of water in the United States. States should continue to regulate and control local waters in order to protect private property rights and support local economical efforts in industry and agriculture.

John Milner serves as attorney for the MPA Board.
Agriculture is under attack. In addition to attacks from organizations like the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) and the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), recent articles in Time magazine and Newsweek have put those media outlets in the middle of the campaign to end animal agriculture. In addition to those more obvious sources of attack, there are other more subtle ones.

One way or another, we are all in business to produce food and make money. The organizations on the attack are in the business of collecting money to promote their agenda. As a result of their activities, new regulations are popping up all over the country to restrict animal farming activities. From this agenda, the Animal Rights movement has gained momentum.

If you think the idea of a family pet being represented by an attorney in court is absurd, take a look at law school course offerings. It seems that animal rights law is rapidly growing in U.S. law schools. According to the Lewis & Clark School of Law in Oregon, “animal law is a developing area of law encompassing any and all legal matters relating to animals, much in the same way that Environmental Law encompasses a broad range of issues.” George Washington University Law School and the HSUS have a joint venture, the Animal Law Litigation Project, which is intended to “improve enforcement of animal protection laws.” According to the Wall Street Journal, Bob Barker of The Price is Right fame has donated millions to various law schools to establish animal law programs. Some of the schools benefiting from his generosity include Harvard, Columbia, Georgetown, Duke, Northwestern, Stanford and UCLA.

I suspect that the upsurge in law schools offering courses in this area is because there is a need for clarification of issues such as “cruelty.” Like pornography, the definition is obvious from more than one point of view. I wonder when the ACLU will get on this bandwagon. And, in case you think this is a fringe movement, prestigious schools like Harvard Law, Duke, University of Virginia and Stanford are offering courses.

How do we combat this? We must first insure that we are doing all that we can to provide quality care for our birds. Because today’s farmers have continued to search for better ways to improve their operations, we now have an abundant supply of high-quality, reasonably-priced food in the United States. This story needs to be told. A time-honored method of getting the correct information out is by “word of mouth.” There is no substitute for personal communication; however, it must be accurate.

We need to be ready to give the facts to anyone who will listen. I’ve had opportunities to talk to a person sitting next to me in a waiting room, on an airplane, and in the grocery line. I once even had a doorman at a hotel ask me a poultry question. Once they learn you are involved in the industry, the questions will be there. For example, do you work on a factory farm? Anytime someone mentions factory farms, I tell them that virtually all chicken in the U.S. is raised on family farms. That always leads to more questions and more opportunities to educate.

During the recent elections, voters in Ohio overwhelmingly approved a farm animal welfare board to set standards for the State’s farmers. This legislation was the result of a grassroots campaign by farmers and ranchers, agriculture organizations, veterinarians, and consumers to protect Ohio’s agriculture industry—a model we should all seriously consider.

At the other end of the spectrum are accusations that agriculture is polluting the nation’s water and destroying the soil. The reality is far from the perception. The Green Movement should be touting the wonders of the poultry industry for its use of all parts of the bird as well as its excrement which is used to add both micro and macro nutrients to the soil. All parts of the bird not sold from human consumption are shipped to protein recycling centers to be transformed into high-quality feed ingredients that end up in bags on the miles of pet food shelves found in grocery and pet stores throughout the U.S. Some of these products are also utilized as feed ingredients for other agricultural animals. Nothing goes to waste.

Much of the litter from poultry houses is used as fertilizer by poultry farmers. It is a prized soil amendment for day lilies and other ornamental plants. There are companies purchasing litter for processing for sale. Litter is stored undercover to prevent rainfall from causing runoff that could enter waterways. And, poultry litter is being used in some locations to produce gas for heating. Litter is not a waster product but a valuable commodity.
In addition to the home front, there are international issues to consider. **International trade** of raw poultry has been a major factor in keeping our markets stable over the last 20 years. They continue to be important to our economy. However, at times, trade barriers in their many forms have halted international trade and thus affected the way poultry companies do business. Most of us think of trade barriers as restrictions on trade between countries put into place by a government, including subsidies, tariffs, quotas, duties, and embargoes. However, there are other more subtle trade barriers in place for other reasons.

Biosecurity is a major cause of embargos against specific products from various areas around the world. For example, just two years ago, there were embargos for poultry because of avian influenza. There are long-standing barriers based on similar issues.

One example is the opposition to the use of chlorine in poultry immersion chillers to control pathogens such as Salmonella. Canada has long held this position. The reason is a fear of trihalomethanes, which are chemicals that can be formed by the reaction of proteins with chlorine in very high levels. Some of these chemicals are known to cause cancer. However, research has shown that the levels of chlorine required are far above what can be used in poultry operations. Therefore, in reality, trihalomethane formation is not a valid reason for refusing the poultry washed in chlorinated water. Nevertheless, the barrier still exists. From time to time, other countries have also had this same embargo.

Microbiological criteria present another means of blocking trade. Some countries do not allow U.S. poultry to be imported because we report the presence of Salmonella on some of our raw poultry. This barrier is not clearly defined, and differences in detection methods, methods of reporting, and other issues, have made this a very difficult area for trade discussions. Last fall, an international group of 26 scientific experts from 16 countries—together with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations—were convened to address the issue of Salmonella specifically. The group concluded that since there is no universally accepted means of eliminating Salmonella from raw poultry or even any practical method for verifying its absence, any requirements should be tied to a measurable food-safety statistic rather than the presence or absence of the organism.

Another recent example comes to us from China which has accused the U.S. industry of “dumping” poultry products in their market. In case you don’t know, international dumping has a definition. It occurs when a product is sold at a price lower than the same product is sold domestically and/or in other countries. This is a great example of the politics of food. In addition to accusing the U.S. of dumping poultry, China claimed that the U.S. government subsidizes our poultry industry which of course is not true. Since most of the product shipped to China consists of chicken feet and paws, the dumping claim is an obvious trade barrier with no merit. While these products have a good market in China and thus are profitable to sell, they have virtually no market in the U.S. and therefore cannot be the subject of dumping. According to the USA Poultry & Egg Export Council, the action is “wholly unjustified and appears to be in retaliation to tariffs announced by the Obama Administration on imports of Chinese-made tires into the U.S.

If the perception of the general public in the U.S. is not changed, the U.S. will no longer be in a position of strength and will be importing a significant amount of our food. The increasing world population will put pressure on the food supply which can only be addressed by systems that allow large-scale production of foodstuffs.

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Why is brooding important? When a chick hatches, it is basically a cold-blooded animal unable to regulate its body temperature properly. To maintain its body temperature, a chick must rely on its environment for heat. The commercial industry has removed the natural outside source of heat for a baby chick, the mother hen. Therefore, it is left up to the grower to become the adoptive parent of the baby chick and provide for its needs. In recent decades, growing a broiler to a 4-pound body weight has decreased from 60 days to less than 40 days. Because of this short production cycle, the first 7 days of the growing period account for about 20% of the broiler’s life—compared with 10% just 20 to 25 years ago. Due to the rapid growth rate of today’s genetically improved broiler, more management demands are put on the grower during the first week of the broiler’s life, because less overall growout time is available to correct a problem. There is no time left to compensate for performance that is lost during the early stages of a broiler’s life. Therefore, a grower must insure that the chicks get off to the best start possible. However, it is not financially practical for a grower to invest more in the birds than he is getting out of them. Many growers offset the costs of brooding chicks while still maintaining a high quality of management during this crucial period. How is this done?

Partial-house brooding, a fuel conservation measure employed during the first two weeks of each production cycle, is used by many producers. Under this brooding program, chicks should not be restricted to less than a third of the house. Additional feeder space in proportion to chick density should be provided by using extra feeder lids and/or large combo lids. With partial-house brooding, proper ventilation is essential, as the additional concentration of chicks can rapidly cause condensation, caked litter, high levels of ammonia, and other problems related to elevated moisture levels. These problems can be avoided with proper ventilation and litter management discussed in Part I* of this article. Once the brooding cycle is complete, achieving an even distribution of chicks throughout the house can be difficult. However, if managed properly, the cost savings attributed to partial house brooding will outweigh the disadvantages. In addition, you don’t lose performance due to lack of feed and water, crowding, poor litter and ventilation management, etc.

Another fuel conservation measure that many growers across the United States have implemented is the use of attic inlets during the wintertime. Attic inlets were designed to draw into the house the warmed air from the attic instead of the colder outside air. While the concept is wonderful, attic inlets must be managed properly to realize their full benefit. For starters, they are not ideal for all chicken houses. Tight, solid side-walled houses are likely to see the biggest impact from the use of attic inlets. Tight, curtain-sided houses will see some, but less, of a benefit. Loose, curtain-sided houses will see even less, if any, benefit. The reason for this is because a large portion of incoming air will be coming through cracks and crevices of loose houses instead of through the attic inlets as intended. Therefore, the owner of an older, loose chicken house may find it more financially rewarding to first spend money on tightening and insulating the house before installing attic inlets. Another possible problem with attic inlets is allowing warm, moist air from the house to leak into the attic and come in contact with the cold metal on the interior of the roof. This can cause condensation that can, over time, lead to structural damage. Proper attic inlet management will ensure that they are shut and sealed when no air is being pulled into the house from the attic by the fans. Part of correct inlet management is keeping the inlets clean so they will properly close with a tight seal. There is a place for attic inlets in the industry to help accomplish good brooding, but the bottom line is that they need to be managed just like everything else in a chicken house.

So, if you have an older chicken house, is tightening the house the only thing you can do to save on fuel costs? The answer is no. Many studies have shown that using stir fans in the ceiling of the chicken house will help move hot air that builds up along the ceiling down toward the birds and help maintain drier litter conditions. In turn, there is less moisture to eliminate, and your heating sources and fans run less which saves you money.

Another aspect of good brooding management implemented by many growers that shows payback in performance and in electricity savings is litter treatment. Chemical litter treatments inhibit ammonia production. When ammonia production is inhibited, you can ventilate at a significantly lower rate to eliminate moisture alone and not worry about having to eliminate excessive amounts of ammonia. Why is it important to eliminate ammonia? Ammonia is an irritant to the chick. The trachea (windpipe) of the chick is lined with tiny hair-like projections called cilia. These cilia are responsible for moving foreign materials by beating rhythmically to move fluid or mucus up and out of the respiratory system. When ammonia comes in contact with the cilia of the respiratory system, the rhythmic movements of the cilia can be greatly reduced. When the action of this “mucociliary escalator” is interrupted, the chick becomes stressed and more susceptible to respiratory infections. Treating the typical brood area with a litter amendment is roughly $200. The value of reduced ventilation rates in wintertime—depending on inside/outside temperatures—can save a grower on average $500. This value doesn’t even include the benefits you get in improved bird performance due to better bird health.

Unfortunately, most of the information I’ve provided in this article costs money. As the old saying goes, “it takes money to make money.” It costs to install attic inlets or stir fans, to tighten up your chicken house, and to use litter amendments. However, the benefits you will reap in improved performance and bird health will save/make you money in the long run.

*Part I of this article appeared in the previous edition of Emerging Trends which may be obtained by calling 601-932-7560.
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NEW CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

Ryn Laster McDonald, Ph.D., is the incoming MPA Chairman of the Board for 2010. Ryn is the Director of Food Safety at Cal-Maine Foods, Inc., the largest table egg producer in the United States. She holds Bachelor’s degrees in English and Poultry Science as well as a Master’s and Doctoral degree in Food Science with an emphasis in poultry—all from Mississippi State University. After completing the English degree, she entered law school at the University of Mississippi. Once enrolled, she soon concluded that law just wasn’t the career she wanted. Ryn found her way back to MSU—this time to study poultry science.

“I came (to poultry science) for the jobs, but I found out that I was passionate about it,” she said, adding that she credits her major professor, Dr. Yvonne Vizzier Thaxton, for that passion. Interestingly, Ryn is only the second woman to be chairman of the board of MPA with Dr. Vizzier Thaxton being the first. Ryn credits Dr. Wallace Morgan, Dr. J. Paul Thaxton, and Dr. Vizzier Thaxton as the major influences in her professional career.

At Cal-Maine, Ryn oversees and writes all of the food safety programs as well as programs dealing with animal welfare and regulatory compliance. She is also the corporate Safe Quality Food (SQF) practitioner. She is a member of many industry-wide committees and has spoken at many meetings and given presentations all over the United States and Canada.

“I look forward to serving the Mississippi Poultry Association in the capacity of chairman of the board for 2010, and I look forward to working with everyone involved to make 2010 a great year for poultry in Mississippi,” said Ryn.

NEW GROWER ADVISORY COMMITTEE (GAC) CHAIRMAN

Ronnie Ingram of Carthage, Mississippi, will be the new GAC chairman for 2010. Ronnie was raised in Carthage in the heart of the poultry belt. He is married to Donnie Beth Ingram, and they have two daughters, Juliana (13) and Christiana (9). Ronnie started working around the poultry business as an adolescent for his father. He worked doing the dirt work (forming the pads and drainage systems) for new poultry farms. In 1995, he went into business for himself building poultry pads and has since moved into landfill construction. Ronnie is very involved with MPA and the GAC and is willing to give us advice or support whenever we call on him.
I would like to thank all of you who were MPA members in 2009 and for your support. We appreciate everyone who has provided input—whether positive or negative—in the past year around the state. You have helped us understand more fully the challenges you face as a poultry grower. The industry had a great year in 2009 despite some hurdles. Looking back, we are very pleased to have played a big part in bringing a sales tax reduction to you in 2009. I look forward to serving you in 2010 and will continue to seek your guidance and opinions while searching for ways to aid in making your farm operate as stress free as possible.

The MPA membership drive will soon be under way for the 2010 fiscal year. You will be contacted in a few different ways: by mail, Service Techs for the company for which you grow, and our newsletter. Another way just made available this year is through our website. You can print the grower member form and mail it to us. We want to make sure everyone has the opportunity for his or her voice to be heard and to take advantage of membership opportunities—including making sure you are represented in regulatory and legislative matters.

If the Association has missed contacting 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 contact me, J. D. Sumrall, Grower Relations Coordinator, at 601-932-7560 or by e-mail at sumrall@mspoultry.org.

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HOME PHONE ______________________________________________________

FAX _______________________________________________________________

EMAIL ____________________________________________________________

____________ ENCLOSED ARE MY ANNUAL DUES: GROWER............$30.00

MPA NOW ACCEPTS CREDIT CARDS!

Please cut out this form and mail it to the Association Office:
110 Airport Road South, Suite C • Pearl, Mississippi 39208
601-932-7560
www.mspoultry.org
UPCOMING EVENTS

DECEMBER 8
Grower Advisory Committee meeting
Morgan’s on Main in Collins, MS (time to be announced)

DECEMBER 11
MPA Board of Directors Meeting
MPA Headquarters in Pearl, MS at 11:00 a.m.

MISSISSIPPI POULTRY ASSOCIATION

Mark Leggett, President
leggett@mspoultry.org

Steve McLaurin, Chairman

Ryn McDonald, Vice Chairman

Larry Gandy, Treasurer

Peter McKinley, Grower Advisory Committee Chairman

J. D. Sumrall, Grower Relations Coordinator
sumrall@mspoultry.org

Becky Beard, Administrative Assistant
mpaoffice@bellsouth.net

GROWER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

James Cochran
Marshall Durbin

Michael Magee
Tyson Foods

Donna Ward
Tyson Foods

Todd Dupré
Tyson Foods

Peter McKinley
Sanderson Farms

Jon Wilson
Peco Farms

Bo Duvall
Marshall Durbin

Deborah Sumrall
Sanderson Farms

Gary Weatherford
Tyson Foods

Steve Holloway
Peco Foods

Danny Thornton
Peco Foods

Michael Magee
Tyson Foods

Paul R. Ingram
Tyson Foods

Kenneth Upton
Sanderson Farms

Peter McKinley
Sanderson Farms

Debora Sumrall
Sanderson Farms

Donna Ward
Tyson Foods

Jon Wilson
Peco Farms

Gary Weatherford
Tyson Foods

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

Happy Holidays from the Mississippi Poultry Association

MISSISSIPPI POULTRY ASSOCIATION
110 Airport Road South, Suite C
Pearl, Mississippi 39208

CONTACT INFORMATION
Please note that we have moved
110 Airport Road South, Suite C
Pearl, Mississippi 39208
New Phone: 601-932-7560
New Fax: 601-932-7568
www.mspoultry.org