The 2014-2015 Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza outbreak (HPAI) on the West Coast and Midwest led to regulation changes from the Mississippi Board of Animal Health (MBAH) that poultry growers need to follow.

As a poultry producers in Mississippi, you must have a location on your property that could be used as a mass burial site if that is the disposal method you choose. The regulations state that:

“Each commercial poultry grower shall have a mass mortality disposal plan that has been developed by the Board of Animal Health and implemented by Natural Resources Conservation Service. This plan shall identify the type of disposal method to be used, as well as the location of the disposal site for occasions where due to disease or other events, the amount of mortality exceeds the capacity of the approved disposal process, such as composter or incinerator. For purposes of this regulation, “commercial poultry” shall be construed to mean any poultry flock with more than 3,000 birds.”

Type of disposal to be used by the grower in the event of mortality of poultry that exceeds the capacity of the composter or incinerator that has been approved for routine mortality. Types of disposal include:

- a. Burial
- b. In-house composting
- c. Outdoor Composting
- d. In special circumstance the State Veterinarian may approve use of a landfill, or other off-site disposal options.

Inspection and location of a disposal site shall be conducted by NRCS, in coordination with the Board of Animal Health using criteria needed to evaluate an appropriate site for burial or composting. Such site will be identified with GPS Coordinates.

Such plan shall be sent to the Board of Animal Health for final approval, and remain in force until there is a change on the farm, to include, but not be limited to, an increase in size or change in ownership, in which case a new plan must be filed. These plans must have the approval of the landowner if that person is not the poultry grower.

As the producer, you are to determine the site on your farm where you would like to bury the birds, should it be necessary due to disease, natural...
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² Merial internal data.
³ Merial internal data.

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SUMMER MEETINGS SET BUSY AGENDA  FOR LEGISLATIVE SESSION IN JANUARY

Mississippi legislators met frequently during the summer and fall and now face a full agenda of reworking taxes and education funding and making state agencies more efficient for the 2017 legislative session that begins January 3.

Revenue collections have not met projections any month since the current fiscal year began July 1. Gov. Bryant has had to cut budgets once since then after making cuts three times during the prior fiscal year.

Among the goals of studying the tax system over the summer and fall, according to legislative leaders, was to make Mississippi’s tax laws attractive to business investment and to make revenue more stable.

Some of the ideas suggested were to repeal sales taxes on business inputs such as energy or raw materials and speeding up the phase-out of the franchise tax and the 3 percent income tax bracket. During the 2016 session, lawmakers repealed the franchise tax and the lowest income tax bracket as well as cutting the income tax for the self-employed beginning in 2018.

Other ideas that came from this summer’s tax study committee included adding the sales tax to internet purchases even though the U.S. Supreme Court has said Congress must decide whether to allow states to tax internet sales.

Mississippi’s formula for funding public schools, the Mississippi Adequate Education Program, is likely to be rewritten after legislative leaders sought the advice of a New Jersey firm to suggest changes to make the formula more student-driven and achievable. The current formula has only been fully funded twice and relies on the average costs of districts with an accountability rating of a C.

MPA will continue to push for financing for road and bridge maintenance and repairs. The state’s 18-cent per gallon fuel tax is not providing adequate funding to maintain highways, county roads and city streets. Transportation is vital to the poultry industry and trucks now routinely make lengthy detours going to and from farms because of deficient bridges and bad roads.

Speaking of trucks, MPA believes feed trucks should be allowed to carry the same weight as live-haul trucks (84,000 pounds) since both travel the same roads. Adding an extra two tons to feed trucks would keep Mississippi competitive with other poultry states that have increased weight limits to as much as 90,000 pounds.

Discussions about reorganizing agencies, boards and commissions could resume in 2017. The Mississippi Poultry Association recommends an appointee to the state Board of Animal Health, which selects the State Veterinarian. Legislation that passed the Senate and died in the House during the 2016 session would have made the board advisory without a role in selecting the State Veterinarian. This proposal is likely to return along with a number of other agency consolidation proposals as legislators look for ways to reduce spending.

MPA will be watching legislation from activist groups that could impact the poultry industry. These include legislation to add new, unnecessary in-state regulation on poultry plants and to make it easier to sell uninspected chicken meat from small farms at farmers’ markets.
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Early next year, the EPA Office of Inspector General (OIG) will release a report concerning whether EPA’s level of oversight of air emissions from animal feeding operations [AFOs] needs to be more stringent. Environmental groups are poised to file lawsuits against EPA for failing to sufficiently control these emissions.

On March 8, 2016, OIG announced that it was initiating an investigation “to determine what actions the EPA has taken to evaluate air emissions from [AFOs]”, including review of (1) applicable laws, regulations, policies, procedures and guidance, and (2) any EPA air emissions modeling or measurement studies of these air emissions, as well as any such studies conducted by entities outside of EPA.

OIG appears to be conducting this investigation since no action to address AFO air emissions has been taken since the institution of the “Air Compliance Agreement” (ACA) between EPA and the animal agricultural industry in 2005. Under the ACA, AFO farms were exempted from air emissions violations. In exchange, the farms agreed to allow the EPA to measure air emissions so that the agency could gather data that would allow it to eventually set standards for air pollution.

As background, in 2006, EPA approved agreements with 2,568 AFOs, representing nearly 14,000 farms. Monitoring of 25 farms in nine states occurred from mid-2007 to the end of 2009. In 2011, EPA released the data from the individual monitored sites and began developing improved emissions estimating methodologies (EEMs) based on the data. Draft EEMs for some animal sectors were released for review and public comment in 2012 and have been widely critiqued, including by EPA’s science advisers. These EEMs have not been finalized.

The OIG’s investigation report is expected in the spring, but President-elect Donald Trump has vowed to roll back environmental regulations, not expand them, and he has a Republican Congress as his ally. Typically, after the Inspector General issues its report, EPA responds by issuing an action plan to address the problem. It seems unlikely that a Trump EPA would respond.

Environmental groups have said they will file lawsuits within the next six months against EPA to try to obtain court approval for forcing EPA to more stringently regulate AFO farms as “stationary sources” of air emissions under the Clean Air Act. The OIG report should have been issued by then as well. However, with the Trump administration well underway at that point, the groups say they are skeptical that the EPA will make any progress and will rely on convincing the courts to force EPA to ramp up its regulatory enforcement.

If you have any questions concerning this article or would like to have further information, please contact John Milner, MPA Counsel, at jmilner@brunini.com or (601) 291-4696.

Studies Show Poultry House Energy Retrofits Save Money
A study conducted in 2006 by Auburn University documents the costs and returns of retrofitting a poultry house with spray foam sealants.

Six Alabama test houses had curtain sidewalls treated with a 1-inch sprayed polyurethane sealant manufactured by BioBased Technologies:

- These houses realized a 35% savings in fuel costs in comparison to identical untreated houses
- Annual fuel savings were 1,850 gallons per house after treatment
- Static pressure of the houses increased from 0.12 before treatment to an average of 0.27 after treatment
- High-to-low temperature differences in the treated houses are only 3 – 4 degrees compared to untreated houses that experience 7 – 8 degree differences
- Further advantages of this retrofit application were seen in slight improvements in bird performance data over a 7 flock, one year period
- The R-value of the sidewalls increased from approximately R-1 to R-8 at the curtains. Above and below the curtains the R-values increased from R-2 to R-9.
- At prevailing propane prices for the time ($1.39 per gallon) and grower pay rate ($0.05 per pound) the cost of retrofitting the structures was paid back within 10 – 12 flocks.

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- Pay for what you produce; there is no investment in capital equipment. Users typically experience savings of 30% compared to traditional chemical cleaners

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Two large fundraising events happen every September for the small MPA Staff. The MPA Convention and the Mississippi Poultry Foundation Auction. The annual meeting is the largest event MPA has each year. The funds raised for the meeting keep our association operating so we can provide many services to our members, promote our industry and actually pay for the meeting and the activities at the meeting.

2016 was the 79th Annual Meeting of the Mississippi Poultry Association. The MPA staff, me, Thomas Mills and Mark Leggett work and plan for over a year to make our convention successful. On Monday before convention the three of us, started packing up to head to Destin. This means we take our office to Destin along with a U-Haul trailer stuffed full of the items such as, ladies program gifts, registration packets, t-shirts, and lots of auction items. We were successful in not breaking anything during the loading process. Once we got to Destin, we unpack the trailer and start moving items to the proper storage rooms. We were lucky again that nothing was broken or left at the office.

This year’s convention was well attended with 356 guests going in lots of directions. It is always fun to be able to reconnect with friends you haven’t seen, in some cases, since last September.

The Thursday night kick-off reception on the Barefoot’s Deck was well attended, not to mention beautiful with the soft wind blowing, the waves lapping, and the sun setting over the emerald green waters. Great food and conversation was everywhere.

The business part of the meetings began on Friday morning with speakers. House Ag Committee Chairman Bill Pigott spoke to the MPA Past Chairmen of the Board. Sid Salter, chief communications officer for Mississippi State University was our Keynote speaker this year. Dr. Ashley Peterson from the National Chicken Council was the Keynote Speaker for Saturday’s business meeting.

As always, golf and fishing were the afternoon activities. This year we combined the Friday and Saturday golf tournaments. The golfers were treated to nice prizes sponsored by McNeely Plastic Products, Vendworks, LLC and International Paper. The feedback from the golfers for the one day tournament was favorable.

The fishing tournament was well attended and is rapidly becoming the activity you want to participate in. With all of the ten boats loaded, the fishermen, fed by International Paper and supplied with drinks from R & L Poultry Equipment, set off on a five-hour search for the largest fish, most fish caught etc. The fishermen were diligent in their quest to win the great prizes sponsored by American Packaging Company and Briggs Equipment Co. These companies were very generous with the prizes such as the Green Egg Grill as the top fishing prize and many other items. They also gave away cash prizes to the fishermen. The total amount of prizes was over $8,000.

The ladies in attendance were certainly not left out of the fun. Cobb-Vantress hosted a brunch at Seaside Resort and a shopping excursion from Cobb-Vantress. This event just gets better every year. The attendees had a great time. If you missed this adventure then please try again next year. Bud Holcomb and Cobb-Vantress, Inc. really go the extra mile to make this activity new and fun each year.

I would like to say thank you to all of our sponsors. We could not have a successful meeting and fun activities without your support.

Greg McNeely with McNeely Plastic Products was elected...
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AGRI-BUSINESS
the MPA Allied Industry Person of the Year Award. The winner is chosen from the nominations made by the people within the poultry companies that the salesperson called on during the year. Please congratulate Greg if you see him on this esteemed honor.

Danny Thornton was nominated and elected into the Mississippi Poultry Hall of Fame. Danny and his family were honored with a reception held at the Mississippi State University Poultry Science Department in October. Danny and his wife Sherry own and operate a pullet farm and Danny has been successful in his work with the Mississippi Board of Animal Health and at Mississippi State University. He has served MPA in numerous capacities, most recently as the chairman of the MPA Grower Advisory Committee.

After all the business meetings and tournament fun was over and the prizes awarded it was time to get serious about fundraising for the Mississippi Poultry Foundation. The auction provides many services but one thing that is important is the scholarship money that is given each year to deserving students attending or about to begin college. Grower’s children and grandchildren are the recipients of the scholarships given each year.

This year our members were very generous in providing silent auction items. After the silent auction ended it was time for the live auction. Auctioneer Joe Joe Brown started the live auction and the MS Poultry Foundation raised close to $19,480.

If you were still present at the end of the auction you were treated to a $100 drawing from Merial Select and a $500 cash prize given by American Packaging and Briggs Equipment Company.

Our meeting this year was successful in so many ways from fund raising to everyone have a great time. I hope to see everyone next year on September 14-17, 2017.
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The Mississippi Poultry Association stepped up its annual holiday season donation to Gov. Phil Bryant on November 2, 2016. MPA provided 54,000 pounds of broiler meat and 280,000 eggs, almost a half-million servings of protein.

Governor Bryant directed the donation to the Salvation Army in Jackson. Lt. Matt Hegren said, “This donation by the Mississippi Poultry Association will go to help families across the state during the holiday season.”

The Salvation Army partnered with Mississippi Food Network, Mississippi Children’s Home Services, Gateway Rescue Mission, Grace House, and Catholic Charities to share the donation.

This was the sixth year that MPA broiler and egg companies made a donation to the Governor to direct to a charity of his choice. The first year of donations, MPA donated 10,000 pounds of meat and 10,000 eggs to Governor Haley Barbour who chose the Mississippi Food Network to receive the donation.

This year’s donation is MPA’s largest to poultry and egg donation to date. Last year MPA donated 50,000 pounds of broiler meat and 32,400 eggs. Chairman Dr. Ryn Laster believes the donation will be very helpful in for the holiday season because “it allows families to have places to go during the holiday season to get basic needs met with a hot meal.”
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MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: COMMUNITY BANK

When Community Bank opened its doors more than 100 years ago, it did not open in a large, metropolitan area or use the usual bank business plan. Instead, Community Bank began in a small timber community in east central Mississippi. First known as Farmers and Merchants Bank, today, Community Bancshares of Mississippi, Inc. is one of the South’s fastest-growing financial institutions. Community Bank has served the poultry industry of Mississippi for over 25 years and has unmatched knowledge of poultry operations in the state of Mississippi. Their humble beginnings and unique bank business plan allow Community Bank to thrive at the local level where all of their decisions are made. Its employees believe that it is one of the most unique banks because they are able to get to know the community in which they serve better than any other bank.

In the mid 1980’s, the Bank in Forest (Farmers & Merchants at that time) began a concerted effort to utilize the FSA (Farmers Home) guaranteed loan program to help poultry farmers construct new houses. As the industry expanded and increased production in the 1990’s, the bank expanded its poultry lending by utilizing the SBA guaranteed lending program in conjunction with the FSA program. Community Bank also worked with MDA to provide Agribusiness Enterprise Loans to the farmers. When Community Bancshares acquired Merchants and Manufactures Bank in Laurel and Ellisville in 1995, that bank was heavily involved in poultry lending and those offices continued to serve the Pine Belt as the Forest location did central Mississippi. Today, Community Bancshares has grown to over 44 offices and over 700 employees in 4 states. Community Bank continues to be the leader in Mississippi in loan volume by the Small Business Administration.

The history of Community Bank has allowed the bank to thrive and continue to serve rural communities of Mississippi for generations. Their separately chartered banks operate independently but share services within a common holding company. Unlike most banks, which have a central office that dictates policy to branches, this structure gives Community Bank the best of both worlds—pooled resources that can afford expensive technologies and services and local decision makers empowered to act with the community in mind. Community Bank also has community headquarters in a few strategic locations, providing customers a superior staff and taking the money saved and translating it into better rates for customers instead of having built bank branches on every corner like their competitors.

With 44 offices in 4 states, Community Banks prides itself on creating community lenders in the areas it serves. The bank staff is encouraged to be involved in local activities and given the freedom to do so easily. Community Banks participate in their communities in ways no other chain banks do. With this structure, Community Bank is able to provide excellent service and experienced personnel in poultry lending in the state of Mississippi because many Community Bank lenders were born in the areas they currently serve, which affords customers the opportunity to do business with the neighbors. Many customers consider their lenders to be family. This trust is vital, because it allows each party to focus on what is most important—the customer’s needs.
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A dozen members and staff of the House Agriculture Committee visited the farm of Vice Chairman Vince Mangold on a November 15 tour arranged by MPA.

MPA worked with Agriculture Committee Chairman Bill Pigott of Tylertown to arrange the tour that included a tour of the Sanderson hatchery and feed mill in Fernwood where Wes Hall, McComb production division manager, explained the operations to the sound of baby chicks headed to the farm.

“I thought it was important for the committee to see first hand how the poultry industry operates,” said Pigott, whose district includes many Sanderson growers.

Rep. Mangold and his wife Michelle, are Sanderson broiler growers with eight houses in Lincoln County. It was the first visit to a poultry farm for several of the committee members, including Rep. Robert Foster of Hernando, Mangold’s deskmate at the Capitol.

“Michelle and I wanted our colleagues to see the farm and how we care for the birds,” Rep. Mangold said after the tour.

“Vince and Michelle have a beautiful farm that operates like a well-oiled machine,” said Rep. Foster, who has his own farm in DeSoto County.

Other legislators participating included: Reps. Bubba Carpenter of Burnsville, Karl Gibbs of West Point, Bill Kinkade of Byhalia, Steve Massengill of Hickory Flat, Ken Morgan of Columbia, Orlando Paden of Clarksdale, Gary Stales of Laurel, Sara Thomas, of Indianola. The tour included lunch at The Roundtable in McComb.

Lobbyists Karyn Newman with Tyson Foods and Lee Thornton with Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation participated as well. Newly named House of Representatives Information Officer Clancy Smith took part in the tour which will be featured in the House newsletter for members and staff.
Sunbelt Rentals offers a wide range of poultry facility solutions including efficient condensation control and heat treatment solutions for virus elimination. We offer the newest fleet of chillers, industrial air conditioners, heaters, drying equipment, temporary power, blended systems and more. Designed to be self-contained, our equipment provides efficient, dependable performance with easy operation and mobility. In addition, we offer unmatched 24/7 emergency response, turnkey service and highly trained specialists with the knowledge and experience to respond quickly to all of your needs.

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Danny Thornton, former chair of the Mississippi Poultry Associations’ Grower Advisory Committee, was inducted into the Mississippi Poultry Hall of Fame. During his career, Danny has served numerous roles throughout the industry. He’s been a consultant, an educator, a regulator and a grower of broilers and breeders.

The Mississippi Poultry Hall of Fame includes founders of companies, CEO’s, groundbreaking researchers and people who worked to grow the industry. The announcement of Thornton’s selection, the first grower included, was made at MPA’s convention and Thornton’s portrait was recently installed in the halls of Mississippi State University Poultry Science Department, where he worked as an extension professor.

Born on February 7, 1950 in Leake County to a poultry and cattle farming family, his family built some of the first broiler houses in Leake County in the late 1940s. They were contract broiler growers for R & R Milling. Danny spent his childhood working on the family farm. After graduating from Carthage High School in 1968 as class president and Salutatorian, he and went on to achieve a Bachelor of Science degree in poultry science in 1972 from MSU. After graduating from Mississippi State he was hired by Van Bowman as a service technician with R & R Milling. In 1973, Danny joined the National Guard went on to serve 12 years in the National Guard. Upon completion of his National Guard training, he returned to work with R & R Milling in the hatchery.

In 1974 he returned to MSU to pursue a Master’s degree in poultry nutrition. In May of 1975, he completed his masters, married his wife, Sherry, and began working with the Mississippi Board of Animal Health.

Danny was employed by the Board of Animal Health as a poultry epidemiologist for 34 years from 1975 to 2008. In 2008, he began working as a Poultry Extension Specialist at Mississippi State University. After serving 38 years, he retired from the state in June 2012. After retirement, he began conducting animal welfare audits as a consultant for Process Management Consulting of Nashville.

During a majority of his career in the poultry industry, the Thorntons also owned and operated a poultry farm. From 1980 to 1993 they owned and operated a broiler farm. In 1996, he built 3 pullet houses and continues to own and operate them as a contract grower for Peco Farms.

Along with his long list of achievements in Mississippi’s poultry industry, Danny has served on the Leake County Co-op board of directors, the Leake Academy board of directors for 9 years. He is an active member of the Leake County Farm Bureau board, serves as a member of the local electric co-op board of directors and serves as a deacon at Sunrise Baptist Church.

Poultry is Mississippi’s largest agricultural industry, providing more than 55,000 jobs and resulting in a $20 billion impact on the state’s economy. MPA, founded in 1937, is the voice of the industry representing poultry companies, allied industries, and growers.

Danny Thornton and Sherry Thornton and their family during the Hall of Fame Ceremony at MSU Poultry Science Department.
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MPA ALLIED INDUSTRY LEADER OF THE YEAR

The Mississippi Poultry Association recognized Greg McNeely, of McNeely Plastics, as the 2016 Allied Industry Leader. McNeely Plastics makes plastic bags and films for food industries including poultry, beef, pork, catfish, seafood, dairy, beverage, and baked goods, and for use by the wood products and lawn and garden industries.

Greg was born in Natchez, Mississippi and as a young boy, his family moved to McComb. After a brief time away from Jackson after high school graduation, he returned to the Jackson area and attended Holmes Community College then attended Millsaps College, where he graduated Magna Cum Laude with a Bachelor of Business Administration degree with a minor in Economics.

When his father passed away in 2001, Greg became CEO and President of the family business in Clinton. In 2003, the company he turned around was selected to the Mississippi Business Journal’s “Fast 40”. The manufacturing and the distribution companies merged in 2005, forming what is today a very successful company.

In addition to being active in MPA, Greg has been active with the Mississippi Manufacturers Association, the Flexible Packaging Association Society of the Plastics Industry, and The Film & Bag Federation. He serves on the Board of Directors of the Harbor House Chemical Dependency Center and on the Mississippi Department of Employment Security’s Advisory Council.

However, even with all of these accomplishments, one of the most frequent comments both business and personal acquaintances make is that “He is such a nice guy.” At work he treats customers, vendors, and employees with ethics, integrity, and according to the Golden Rule. In fact, the Golden Rule is part of the company values included in the mission statement. He gives of his time and resources to charities, making helping others part of his daily life.

A devoted father to Jacob (18) and Emily (12), he is also a very strong supporter of charitable programs that benefit children, including supporting the Mississippi Children’s Museum, “adopting” distressed families, support of many local youth teams and activities, support for addiction relief, etc. No matter how busy, he will always stop and take time to give of himself to someone in need.

The Mississippi Poultry Association would like to thank all of its allied members who play a vital role of our organization. Allied members of the Mississippi Poultry Association work hard year round to help support the industry and without them we would not be able to do what we do.

GREG JORDAN ELECTED MPA CHAIR FOR 2017

G reg Jordan with Wayne Farms, LLC, begins his term as Chair of the Mississippi Poultry Association Board of Directors January 1.

Greg who is live operations manager for Wayne Farms’ Laurel Complex, was elected to the position at the association’s annual convention in Destin, Florida in September. He replaces Dr. Ryn Laster, director of food safety at Cal-Maine Foods in Jackson.

Live Operations Manager for Wayne’s Laurel Complex, Greg is an Auburn graduate who has 40 years experience in the poultry business. Prior to his current position, he worked for Wayne Farms’ South Alabama complex as broiler manager.

Greg and his wife, Jan, live in Laurel and have one child, Andrea.

“MPA has a long history of representing the industry’s positive contributions and its needs to our elected leaders, regulatory agencies and the general public. Those who have served before me have built MPA into a respected voice for all the industry and I am humbled to be able to serve this industry,” he said.

Greg will lead the association during its 80th year. The MPA was formed in 1937, and today includes five broiler companies, one table egg producer, 900 grower members and 125 allied industry members.

Other members of the MPA Executive Committee for 2017 are: Vice Chair Ray Ables, Tyson Foods, Inc.; Immediate Past Chair Dr. Ryn Laster, Cal-Maine Foods, Inc.; Past Chair Steve McLaurin, Peco Foods, Inc.; Treasurer Joe Colee, MarJac Poultry MS.; At-Large Member Bob Billingsley, Sanderson Farms, Inc.; Grower Advisory Committee Chair Cindy Tucker, a Peco Foods, Inc. grower.
Recognizing the rising costs of a college education and the need to recruit more graduates into the poultry industry, the Mississippi Poultry Foundation Board of Trustees increased the amount of scholarships it will award to students in 2017.

The board voted to increase the four Mississippi Poultry Foundation Scholarships awarded each spring to $4,000 each in 2017. The application for the 2017 scholarship is on the Mississippi Poultry Association website, www.mspoultry.org.

The scholarships have been $1,500 each for several years. As the revenue from annual fundraising auction has grown, the foundation’s board of trustees voted to increase the scholarship to $4,000 each.

Scholarships are awarded to students who are either pursuing careers in the poultry industry or to those whose families are grower members of the Mississippi Poultry Association based on the information called for in the application. The requested information includes a transcript, grade point average, ACT score, letters of recommendation and an essay, among other data.

The deadline to have a mailed application with the required information to MPA is February 24, 2017.

This was the fifth year the Department of Poultry Science at Mississippi State University hosted the 4-H Poultry Chain Show. The event was another success and MSU received a lot of positive feedback.

If you are unfamiliar with the poultry chain, it is where participants receive approximately 20 chicks, either Leghorns or Plymouth Rocks and raise them until sexual maturity. When participants begin the poultry chain they complete a course on raising birds, biosecurity and the importance of vaccinations. These participants keep a record book the entire 20 weeks that illustrates the birds’ feeding schedule, weight gain, vaccination schedules, biosecurity of their facilities, any other information they choose to add, and of course pictures.

Once the birds are approximately 20 weeks of age, participants select their top six birds, based on size, maturity, and uniformity and show them at a county show. The county grand champion and reserve champion advance to a state show, which was held this year October 14th at the State Fair. While at the fair all participants from counties located throughout the state will show their birds and record books in hopes of becoming a grand champion within the state.

Participants can also choose to participate in showmanship where they demonstrate their bird handling skills. This category of the competition is always exciting to watch because the time and effort these participants have allocated to their birds can easily be observed. Participants are asked to display their birds in different positions as well as walk them along a table without touching the birds. Those of you familiar with chickens know this is not an easy task without a lot of dedicated practice and time.

This year we had a total of 136 participants from 28 counties. We awarded Grand Champion and Reserve Champion for Juniors and Seniors in the Layer category and meat category as well as a Junior and Senior Grand Champion and Reserve Champion for showmanship. A total of $10,900.00 was awarded to the winners which was graciously donated by MPA, the Mississippi State Extension Service, and the Department of Poultry Science.

With the event being another success we are expecting even more support as well as a larger amount of participants next year. This success would not have been possible without donor support, as well as all of the hard work from the department, extension agents and participants. We look forward to next year, with a bigger and even better Chain Project.
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Brunini’s environmental team is “one of the premier practices in the state” and represents major manufacturers and private industry clients.

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.

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Listing of areas of practice does not indicate any certification of expertise. Any decision with respect to legal service should not be based solely on this or any other advertisement. Free background information upon request.
We would also like to congratulate the following participants for their hard work and success in this year’s chain project.

**Junior Layer Grand Champion**  
Tyler Housley  
Rankin County

**Junior Layer Reserve Champion**  
Abi Pittman  
Panola County

1st place  
LenaKate Fulgham  
Chickasaw County

2nd Place  
Mallory Lemoine  
Rankin County

3rd place  
Chrisa Brown  
Panola County

4th Place  
Elliot Turbyfill  
Wayne County

5th Place  
Skylar Noblin-Laminack  
Hinds County

**Junior Meat Grand Champion**  
Micah Taylor  
Lee County

**Junior Meat Reserve Champion**  
Jordan Walden  
Lamar County

1st Place  
Ayden Wolken  
Simpson County

2nd Place  
Emmy Tolar  
Marion County

3rd Place  
Kayleigh Avent  
Lafayette County

4th place  
Jonathan Baker  
Stone County

5th place  
Payton Lemoine  
Rankin County

**Senior Layer Grand Champion**  
Galin Burton  
Desoto County

**Senior Layer Reserve Champion**  
Jessica Baker  
Stone County

1st Place  
Grace Hutson  
Lamar County

2nd Place  
Cody Kinabrew  
Rankin County

3rd Place  
William Cook  
Rankin County

4th Place  
HC Weddle  
Calhoun County

5th Place  
Trace LaCoste  
Amite County

**Senior Meat Grand Champion**  
Hannah Hutson  
Lamar County

**Senior Meat Reserve Champion**  
Shelby Abrams  
Chickasaw County

1st Place  
Paxton Bullard  
Rankin County

2nd Place  
Kelsey Purvis  
Rankin County

3rd Place  
Amber Smith  
Chickasaw County

4th Place  
Lauren Revel  
Lowndes County

5th Place  
Madison Cox  
Calhoun County

**Senior Showmanship Grand Champion**  
Kelsey Purvis  
Rankin County

**Senior Showmanship Reserve Champion**  
Jessica Baker  
Stone County

**Junior Showmanship Grand Champion**  
Skylar Noblin-Laminack  
Hinds County

**Junior Showmanship Reserve Champion**  
Micah Taylor  
Lee County

*Thomas Mills, Jessica Wells, Micah Taylor and John Campbell*
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MISSISSIPPI VOTERS CHOOSE TRUMP, CURRENT CONGRESSMEN AND KEEP MOST JUDGES

Mississippi voters supported Republican Donald Trump by a wide margin, overwhelmingly returned the state’s four Congressmen but made a few changes on the Mississippi Supreme Court and Court of Appeals.

Trump won Mississippi 58 percent to 40 percent over Democrat Hillary Clinton, carrying 56 of the state’s 82 counties. Mississippi’s electors met Dec. 19 at the State Capitol to cast the state’s six electoral votes for Trump. Sanderson Farms CEO Joe Sanderson was one of the six Republican electors.

Reps. Trent Kelly in the 1st District, Bennie Thompson in the 2nd, Gregg Harper in the 3rd and 4th District Congressman Steven Palazzo will return to the U.S. House of Representatives where Republicans maintained their majority, 247 to 187. Thompson is Mississippi’s only Democrat Congressman.

Mississippi’s judicial elections are non-partisan races. There were three contested Supreme Court races and two contested Court of Appeals races.

On the Supreme Court, incumbent Jim Kitchens was re-elected from the Central District for a second eight year term on the state’s highest court. He defeated Appeals Court Judge Kenny Griffis 56-44 percent. Griffis is married to Mary Helen McCarty, daughter of Johnny McCarty, former owner of McCarty Farms. The Mississippi Poultry Association Political Action Committee supported Griffis, who will retain his seat on the Court of Appeals. He will face re-election in 2023.

Justice Dawn Beam was handily re-elected with 67 percent from South Mississippi to serve her first full term on the Supreme Court. She was appointed by Gov. Phil Bryant in December 2015 to fill a vacant seat.

In the Northern Supreme Court District, the retirement of Justice Ann Lamar of Senatobia set up a four-way race that led to a Nov. 29 runoff between attorney John Brady of Columbus, supported by MPA, and DeSoto County Circuit Judge Bobby Chamberlin. Chamberlin, a former state senator, handily won the runoff.

In the Court of Appeals contested races, incumbent Jack Wilson defeated Madison County Judge Ed Hannon in the November 29 runoff. MPA PAC supported Wilson, who was seeking his first full term on the court. Wilson was appointed by Gov. Phil Bryant in June 2015 to the seat elected from east central Mississippi.

The only sitting judge to lose a bid for re-election was Appeals Court Judge Ceola James of Vicksburg who was defeated by Latrice Westbrooks of Jackson. Westbrooks received 57 percent of the vote in the district on the western side of the state. James filed suit against Westbrooks, claiming Congressman Thompson’s support of Westbrooks was a partisan move not allowed under the state’s non-partisan judicial election laws, but other elected officials endorsed candidates in other races.

Mississippi has some type of election every year - in 2017 it is municipal elections, Congress and U.S. Senate roll around again in 2018 and the elections for statewide officials and legislators will be in 2019.
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First Financial Bank of Carthage provides funding for the Mississippi Poultry Foundation to award two scholarships totaling $1,500 per year to two poultry science seniors at Mississippi State University (MSU). A committee of educators chooses the recipients.

The winners of the 2016 scholarships awarded in October are Andrew Brown of Gordo, Ala. and John “Whit” Whittington Conner of Brandon. The announcement was made by FFB Vice President Michael Barnes at Mississippi State University recently. First Financial Bank is one of the state’s largest poultry industry lenders.

“First Financial Bank is glad to assist these future leaders in the poultry industry to complete their education at MSU,” Barnes said. “We are proud to be one of the early supporters of the Mississippi Poultry Foundation’s efforts to assist poultry science students with their education.”

Brown, who won a $1,000 scholarship split over two semesters, has won several other honors at MSU including the Dr. Wallace G. Morgan Endowed Scholarship and the H.F. “Mac” McCarty Scholarship. Upon graduation, Brown plans to apply for graduate school to work on his master’s degree in poultry nutrition. He has worked for Peco Foods in Gordo and as an undergraduate research assistant while at MSU.

Conner, who graduates in May has worked as an intern for Cal-Maine Foods in Chase, Kansas. His goal upon graduation is to work for a major poultry or egg company. He received a $250 scholarship for the fall semester and an equal amount for the spring semester.

This is the seventh year that First Financial Bank has made donations for scholarships to the Mississippi Poultry Foundation.
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ROAST CHICKEN WITH APPLE STUFFING AND CIDER SAUCE

Nutritional Information
Per Serving: 500 calories; 46 g protein; 26 g carbohydrate; 23 g fat; 7 g saturated fat

Serving Size: 4

Ingredients

Stuffing
1 TBLS butter
1 apple, peeled, cored and finely diced
1 onion, 1/2 finely diced and 1/2 reserved
2 TBLS fresh tarragon, chopped
1/2 cup dry breadcrumbs
1/4 cup apple cider
1/2 tsps salt
1/4 tsps black pepper

Sauce
2 TBLS flour
1/2 cup apple cider
1/2 cup chicken broth (fat-free)
1 TBLS fresh tarragon, chopped
1 TBLS apple cider vinegar

Preparation
Make stuffing by melting butter in non-stick skillet over medium heat. Place apple pieces in skillet; sauté. Add onion diced pieces; sauté until softened, about 3 minutes. Remove from heat. Stir in tarragon, breadcrumbs and apple cider. Add salt and pepper; stir. Set aside. Preheat oven to 400°F.
Loosen skin on breasts and thighs of chicken by sliding fingers under skin. Push stuffing under skin, distributing evenly. Tie legs with six inch piece of butcher twine. Sprinkle 1 teaspoon salt and 3/4 teaspoon black pepper on inside and outside of chicken. Place onion half inside the cavity of chicken. Place chicken in roasting pan; bake for 1 hour.
To make sauce, transfer chicken from roasting pan to cutting board. Pour pan drippings into sauce pan, scraping bits from bottom of pan. Whisk in flour. Warm over medium heat. Gradually whisk in apple cider and chicken broth. Bring to simmer; cook over very low heat for 3 minutes. Stir in tarragon and apple cider vinegar.
Carve chicken; arrange on serving plate. Pour sauce into pitcher and pass separately.

Source: www.eatchicken.com

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