POULTRY FARMING AND NEIGHBORS: THE LITTLE THINGS ARE IMPORTANT

Dr. Tom Tabler, Jessica Wells, and Dr. Wei Zhai
Mississippi State University Extension Service, Poultry Science

Poultry is the largest agricultural commodity in Mississippi and has ranked number one in farm gate value for the past 23 years. Over ten percent of the poultry supply in the nation is the result of Mississippi production. The state has approximately 2,000 poultry growers. However, not all these growers have understanding neighbors. Poultry production can create several potential causes of complaints, including noise, dust, flies, and odors. Today, the demographics of rural areas are changing rapidly and becoming more urbanized. In addition, few people outside the agricultural community understand the commercial farming practices employed by the poultry industry.

Many people who leave the city hoping to enjoy their idea of the “country lifestyle” are unaware of common, everyday farming practices today and have little patience for them. As a result, conflicts may arise between poultry growers and neighbors. Neighbors may think the farm next door is destroying the “pastoral” lifestyle they moved to the country for. Farmers may conclude that their new neighbors have a serious lack of knowledge as to where their food comes from and what it takes to put supper on the table. Left unchecked, these differences may eventually lead to legal action where, in most cases, only the lawyers come out winners. Time and money are wasted, stress takes a mental and physical toll on all the parties involved, and relationships are destroyed. In some situations, farmers may find it difficult to expand or even continue in operation (Cunningham, 2012).

There are a few simple ways to prevent the situation from getting out of hand, however. Open communication and good will are important keys to avoiding conflicts. If you are a poultry grower, it’s important to know who your neighbors are and make it a point to visit with them on occasion; keeping in mind adequate biosecurity practices, however. By
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visiting your neighbors and keeping communication lines open, it’s more likely they will come to you if an issue arises instead of turning you in over a complaint. Recognize the fact that operating a poultry farm comes with a number of challenges in addition to day-to-day farm management requirements. Often people “smell” with their eyes instead of their noses. Running a clean, neat, well-managed farm is one of the best ways to lessen complaints about animal production facilities.

In most cases, people will be more tolerant of dust and odor from a well-managed operation than from an untidy one. Of course, extra effort is required to keep the grass mowed on a regular basis and maintain a well-groomed operation but it will likely be worth it from a public relations standpoint. Visit with neighbors when you have something upcoming that may affect them such as spreading litter or a nighttime catch with live haul trucks coming and going all night. They need to personally hear from you accurate information about what’s going on instead of getting secondhand information that may or may not be correct or, worse yet, being surprised by your actions with no warning at all.

Neighbors may also be your customers because they likely go to the store and buy the very product you are producing. Farming is a business and every business needs happy customers. A few common sense practices may help keep your customers happy. If neighbors are also gardeners, a little free chicken litter for their garden is often a welcome gesture. It may seem like a small token but it goes a long way in terms of promoting goodwill and friendship. Smoothing a neighbor’s driveway with your tractor and blade or front-end loader takes little time but will be much appreciated. If a neighbor does have a complaint, address it quickly and tactfully. Be sympathetic and realize that sometimes, for the sake of the farm, it may be best just to take your medicine, apologize, and offer to try to do better in the future. Hopefully, this will defuse the situation and perhaps prevent possible legal action.

In some situations, out of sight is out of mind. It may be worth considering screening an operation from public view. Vegetative environmental buffers or windbreaks are an old technology that may hold benefits for today’s tunnel-ventilated poultry houses (Tabler and Liang, 2008). Solid-wall poultry house construction now makes it feasible to have trees alongside poultry houses without worrying about disrupting airflow patterns. Minimizing visibility will draw attention away from the farm as a potential source of dust, flies, odors, or other possible sources of complaints.

Spreading litter is always a delicate issue because it generates both dust and odor for a while. Think before you spread, and when and where you spread. Check the wind direction and speed. Is there rain in the forecast for the immediate future? Spread during the hot part of the day (when most people are not at home) so that the sun can help further dry the material and reduce odor. Do not spread very early in the morning or late evening when humidity is high and the air is heavy. These conditions hold odor near the ground and increases the likelihood that someone will be affected and complain. Give yourself enough distance when spreading so that you do not sling chunks of caked litter across roads or highways or onto neighbors’ yards.

Mortality disposal is another area with high potential to generate numerous complaints. Properly dispose of mortality immediately after removal from the chicken house. Do not throw dead birds outside the chicken house door for the neighbor’s dogs to drag away. If you have an incinerator, use a fast, hot burn to dispose of mortality quickly. A slow burn allows the mortality to smolder which will generate an odor likely to draw complaints. Use the afterburner (which re-burns the smoke) if your incinerator has one. This will remove many of the particles in the smoke that actually generate the odor. Burn the mortality during the day if possible; not early morning or evening when the air is heavy and odor stays close to the ground. If you have a composter, cover mortality with sufficient litter to prevent vectors (opossums, raccoons, skunks, dogs, etc.) from uncovering and dragging away carcasses. Also, use a probe thermometer to check the temperature on a regular basis. Temperature should be in the 120° F range as the bin is filling and may reach 130-150° F after the bin is filled. Once temperature has peaked and fallen back to the 120° F range again (this usually takes 2-3 weeks), the material is ready to turn for further decomposition.

Education is a key point for both the farm and nonfarm populations. Farmers are busy with their work and often fail to realize that a large part of the population are so far removed from agriculture today that they do not understand what it takes to put food on the table. Because they do not understand the demands of farming, the nonfarm population is often intolerant and unwilling to accept the occasional noise, odor, dust, etc. that farming practices generate. There are steps that the agricultural community can take to better educate the public about farming and the needs of farmers. Local agricultural organizations can become involved with educational efforts and outreach programs for non-farmers. Farmers can also help tell their own story. Many communities have agricultural committees associated with the local Chamber of Commerce. Volunteer for these or other agricultural promotion events at the local level. Many banks in rural areas have agricultural advisory boards that offer another opportunity to improve farm-nonfarm relationships. While these commitments take time away from the farm, the payback can be a public that is better informed, more understanding, and therefore, perhaps more willing to accept the occasional nuisances associated with agricultural production.

References
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REFERENCES
1 Data on file.
2 Data on file.

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Brunini has considerable expertise in environmental litigation, regulatory permitting and compliance issues as well as due diligence and transactional matters. John Milner was noted by Chambers USA as being “instrumental in developing Brunini's environmental practice” into the leadership position it holds today.

John Milner serves as counsel to the Mississippi Poultry Association and has special expertise in poultry-related environmental issues. Partners Gene Wasson also has impressive abilities in the environmental sector.

The Sixth Annual MPA Breeder/Hatchery Seminar will be August 14 at the Pearl Lab and August 15 at the Collins Civic Center.

Dr. Tom Tabler, MSU Poultry Science Extension professor, put together an agenda focusing on the needs of breeder technicians, growers and hatchery employees. Registration begins at 8 a.m. both days.

There is no charge to attend for growers or company employees, but space is limited, so you must let Becky Beard know if you plan to attend. Call her or 601-932-7560 or email her at beard@mspoutry.org by August 9.

The agenda, set to conclude by 3 p.m. is shown below.

**Topics and Speakers**

1. How Best to Control Nervousness and Piling in Pullets - Nate Collett - Hubbard Breeders LLC
2. Hatchery Breakout Information - Jiggs Kilgore - Hubbard Breeders LLC
3. Incubation Temperatures for Multi-Stage Machines with Bigger Eggs - Chad Daniels - Chickmaster Incubator
4. Proper Weight/Fleshing of Males as They Age - Daren Rakestraw - Aviagen, Inc.
5. Colony/Community Nests - David Freeman - Big Dutchman
7. Male Management and Hatchability/Fertility - Dr. Keith Bramwell - Jamesway Incubators
8. Nutritional Requirements for Proper Female Feathering: Day-Old to End-of-Lay - Leasea Butler - Cobb-Vantress, Inc.
9. Recommended Fogging Techniques for Hatchery and On-Farm Egg Coolers - Jake Anderson - MWI Animal Health
10. Disease Update 2018 - Dr. Jim Watson - MBAH
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As a record six state legislators qualified to run for Congress, there have also been special elections this summer for open seats to elect new legislators.

The special election for House District 77 will be July 10 in parts of Simpson and Rankin counties. In a special election, candidates are listed without party labels on the ballot. If no candidate receives a majority, the runoff between the two receiving the most votes will be July 31. The winner will replace former Rep. Andy Gipson, who was named by Gov. Phil Bryant to be Agriculture Commissioner in April.

- **Cliff Brown of Star.** He ran for the Miss. Senate in 2011 and 2015 and lost. He is retired from the Miss. Air National Guard, and owns a retail business.

- **Hayes Patrick of Puckett.** A cattle farmer, restores old homes, formerly owned a gym/fitness center and fruitstand/catering business.

- **Christopher R. “Chris” Purdum of Magee.** An attorney, former Mendenhall City Judge, Mt. Olive City Attorney, former Magee Chamber of Commerce.

- **Cemper Scott of Mendenhall.** Her family owns Scott Tractor & Equipment Company, active in Miss. Republican Women.

- **Price Wallace of Mendenhall.** A former chairman of the board of the Mississippi Cattlemen’s Association, a poultry grower for Koch Foods, owns River Birch Farms, formerly owned Wallace Tractor.

In House District 30, on May 31, Democrat Tracey Rosebud of Tutwiler was elected in a special election to replace retired Rep. Robert Huddleston, D-Sumner. Four candidates qualified and in the runoff, Rosebud defeated Blake Feretti of Cleveland who had said he would be an independent if elected. Rosebud received 52 percent of the vote to 48 percent for Feretti.

Another special election could be scheduled for later in the year if Rep. Brad Touchstone, R-Hattiesburg, wins his election for Lamar County Court Judge in November. Touchstone is the seventh legislator this year to qualify to run for another position.

A record six legislators qualified to run for Congress earlier this year and two are out of the running now. Rep. Omeria Scott, D-Laurel, finished third in the Democratic primary for U.S. Senate held by incumbent U.S. Sen. Roger Wicker, R-Tupelo and state Sen. Sally Doty, R-Brookhaven, finished third in the 3rd District Congressional race.

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RUNOFFS IN PARTY PRIMARIES ON NOVEMBER BALLOTS SET FOR SENATE, U.S. HOUSE AND JUDICIAL ELECTIONS

Now that the party primaries decided the Democratic and Republican candidates, the ballots are set for the November 6 General and special elections.

Turnout was low in both the June 5 primaries and the June 26 runoff, but could rise in November with two U.S. Senate races to be decided. Incumbent U.S. Sen. Roger Wicker is running for another six year term. Recently appointed U.S. Sen. Cindy Hyde-Smith is running in a special election to finish the term of retired Sen. Thad Cochran. The term is up in January 2021.

The three incumbent U.S. Congressmen have opponents in November. Third district voters will be selecting a replacement for retiring Rep. Gregg Harper.

Voters will also be choosing judges for the Supreme Court, Court of Appeals and circuit and chancery courts. Judges run in non-partisan elections. There are contested elections in three of the five Court of Appeals districts. Thirty one of the 45 incumbent chancery judges are unopposed for re-election and 39 of the 53 circuit judges are unopposed.

### 2018 ELECTIONS - NOVEMBER 6 BALLOT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>U.S. Senate</strong></th>
<th><strong>Court of Appeals 1st District Position 2</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Roger Wicker, Tupelo, Republican, incumbent</td>
<td>Donna M. Barnes, incumbent, unopposed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Baria, Bay St. Louis, Democrat</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Danny Bedwell, Libertarian</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Shawn O’Hara, Reform</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>U.S. Senate Special Election</strong></th>
<th><strong>Court of Appeals 2nd District Position 1</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cindy Hyde-Smith, Brookhaven, incumbent</td>
<td>Open Seat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mike Espy, Madison</td>
<td>Eric Charles Hawkins, Greenville</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris McDaniel, Ellisville</td>
<td>Ceola James, Vicksburg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tobey Bartee, Gautier</td>
<td>Deborah McDonald, Natchez</td>
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While party labels will not appear on the ballot, Hyde-Smith and McDaniel are Republicans and Espy and Bartee are Democrats.

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<tr>
<th><strong>1st Congressional District</strong></th>
<th><strong>Court of Appeals 4th District Position 2</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trent Kelly, Saltillo, incumbent, Republican</td>
<td>Open Seat</td>
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<tr>
<td>Randy Mack Wadkins, Democrat</td>
<td>Byron Carter, Byram</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tracelia Lou O’Hara, Reform</td>
<td>Brad Clanton, Jackson</td>
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Voters will also be choosing judges for the Supreme Court, Court of Appeals and circuit and chancery courts. Judges run in non-partisan elections. There are contested elections in three of the five Court of Appeals districts. Thirty one of the 45 incumbent chancery judges are unopposed for re-election and 39 of the 53 circuit judges are unopposed.

<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>2nd Congressional District</strong></th>
<th><strong>Court of Appeals 5th District, Position 1</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bennie Thompson, Bolton, incumbent, Democrat</td>
<td>Anthony N. Lawrence III, Pascagoula</td>
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<tr>
<td>Irving Harris, Reform</td>
<td>Michael McPhail, Hattiesburg</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>3rd Congressional District</strong></th>
<th><strong>Court of Appeals 5th District Position 2</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Open Seat</td>
<td>Sean Tindell, Gulfport, incumbent, unopposed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Ted Evans, Preston, Democrat</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Michael Guest, Brandon, Republican</td>
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<tr>
<td>Matthew Holland, Reform</td>
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<th><strong>4th Congressional District</strong></th>
<th><strong>Circuit Court</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Steven Palazzo, Biloxi, incumbent, Republican</td>
<td>53 Judges in 21 Districts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeramey Anderson, Moss Point, Democrat</td>
<td>Chancery Court</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lajena Sheets, Reform</td>
<td>45 Judges in 22 Districts</td>
</tr>
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**Mississippi Supreme Court Southern District**

David M. Ishie, Gulfport, incumbent, unopposed

**Likely Runoffs on November 27**

- U.S. Senate Seat Special Election
- Court of Appeals District 2, Position 1
- Court of Appeals District 4, Position 2
- Circuit Court
- Chancery Court
During 2015, the United States experienced the largest animal health emergency in the history of our country with the outbreak of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI). This outbreak cost the taxpayers of the United States around $1 billion to contain, with the majority of the funds spent on indemnity, cleaning and disinfecting the poultry houses. The poultry industry lost more than $1 billion in lost revenue due to disease and lost export markets. Because practicing good biosecurity is the best insurance against diseases coming onto a farm, in order to participate in indemnity and cost share for cleaning and disinfection in future outbreaks, poultry producers are required to have a biosecurity plan in place for their farm. These biosecurity plans are a part of the National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP) which is a joint Industry, State and USDA poultry program. In addition, once the law becomes finalized, these biosecurity plans must be audited by the Board of Animal Health, who is the Official State Agency for USDA in carrying out the NPIP in Mississippi. USDA has outlined 14 Biosecurity Principles that each plan must contain, with the 14th being “Auditing”. Most of the principles are the kinds of biosecurity practices we have talked about for years, however, these principles also require that someone be named the Biosecurity Coordinator and that training must occur on the farm. Part of the auditing process will be to examine records for proof that training of employees has occurred. Initially, audits will be limited to “complex-wide” inspection, and not include on-farm visits. At some point in the future, there is the possibility of auditing individual farms to make sure they are also in compliance.

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Every spring the USDA’s National Agricultural Statistics Service releases its “Poultry – Production and Value” report. The April 2018 edition with 2017 data ranks Mississippi fifth in broilers for number, pounds and value and 22nd in egg production and 12th in value of eggs produced.

The data has a long history. Looking back at just the last 25 years, shows a steady rise from 87 million birds in 1992 to 853 million head in 2005 and then a slight drop in number of birds and a leveling out of the numbers to around 740 million.

Since 1992, the pounds of poultry produced in Mississippi has followed a similar growth, then the leveling pattern, while value has shown a continuous but jagged climb. From 2 billion pounds in 1999, production rose to 4.9 billion pounds in 2004 and has settled at around 4.7 billion pounds. The value of chicken produced has climbed from $665 million in 1992 to $2.58 billion in 2017.

The size of birds has grown steadily over the last 25 years with the pounds per head going from under 4.5 pounds to an average of almost 6.5 pounds.

Egg value has risen from $96 million in 1992 to $211 million today with a peak at $248 million in 2015, the year northern egg producers were hit by avian influenza. As with broilers, the peak in numbers of eggs came in 2005 when Mississippi produced 1.7 billion eggs. The numbers of eggs has returned to where it was in 1992, 1.4 billion.

Changing 1992 to 100 in the charts below shows the growth since then.
WHAT YOU MISSED AT MPA POULTRY MANAGEMENT SCHOOL

If you missed the MPA’s Poultry Management School in Starkville last month, here is a synopsis of the speaker’s presentations.

Update from MSU Poultry Science Dept Dr. Chris McDaniel
The department expects an enrollment of 80 students in the fall, up from 38 in 2007. The new poultry science building is expected to open in 2020. The department is working to upgrade the processing plant so that meat processed there could be sold.

Dr. Natalie Armour, College of Veterinary Medicine, Poultry Research & Diagnostic Lab
The lab had recently diagnosed ILT and MG. The ILT was in two backyard flocks near Lake in March. The MG cases in commercial flocks occurred in Jones and Choctaw counties. The Biosecurity Level 3 laboratory in the Poultry Research and Diagnostic Lab in Peal is being upgraded.

Chick Quality by Dr. Tim Cummings, Zoetis
Poor chick quality impacts birds’ performance, increases mortality and shows the need for a clean hatchery. He said normal first week mortality is around 1 percent. He explained what abnormalities to look for when posting birds.

Pest Management by Dr. Jerome Goddard, MSU
Sometimes the failure of a specific pesticide to work on pests may be due to the application and not the pesticide itself. He said manure maintenance is key to fly control and also recommended spraying the perimeters of the buildings.

Feed Management by Darrin Poole, Sanderson Farms
He talked about how to check the remaining feed in bins and maintaining the flow of feed and the prevention of mold and the cleaning of feed bins. He also said “duct tape is not a repair.” He said open lines of communication with growers is important so that growers can let the feed mill know when there is no feed to pick up.

Mycoplasma by Dr. Natalie Armour, CVM PRDL
Mycoplasma can spread from hen to egg, from bird to bird and from people or equipment as carriers to birds and can survive for up to 12 days on certain surfaces. An infected bird remains a carrier for life. Most outbreaks can be traced to biosecurity breaches.

Update Dr. John Linhoss, Dept. of Agricultural & Biological Engineering
The department has three faculty with a poultry focus. They are researching fan shades, biochar (charcoal) as a litter amendment, perching platforms for broilers and robots to pick up floor eggs.

Update from USDA ARS Poultry Research Unit by Dr. Jody Purswell
ARS is working on a grant in collaboration with the Poultry Science Department, the College of Veterinary Medicine and the Department of Agricultural and Biological Engineering on a vaccine for E. Coli. The ARS Poultry Research Unit is building a new building to replace one that burned in October 2015. ARS also is seeking a nutritionist. Current research includes stocking density for birds given antibiotics and those not given antibiotics.

Communication: How Do You Best Represent Your Company? Julie Broussard White, MSU Extension
She said she is an “agvocate,” an advocate for agriculture. She spoke about how our professional and personal frames of reference combine in how we approach our jobs. She spoke about the need to be organized which relieves stress, to accomplish more with good relationships and to be courteous and empathetic.

Water Quality by Dr. Scott McKenzie, MWI
He reminded the group that birds consume twice as much water as they do feed. He said water line disinfection is important between flocks and that vinegar is not adequate. He said growers need to know what is in their water and that a simple test kit for pools can be used as an initial indicator of water quality. He spoke about PH and uses of chlorine(s). Both the grower and the integrator benefit from better water quality.

Ventilation Dr. Jody Purswell, USDA ARS
He said the first thing to look at is the belts on the fans to get an indication of stress on the ventilation system and then the sheave gauges for the belts. The loss of efficiency of the fans raises electricity costs and reduces cooling potential. He said fan maintenance is important in both hot and cold seasons.

Bio-Security by Dr. David French, Sanderson Farms
He gave a case study of the investigation of an outbreak of mycoplasma gallisepticum and mycoplasma synoviae and coryza on a farm in Georgia that was traced to the farm manager who frequently visited a nearby home with a backyard flock.

Field Diagnostics by Dr. Leslie Johnson, CVM PRDL
She went over the basics of necropsy techniques to determine the diseases that infect chickens. She said thoroughness and consistency in performing field diagnostics are important to quick detection and response to diseases, performance problems and mortality in a flock.

— GROWING MISSISSIPPI’S ECONOMY SINCE 1937 —

14
The MPA’s Poultry Management School brought together industry professionals to hear the latest on a wide range of issues relating to poultry industry.

Approximately 164 industry people attended the school May 16 & 17 at the College of Veterinary Medicine at Mississippi State University and the Allied Industry Crawfish Boil at the Starkville VFW.

We want to thank all our sponsors. Wednesday’s lunch at the MSU Poultry Science Department was sponsored by First South Farm Credit. Cobb-Vantress, Inc. & International. Wednesday’s lunch at the MSU Poultry Science Department was sponsored by First South Farm Credit. Cobb-Vantress, Inc. & International Paper sponsored breakfast and breaks both days.

MWI Animal Health sponsored a barbeque for the Allied Dinner.
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Four MSU students have been selected to receive the 2018 Mississippi Poultry Foundation Scholarship. The winners are Josie Gamble of Soso, Seth Walters of Collins, Bridgett Cooley of Ellisville and Morgan Attwood of North Carolina. Three of the four recipients are current poultry science students at Mississippi State University, one being a grower’s child, and one recipient will be a poultry science student in the fall. This marks the 15th year the scholarship has been awarded and the second year since the scholarship amount increased to $4,000 per student.

Josie Gamble is the daughter of Tim and Angie Gamble. Josie graduated Summa Cum Laude from West Jones High School, while attending dual enrollment classes at Jones County Junior College. She is currently a student at Mississippi State University pursuing her poultry science degree with a minor in Spanish. She is a member of the Poultry Science Club and Pre-Vet Club. Her future goal is to become a veterinarian in the poultry industry, working to prevent diseases with vaccines.

Seth Walters is the son of Ramona Walters Anderson. Seth graduated with honors from Stringer Attendance Center. He graduated from Jones County Junior College and is currently a poultry science student at Mississippi State University. He is a member of the Poultry Science Club and Collegiate Cattlemen’s Association. Upon graduating, Seth plans to work in an area to help farmers produce better yields, all while starting his own poultry and cattle business.

Morgan Attwood is the daughter of Sharon and Damian Attwood. Morgan is a recent graduate of Cuthbertson High School, in North Carolina, where she held numerous leadership positions in Future Farmers of America. This fall, she will be attending Mississippi State University pursuing a degree in poultry science. She plans to become a veterinarian in the poultry industry, working in the field of genetics and embryology.

Bridgett Cooley is the daughter of Belinda and Ronnie Cooley, who grow for Sanderson Farms. Bridgett Cooley is a graduate of A Beka Academy. After graduating and receiving many awards from Jones County Junior College, she decided to attend Mississippi State to pursue a degree in poultry science. Bridgett’s family has been raising broilers since she was eight years old. She has always enjoyed being on the farm, which is why she chose to pursue a career as a veterinarian in the poultry industry.

The winners are chosen by a committee of educators at the university, community college and the high school levels based on the students’ ACT scores, school transcripts, and an essay showcasing their knowledge of the poultry industry.
The 5090EL features a low stance and is built on the rugged John Deere 5E 4-cylinder tractor platform. With an overall height of only 69 inches and 90 engine horsepower, it fits easily through small doors like those found in poultry houses or horse barns and has plenty of power to pull a variety of implements.

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The 5090EL is backed by a John Deere 2-year or 2,000 hour comprehensive factory warranty, and a 5-year or 2,000-hour powertrain warranty.
Andy Gipson is sworn in by Mississippi Supreme Court Chief Justice Bill Waller, Jr. in the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce conference room on April 2.

Gov. Phil Bryant named former state Rep. Gipson, to the job on March 29 after the governor appointed former Commissioner Cindy Hyde-Smith to be U.S. Senator to replace Thad Cochran. Commissioner Gipson serves as an ex-officio member of the MPA Board of Directors. With Andy are his wife, Leslie, and their four children — Joseph, Benjamin, Abigail and Sarah. Andy is an attorney, a pastor and the owner of Gipson Land and Cattle who served in the Miss. House for 10 years, including six as Judiciary B Chairman. He is the state’s eighth Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce.

Gov. Phil Bryant, center, signs HB1122 which prevents local governments from imposing regulations on farmers already regulated by state agencies.

From left are: Reps. Chris Johnson, R-Hattiesburg, and Bill Pigott, R-Tylertown, Miss. Farm Bureau Federation President, Gov. Bryant, Ted Mangum, MPA Grower Advisory Committee Chair and Ron Aldridge, Miss. National Federation of Independent Business president.

Indian Delegation visits Mississippi.

A group of 15 business people from India visited Mississippi in May. MPA arranged a tour of the Tyson plant in Carthage for the group that earlier in the day had met with Gov. Phil Bryant and officials from the Mississippi Development Authority and the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce. The U.S. and India reached an agreement that opens India’s market to U.S. chicken products. Shipments have already been sent to India, a nation of 1.3 billion people.
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Georgia Poultry announces the expansion of its poultry construction services to Arkansas, Missouri, and Oklahoma. They now offer turnkey construction along with complete remodeling, installation and equipment retrofits. Georgia Poultry currently supplies area producers with repair parts, supplies and on-farm service through six regional store locations in Mississippi.

Georgia Poultry is a division of Hog Slat Inc. headquartered in Newton Grove, NC with regional offices in Iowa and Oklahoma. Hog Slat’s financial strength and experience in constructing large-scale projects have made it the general contractor of choice for a broad range of producers. Hog Slat is a leading distributor and manufacturer of hog and poultry equipment including GrowerSELECT® feeding and ventilation products.

Georgia Poultry Equipment Company is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Hog Slat engaged in the distribution of poultry equipment. Started in Georgia in 2004 by the acquisition of several existing locations in the state, Georgia Poultry has quickly expanded to locations not only in Georgia but also in Tennessee, Florida, Mississippi, Arkansas, and Missouri.
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All briefs have been filed and Circuit Judge James L. Roberts has scheduled oral arguments in the Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) and the Mississippi Poultry Association (MPA) appeal of the Monroe County Board of Supervisors’ (Board) adoption of an ordinance restricting the location of poultry farms within Monroe County. Oral arguments are set for August 27, in Lee County.

On December 4, 2017, the Board adopted an ordinance regulating poultry operations within Monroe County. Under the ordinance, any new or existing Dry Litter Poultry Animal Feeding Operations, which require from the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) a Multi-Media General Pollution Control Permit to manage litter and/or to construct/operate air emissions equipment, may not be located within: (1) one mile of the corporate limits of any municipality; (2) 1,200 feet from any residential dwelling, place of worship, or commercial enterprise that is not owned by the operator; or (3) 300 feet of the property line of any adjacent property owner. In addition, prior to beginning construction on any new or expanding poultry farm, the operator must provide notice to the Board identifying the operator, location, and approximate number of chickens to be housed on the property. Failure to comply with the ordinance will result in a penalty of $1,000 per day, per violation.

Members of the agricultural community, including representatives of the MPA and MFBF, attended the Board’s meeting and provided oral and written comments in opposition to the Board imposing any restrictions on poultry operations. However, by a 3-2 vote, the Board adopted the ordinance.

On December 14, 2017, the MPA and MFBF (collectively, the Appellants), appealed the Board’s decision to the Circuit Court of Monroe County, Mississippi. In their briefing, the Appellants argued the ordinance should be invalidated for three separate reasons: (1) it restricted land use by establishing setback requirements and, therefore, required Monroe County to have first adopted a comprehensive zoning plan, which the County had not done; (2) it was adopted without substantial evidence, and the Board ignored evidence within the record; and (3) the regulation of poultry operations is preempted by the Legislature, and the Board’s ordinance conflicts with and is superseded by regulation promulgated by the Mississippi Commission on Environmental Quality (MCEQ).

In response, the Board argues that it validly adopted the ordinance and that the ordinance does not constitute zoning and, therefore, no comprehensive zoning plan was required to be adopted. Finally, the Board alleges its ordinance is permissibly more restrictive than requirements set by the MCEQ and the MCEQ does not preempt the field of poultry regulation.

After the Board adopted the ordinance on December 4, 2017, the Mississippi Legislature passed, and Governor Phil Bryant signed into law, HB 1122, which amended state law to expressly provide that a city or county board may not regulate agricultural operation, forestry activity or traditional farm practices, as those terms are defined under Mississippi law. This would prevent local regulation of commercial poultry operations under most circumstances. Furthermore, HB 1122 expressly clarified that local governments are preempted from adopting regulations which affect poultry operations since this industry is regulated by the MDEQ. The Appellants argued that the language of HB 1122 was the law all along in Mississippi. However, HB 1122 removes all doubt. Notably, however, HB 1122 does not apply to existing ordinances, including the ordinance at the center of the MPA and MFBF’s appeal.
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The U.S. dodged a bullet this spring when there was no outbreak of highly pathogenic avian influenza like occurred in 2015 in the Midwest, and 2017 in neighboring states.

A recent USDA report says the 2014-15 outbreak that mainly impacted laying hens and turkeys, and also cost the broiler industry, rippled through the economy for long after the virus was eradicated.

The following information is taken from “Impacts of the 2014-2015 Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Outbreak on the U.S. Poultry Sector” by the USDA’s Economic Research Service.

The 2014-2015 HPAI outbreak was the largest poultry health disaster in U.S. history. “Between December 2014 and June 2015, more than 50 million chickens and turkeys in the United States died of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) or were destroyed to stop the spread of the disease. These birds accounted for about 12 percent of the U.S. table-egg laying population and 8 percent of the estimated inventory of turkeys grown for meat.

As of 2014, the United States was the world’s largest producer of chicken and turkey meat and the second largest producer of chicken eggs and farm-level sales of these commodities amounted to over $48 billion. Exports of poultry production in 2010-14, was 19 percent of U.S. broiler production, 12 percent of egg production and 4 percent of turkey production.

The federal government spent $879 million for depopulation, cleaning and disinfection, and $200 million in indemnity for lost birds.

The lost birds contracted supply, while trade restrictions on U.S. poultry exports decreased the pool of available consumers. These two market shifts increased and decreased prices, respectively, and ultimately affected the revenues of all producers, economists said.

More than 50 countries restricted the import of U.S. poultry products to varying degrees. Lower supplies of turkey and egg products led to higher prices, which further reduced export volume. July-December 2015 shipments of egg products were 45 percent lower than the same months the previous year. The decline in broiler exports was relatively less severe, in part because production did not decline. During July-December 2015, broiler exports, typically the majority of poultry exports, were 18 percent lower than the same period in 2014 but the loss in income from broiler exports far surpassed income losses from the reduced egg and turkey exports.

As countries restricted imports of U.S. poultry commodities during and after the outbreak, broiler export losses accounted for the overwhelming majority of lost poultry export income. In 2015, broiler exports were $1.1 billion lower than in 2014, a 26-percent decrease; egg export income declined $41 million, a loss of 13 percent; turkey export income was $177 million lower, a 23-percent decline.

Some countries closed their markets to all U.S. poultry exports during and after the outbreak. However, countries that restricted trade often limited their restrictions to certain U.S. regions. This regionalization allowed other areas to continue exporting and prevented a larger market disruption.

After the outbreak, record-high egg prices were the most notable market change, with price increases far surpassing production losses on a relative basis. Over the May-December 2015 period, the benchmark egg price was 61 percent above a year earlier, while production declined only about 10 percent.

After the outbreak, whole broiler prices continued to decline. By October 2015, prices reached a 4-year low that was 30 percent below a year earlier. This significant market response reflected export losses, since nearly a fifth of broiler production was typically exported before the outbreak. The decline in the price of leg quarters, which typically account for the majority of broiler exports, was exceptional. In July-December 2015, leg-quarter prices on the Northeast and Southern markets were 48 and 65 percent below a year earlier, respectively.

U.S. poultry exports in 2016 remained mostly below pre-outbreak levels. Many trade restrictions were lifted before 2016, but a few important markets remained restricted or closed, including China, Mexico, and South Korea.

Egg price volatility in 2016 was exceptional. Prices fell sharply less than a year after reaching record-high levels in 2015. Compared to before the outbreak, 2016 egg exports were down, and egg production was up due to the recovery, leading to higher domestic egg supplies. Additionally, a leading egg producer reported that the high 2015 prices encouraged domestic commercial buyers to reformulate products with less egg content, possibly resulting in a sustained reduction in demand.

Broiler exports in 2016 remained 7 percent below their 2010-14 average. With production at record levels, domestic supplies remained above pre-outbreak levels, including large amounts in cold storage. Broiler stocks, reported by USDA, averaged 20 percent higher in 2016 than during 2010-14. These high supplies contributed to the prolonged slump in broiler prices below pre-outbreak levels.

As countries restricted imports of U.S. poultry commodities during and after the outbreak, broiler production did not decline. During July-December 2015, the loss in income from broiler exports was relatively less severe, in part because production did not decline. During July-December 2015, broiler exports, typically the majority of poultry exports, were 18 percent lower than the same period in 2014 but the loss in income from broiler exports far surpassed income losses from the reduced egg and turkey exports.
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It’s time for the 81st MPA Convention. The MPA Convention begins festivities on September 13th and concludes with the Mississippi Poultry Foundation Auction on September 15th. See you September 13-16.

The annual meeting is the largest event MPA has each year. The funds raised for the meeting keeps our association operating so we can provide many services to our members, promote our industry and actually pay the cost of the activities at the meeting.

Last year’s convention was well attended with over 350 guests going in lots of directions. It is always fun to be able to re-connect with friends you haven’t seen, in some cases, since last September.

Registration will begin on Thursday afternoon. Thursday night on the Barefoot Deck will be the setting for the Kick-Off Reception.

The business part of the meetings begin on Friday morning with speakers. Commissioner of Agriculture & Commerce Andy Gipson will speak and Dr. Ashley Peterson from the National Chicken Council is the Keynoter.

As always, golf and fishing are the Friday afternoon’s activities. This year, one large golf tournament will start at noon. The golfers will be treated to nice prizes sponsored by McNeely Plastic Products, Vendworks, LLC and International Paper.

The fishing tournament will have food sponsored by International paper and drinks sponsored by QC Supply. The fishermen will win great prizes sponsored by American Packaging Company and Deep South Equipment Co. These companies are very generous with the prizes so sign up early.

### Missippi Poultry Association 2018 Convention Registration - September 13 - 16, 2018

- **Name ________________________________**
- **Spouse’s Name for Badge (if Attending) ____________________________________________**
- **Company Name ________________________________________________________________**
- **Mailing Address ______________________________________________________________**
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- **Email Address _________________________________________________________________**
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- **T-Shirt Size: S M L XL 2XL 3XL 4XL 5XL**
- **Spouse Size: S M L XL 2XL 3XL 4XL 5XL**

#### Registration Fees:
- ( ) Formula/Allied Members Single or Couple ($375.00) $ ________________
- ( ) Non-Member Single or Couple ($475.00) $ ________________
- ( ) Grower Member Single or Couple ($50.00) $ ________________

#### Activity Fees:
- ( ) Vendworks, McNeely Plastic Products, International Paper Friday Golf, Raven Golf Club ($155.00) $ ________________
- ( ) Mulligan (4 for $25, each golfer can only use 2) $ ________________
- ( ) American Packaging/Deep South Equipment Co. Fishing Tournament ($250.00) $ ________________
- ( ) Cobb-Vantress/Huvepharma Ladies Program No Charge (Limited to 60. Please respond by September 5th)

Complimentary, but you need to register for headcount purposes. See details in this flyer.

- **Late Registration Fee $75.00 After August 31st $ ________________**
- **Convention Registration Total $ ________________**

The Association accepts MasterCard, Visa, American Express and Discover. If using a credit card, please provide the following:

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You can register and pay online at www.mspoultry.org or mail this form, including all activities in which you wish to participate, with a check or credit card info to:

**Mississippi Poultry Association, Inc.**
**110 Airport Road, Suite C,**
**Pearl, Mississippi 39208**

For more information, call MPA at 601-932-7560.

Please indicate your preferred golf foursome below for the Vendworks, McNeely Plastic, and International Paper Friday Tournament: Please note: golf teams are arranged by the tournament sponsors and the professionals at the golf course. While trying to honor your request choosing your foursome does not indicate you will be on that team.

1. __________________________ 2. __________________________ 3. __________________________ 4. __________________________

- **Handicap _________________________ or Average Score __________________________**
The ladies program will be in the hotel this year. TV personality Maggie Wade will entertain the ladies. We look forward to hearing Maggie speak.

After all the business meetings and tournament fun is over and the prizes awarded, it will be time for the Mississippi Poultry Foundation Auction. The auction is an important source of the scholarship money that is given each year to four deserving students attending or about to begin college. Grower’s children and grandchildren, and MSU Poultry Science students are the recipients of the scholarships given each year.

Again this year MPA will be using HANDBID. The MPA staff worked hard to make this change last year and it was very successful. We hope you will join us again this year. The one important thing is that the auction contributors to 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.

A Convention Registration Form is included in this issue as well as online. If you would like to be a part of this meeting just complete the form, send it to the Becky at beard@mspoultry.org, or use the address for MPA 110 Airport Road S. Suite C, Pearl, MS 39208, or use the online registration feature. Call the Hilton Sandestin 850-267-9500 and ask for in-house reservations, use code “MPA” to reserve your room before August 13, 2018. We hope to see you in Destin.

Stan Varner, Bruce Rutledge, Ray Ables and Lee Moore in 2017 golf tournament.

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Most poultry companies have made the move to solid sidewall and near solid wall houses with small curtain openings. These enclosed houses are tighter, more energy efficient, easier to heat and cool, and easier to ventilate than the large curtain sided houses that were built just a few years ago. One of the biggest challenges with these modern houses is how to keep birds alive in the event of a utility company power outage or on-farm electrical problems.

The solution to electric utility outage is automatic-transfer standby generators, which are now standard on most poultry farms, to supply power until the utility restores service. However, on-farm electrical problems continue to trouble many farms. Proper farm wiring, proper electrical grounding, and lightning protection are three areas that are widely misunderstood and often overlooked. Defects in any of these can leave a farm or a house without electricity and cause catastrophic losses in a very short time even if there is a properly operating generator on site. The purpose of this newsletter is to detail what must be done to insure you have a properly installed and operating electrical system that will not bite you in your pocket book. The information presented is especially relevant to new construction but also useful in inspecting and renovating installed electric systems.

Proper Electrical Wiring

The first principle to observe in protecting against electrical problems is that installation of electric system components and wiring should be done in accordance with the National Electrical Code (NEC) and other local codes, and should be done by a certified electrician. Typically, the utility company will bring power to a central location on the farm, where the main service equipment and metering equipment is located. It is a good idea to not set a permanent power pole closer than 20 feet to the first house to be served and this should be on the opposite side of the house from the feed bins or tanks. In most instances, all feeder wiring from the poles to houses should be run underground and buried at least 2 feet deep, depending on local codes. It is good practice to use conduit for buried power lines, for protection against mechanical damage.

Emergency generators are a must, but we will not go into detail on generators in this issue. See newsletter #8, Emergency Power for Poultry Production (November 2000), at www.poultryhouse.com

Individual Poultry House Wiring

Power should be delivered to the center of the house. Most experts recommend that the main service panel for each poultry house be located in a separate control room located adjacent to the middle of the house. This gets the service panel out of the bird chamber and by being in the center of the house, helps reduce the length of the circuits to the ends of the house.

Panel sizes should be checked by a competent engineer or electrician, but a recommended minimum would be a 200-amp, 40-breaker panel similar to a Square D QO type. In some locations, it is permitted to omit the main breaker to this panel, provided it is properly protected by a breaker at the main service to the farm where the laterals to each house begin.

A manual disconnect switch will be required if the main breaker is omitted. Local codes will dictate if this is acceptable design.

Circuits can be sized to serve more than one fan per breaker, but it is best to run one fan per circuit to allow individual control of the fans. Separate circuits are commonly run to the tunnel inlet machine, vent box machine, electronic controller, and alarm system. Be sure to remember all inside or outside receptacles, as well as any mercury vapor or outsidelights that need to be supplied.

All wiring should be in conduit and in compliance with the National Electrical Code. There is no place for exposed Romex wiring in modern poultry houses.

Lightning Protection and Grounding

Proper installation and grounding of the electric service and all electrical and electronic equipment are essential for safety, reliability of equipment, and protection from lightning damage. Experts say that 90% of all lightning damage can be eliminated if the electrical system on the farm is properly grounded. Proper grounding is more important today than ever, because modern poultry houses are equipped with electronic equipment such as...
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as controllers, alarm systems, and/or telephone dialers, items that were not common on farms 10 years ago. These electronic devices must be installed and grounded properly or serious damage to the devices will result from surges and lightning strikes. Because the energy associated with a lightning strike is so large, it does not take a direct hit or strike to damage electrical equipment.

The key to achieving minimum susceptibility to lightning is outlined in the three steps below. Some of this information is somewhat technical, so be sure you deal with someone, either your electrician or your power supplier, who is knowledgeable on these items. Your electrician and power supplier are invaluable to you in being sure you get a properly installed and grounded installation.

1. Notify your power supplier well in advance and make certain that you tell them that you need a service to your farm that will be well grounded so as to minimize the effects of lightning. They have sophisticated meters and equipment that can check how well farms are grounded. They should check the grounds on their system as well as those on your system.

2. The National Electrical Code prescribes acceptable standards for wiring farms and farm buildings. Poultry farms usually have the main farm service panel at the meter pole, where there will be disconnects for electric lines going to each poultry house. The standby generator and automatic transfer switch are also usually located at or near the meter pole.

It is very important to have a good, single-point electrical ground connection at the electrical service and generator. The NEC allows alternative grounding devices and methods in some circumstances, but grounding is usually done by driving one or more Code-approved metal rods into the ground, with properly sized wire securely connecting the rods to each other and to both the metal casings of all equipment and the grounding circuit of the electrical service.

All grounding devices must be tested to make sure they offer not more than 25 ohms electrical resistance to earth ground, as recommended by the NEC. For houses with electronic controllers, you ideally would like to see less than 5 ohms resistance to ground. Your power supplier can help you with this. If the resistance tests high, you may need to install additional ground rods.

Anywhere we have several pieces of equipment to ground to the earth, we want what is called single point grounding. This is very important to help minimize lightning damage. Do not have separate rods for alarms, dialers, telephone lines, and electrical panels. Multiple rods must be tied together or bonded regardless of their distance apart.

3. To run electricity to your individual houses, wires should be run underground from the central meter pole and generator shed location to each poultry house panel. The NEC allows for this to be done in either a 3-wire or 4-wire system. Your electrician will understand these two options.

Option 1: 3-wire system (see illustration) – Two hot conductors and a neutral are taken to each poultry house. The ground block and neutral block in the house panel are tied together and bonded to the enclosure, and a ground rod is driven at each house. In this scenario, each house is considered a separate electrical system, and we will have single-point grounding for each house and all its electrical and electronic equipment. While this practice has been commonly used for many years, having separately grounded houses can lead to problems, especially with controllers or alarms that are networked (tied) together. If a 3-wire system is used, it is essential to install proper surge or lightning protection devices on all alarms, dialers, and controllers.

Option 2: 4-wire system (see illustration) – In this system, within each house service panel the ground block and the neutral block are kept separated. A ground rod is driven at each house but tied only to the grounding block of the service panel, and a fourth wire from the central meter pole is run to each poultry house and tied to the grounding terminal block and rod. This provides single-point grounding for the house. Looking at the farm as a whole, the grounds and the neutral are tied together only at the central meter pole, so in effect we achieve single-point grounding for the entire farm. In theory, the 4-wire system will minimize surges from lightning and large differences of voltage called ground loops. However, there are extra costs involved, and for the system to be safe, it must be properly put in (including properly sized wire) and maintained.

Whether you choose a 3-wire or 4-wire system, you should adhere to the following as much as possible:

In a 3-wire grounding system, two hot wires and a neutral wire are taken to each house. The neutral and equipment grounding wires are tied together at both the central pole and generator and at each house. This is the older way to achieve good grounding and is acceptable, although the 4-wire system affords an extra measure of protection for sensitive electronic equipment. If you use the 3-wire system, having good surge and lightning protection devices on all electronic equipment is even more critical. At all grounding rod locations, it is essential to check for acceptably low resistance to earth ground. If necessary, additional rods should be driven and all rods bonded together.
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✓ At whatever locations necessary to ground equipment, be certain to adhere to single point grounding at that location. Tie all equipment to a common rod.

✓ Work with your electrician and power supplier. Be sure you have a low resistance to earth at every ground rod. If you don’t, take corrective action.

✓ Use surge protection devices (SPD’s), especially on all controllers, alarms, and dialers. This also helps prevent lightning surges from travelling from one house to another, and is especially important if you choose 3-wire service.

✓ For more safety from lightning damage, consider wireless communications to network controllers and alarms. Many companies are introducing wireless technology and other innovative ideas to minimize the damage that can be caused by lightning.

✓ Be sure all clamps, ground wires, and rods are maintained over time. Don’t neglect your grounding system.

**Bottom Line**

The one-time additional cost of a first-class electrical system with lightning/surge devices providing the best protection against catastrophe may be several hundred dollars per house. That is cheap insurance against the risk over time of losing an entire flock to a lightning strike or on-farm electrical malfunction. Just remember: Without proper grounding, any amount of money spent on lightning and surge protection equipment will be wasted.

By Jim Donald, Extension Engineer and Professor & Jess Campbell, Poultry Housing Technician, Auburn University. Taken from The Poultry Engineering, Economics & Management Newsletter, Auburn University, in cooperation with the U.S. Poultry & Egg Association, Issue No 32, November 2004.

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**POULTRY PRODUCTION EXPECTED TO INCREASE OVER THE NEXT DECADE, USDA PROJECTS**

The future looks promising for the U.S. Poultry industry for the next decade according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The USDA released its “Agricultural Projections to 2027” in mid-February with the forecasts for stable broiler prices, increased production and growing exports.

“Broiler prices in the next decade are expected to be relatively stable following a substantial increase in 2017. The feed price ratios that result from stable broiler prices and moderate feed costs remain favorable for the continued expansion of broiler production. Larger numbers of birds and higher average broiler
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slaughter weights are also expected to contribute to broiler production growth.”

“Poultry production is projected to rise over the projection period. Broiler per capita disappearance (consumption) is expected to follow suit for the majority of the upcoming decade, with a mild decline in the last couple years of the decade, ending at just over 92 pounds per person.” Poultry remains the top protein consumed over the next decade according to the forecast.

Poultry exports are expected to grow over the next 10 years, the report states, “Export growth is faster in the first part of the projection period in part due to the continued recovery from the decline associated with avian influenza that took place in 2015.

The United States is expected to retain its position as second largest exporter of poultry after Brazil overseas. “Although a relatively strong U.S. dollar is expected to dampen growth in U.S. agricultural exports, the United States remains competitive in global agricultural markets, in part due to efficiency and quality margins, and export values grow over the next ten years,” the report notes.

The increasing fuel efficiency of cars is expected to bring a decline in ethanol production. “While falling corn production will characterize the first few years, increases are expected in the later years. Lower corn prices suggest higher feed and residual use, helping to fuel increasing meat production,” the economists predict.

The United States remains the world’s largest corn exporter over the projection period.

For the first time, soybean plantings are expected to rise above corn, hovering around 91 to 92 million acres. Increased demand for soybean meal and oil, and hence crush, are projected over the next decade. These gains reflect low expected feed prices, increasing livestock production, a modest rise in biodiesel and renewable diesel production, and steady demand by foreign importers as incomes continue to rise globally. “This is projected to cause a nominal increase in soybean prices over the decade.”


Overall the agricultural sector of the economy is adjusting to lower prices for most farm commodities but “strong global demand for soybeans is expected to induce soybean plantings that exceed corn acreage. Lower feed costs and continued strong global demand provide economic incentives for expansion in the livestock sector.”

A strong dollar makes U.S. agricultural products more expensive over overseas. “Although a relatively strong U.S. dollar is expected to dampen growth in U.S. agricultural exports, the United States remains competitive in global agricultural markets, in part due to efficiency and quality margins, and export values grow over the next ten years,” the report notes.

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First South
Farm Credit
Our goal at USDA Rural Development is to seek innovative ways to partner with rural communities and businesses to promote quality of life and prosperity throughout rural America. This mission includes supporting industries, like the poultry industry, which serve as the economic foundation of these communities. To this end, we offer a number of programs at Rural Development that you might find helpful to support your operations.

One program in particular that has proven popular among poultry producers nationwide is the Rural Energy for America Program (REAP). The REAP program provides guaranteed loan financing and grant funding to agricultural producers and rural small businesses for renewable energy systems and energy efficiency improvements. Funds can be used for alternative fuel systems and for the purchase, installation, and construction of energy efficiency improvements, such as:

- High efficiency heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems
- Insulation
- Energy-efficient lighting
- Cooling or refrigeration units
- Doors and windows
- Electric, solar or gravity pumps for sprinkler pivots
- Switching from a diesel to electric irrigation motor
- Replacement of energy-inefficient equipment

Another program popular with producers is our Value-Added Producer Grant (VAPG). The VAPG program helps agricultural producers by supporting value-added activities related to the processing and/or marketing of new products. The goals of the program are to generate new products, create and expand marketing opportunities, and increase producer income. Funds can be used for planning activities or for working capital expenses. Examples of planning activities could include conducting feasibility studies and developing business plans for processing and marketing proposed value-added products. Examples of working capital expenses could include processing costs, marketing and advertising expenses, and some expenses related to inventory.

We offer dozens more programs like these to support rural economic development. We encourage you to visit our website at www.rd.usda.gov/ms, or to contact any of our offices statewide, to learn more about what we may have to offer to support and grow your business.

APRICOT GLAZED GRILLED CHICKEN WINGS

National Chicken Council

4 pounds chicken wings, tips removed, and cut at the joint
1 teaspoon kosher salt
¾ cup apricot preserves
2 garlic cloves, mashed
1 tablespoon chopped fresh ginger
½ cup soy sauce
½ teaspoon red pepper flakes
Juice from one lime, about 2 tablespoons
1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
½ teaspoon cumin
2 tablespoons chopped chives
Fresh lime wedges for garnish

PREPARATION

Season wings with salt. Heat grill to medium high. In a food processor (small if available), combine preserves, garlic, ginger, soy sauce, red pepper flakes, lime juice, vinegar, and cumin and process until smooth. Add chives.

Place wings on the grill and cook for 8-10 minutes. Turn, and grill for another 5-6 minutes. With a pastry brush or spoon, brush the sauce on the wings. Cook for about 1 minute, and turn. Repeat on the other side of the wings. Cook for another 1 minute. Wings should register 170 degrees when tested with an instant read thermometer.
Upcoming events:

At all events involving growers, please practice strict biosecurity procedures

Breeder/Hatchery Seminar
AUGUST 14 and 15
Pearl Lab (14) &
Collins Civic Center (15)

MPA, Inc. Convention
SEPTEMBER 13-16
Hilton Sandestin Golf &
Tennis Resort, Destin, FL

The Grower Advisory Committee will meet quarterly at the call of the Chairman.

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