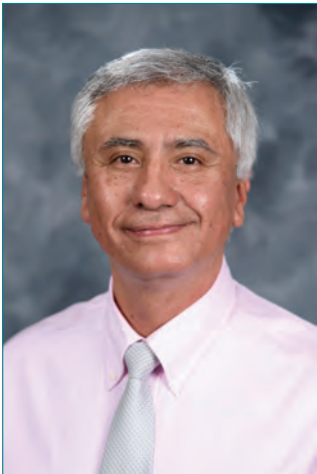


TRENDS

A Newsletter of the Mississippi Poultry Association

MSU POULTRY LAB'S BANDA NAMED EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF MISSISSIPPI VETERINARY RESEARCH AND DIAGNOSTIC LABORATORY SYSTEM

By Mel Thurlow, MSU College of Veterinary Medicine, Director of Outreach



Dr. Alejandro Banda

STARKVILLE, Miss.—The Mississippi State University College of Veterinary Medicine's Dr. Alejandro Banda is the new executive director of the Mississippi Veterinary Research and Diagnostic Laboratory System, or MVRDLS.

The MVRDLS consists of four laboratories located in three geographic sites operated by MSU CVM—the Mississippi Veterinary Research and Diagnostic Laboratory (MVRDL) and the Poultry Research and Diagnostic Laboratory (PRDL), both in Pearl; the Aquatic Research and Diagnostic Laboratory (ARDL) located in Stoneville; and the CVM Diagnostic and Aquatic Laboratory housed in the Wise Center on the college's main campus in Starkville. The labs provide vital surveillance and diagnostic testing for practicing veterinarians, individual producers, pet owners, and the livestock, aquaculture and poultry industries throughout the state.

A longtime CVM faculty member, Banda is a clinical professor in veterinary virology in the CVM Department of Pathobiology and Population Medicine. He joined the PRDL in 2008 and has instructed DVM courses such as Special Species, Agents of Infectious Disease and Veterinary Anatomy, as well as master's-level classes including Advanced Poultry Diseases and Poultry Virology. He is a diplomate of both the American College of Poultry Veterinarians and American College of Microbiologists, member of the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians and American Association of Avian Pathologists, and on the editorial board of the Journal of Avian Diseases.

Banda is originally from Mexico and earned his Doctor of Veterinary Medicine and Master of Veterinary Science degrees from the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM). He completed his Ph.D. in medical microbiology at the University of Georgia. Banda previously worked as a consultant in animal health with the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture in Mexico and as an associate professor in avian medicine and virology at the UNAM College of Veterinary Medicine. He also served as an extension associate and laboratory director at Cornell University Duck Research Laboratory in New

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- YOUTH LEARN MORE ABOUT THE INDUSTRY IN MSU'S FARM TO FORK POULTRY ENRICHMENT CAMP
- "BIRD FLU" AND DAIRY COWS
- AVIAN METAPNEUMOVIRUS: A NEW THREAT SURROUNDING MISSISSIPPI ON ALL FRONTS

York state.

“We are excited about Dr. Banda moving into the executive director role because he brings a wealth of experience from his work at the Poultry Research and Diagnostic Laboratory and fully understands the important mission of the MVRDLS,” MSU CVM Dean Dr. Nicholas Frank said. “Dr. Banda will ensure that the MVRDLS continues to serve the needs of the state by detecting and investigating diseases that threaten the health of animals and impact the poultry, cattle, equine and catfish industries.”

The MVRDLS is the state’s only approved laboratory for conducting government-required surveillance and regulatory testing for domestic and food animals, including those tests required before the harvest, sale, or shipping of food-animal products. And, although the labs do a high volume of

regulatory tests, the diagnostic tests they provide are equally as important as they help producers, veterinarians and industry make decisions about treatment and vaccination programs.

“I am excited to continue serving MSU, the CVM, and the overall state of Mississippi in this new capacity. These current times are posing remarkable challenges in animal health but also offer great opportunities to our diagnostic laboratory system,” Banda said. “MVRDLS is staffed with veterinarians, technicians, research scientists, and support staff who understand that the services we provide are vital to Mississippians. Our employees are committed to protecting the health of animals, people and the state’s vital agricultural economy. I am proud to work with them to ensure that we continue to offer the informed, timely, high-quality services those we serve have come to know and expect.” ■

WHAT’S HAPPENED TO HATCH ON AGENDA FOR THE AUGUST MPA BREEDER-HATCHERY SEMINAR

The Thames Center



The question on everyone’s mind in the poultry industry is what has happened to hatch over the last few years. This will be one of the topics at the MPA Breeder-Hatchery Seminar, Wednesday, Aug. 7 at Copiah-Lincoln Community College in Wesson.

The seminar in the Thames Conference Center, 1084 Lake Rd, Wesson, MS, will begin at with registration at 8 a.m. and conclude at 3 p.m. Lunch is included. There is no cost for MPA members to attend. If you would like to sponsor the meeting or register to attend, please contact Lauren Fortenberry at 601-932-7560 or Fortenberry@mspoultry.org.

A committee of industry personnel working with Miss. State University experts put the program together. Some topics and speakers are still being locked down. We will begin with Sam LeNarz, vice president-account management team for Agristats, who will provide some historical context and recent data.

As usual, the seminar will feature speakers from primary breeders, Aviagen and Cobb-Vantress and hatchery equipment-maker Jamesway.

Various experts will provide information on various diseases important to breeder-hatchery operations. Speakers will include Dr. Natalie Manginsay, new director of the PRDL, Dr. Martha Pulido, PRDL head bacteriologist. Dr. Andy Bishop, Wayne-Sanderson veterinarian on a new threat, avian metapneumovirus.

Other speakers include Dr. Duarte Neves with Zinpro on Nutrition’s Impact on Egg Quality & Hatch , Dr. Keith Bramwell with Jamesway on Incubation by Breed, consultant Dr. Phil Stayer on Granulomas and Jonathan Moon, MSU poultry science extension professor, on Litter Sanitation. ■



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2024 • Issue 2

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

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THE MISSISSIPPI POULTRY ASSOCIATION 2024 CONVENTION

The 2024 MPA Convention will feature most of the same crowd favorites from last year. The Mississippi Poultry Association's 2024 Convention will be at the Hilton Sandestin, Thursday, September 12th to Sunday the 15th.

Thursday

We will have our Platinum Sponsor's Kickoff Reception from 6:00 - 7:00 p.m. on the Barefoot's deck. Cocktails and appetizers will be served, hope to see you there!

Friday

Past Chairman's Breakfast (by invitation only).

Dr. Ashley Peterson, the National Chicken Council's Vice President of Scientific and Regulatory Affairs, returns as our first keynote speaker at the opening business session.

Starting at 9:00 a.m. is the Ladies Program, sponsored by Cobb-Vantress, Inc., Huvepharma, and Jones-Hamilton. This year the ladies will be painting a fall door hanger. This program will be led by The Traveling Painter. Make sure to mark attending on your registration if you plan to attend.

The International Paper and McNeely Plastics Golf Tournament starts at 12:00 with lunch being served. Shotgun start at 1:00. This year we will be playing at the Links Course.

The American Packaging / Deep South Equipment Co. Fishing Tournament begins Friday at noon at the West Past Marina Fishing Docks behind Brotula's Restaurant. International Paper will provide lunches at the dock. Coolers with refreshments will be sponsored by QC Supply/Cumberland. Prizes will be provided by Deep South Equipment Co. and American Packaging.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO PRE-REGISTER IF YOU PLAN TO FISH SO THAT WE HAVE ENOUGH BOATS.

Saturday

Attorney Clayton Bailey with Bailey Brauer law firm, Dallas will speak again this year at the MPA Business meeting at 7:30 a.m.

Free time to visit the beach, go shopping, watch football, or do whatever you like. Starting at 5:00-8:00 p.m. Caricaturist Tim Banfell, sponsored by Diamond V, and the MPA Photo Booth, sponsored by Burroughs Diesel, Zee Company, American Packaging, and Water Tech Inc.

Saturday night:

- Mississippi Poultry Foundation Silent/Live Auction using Handbid software sponsored by Aviagen. **Please download the Handbid app, you will pay for your silent and live auction items through the app.**
- Televisions in the Lobby provided by International Paper.
- Diamond & Gold Sponsor's Awards Reception
- Award Golf and Fishing Prizes ■



ROOM RESERVATIONS

MPA has reserved a block of rooms at the Hilton Sandestin. Please mention MPA when you call the group reservationist, Alicia Murray, 850-267-9500 ext. 3000. The cutoff date for reservations in the MPA block is Sunday, August 11, 2024. After this date, rooms will be sold at the regular hotel rate.

MPA WILL NOT BE MAKING RESERVATIONS. YOU MUST MAKE YOUR OWN RESERVATIONS DIRECTLY WITH THE HOTEL.

SCHOLARSHIP AUCTION

The Scholarship Auction items will be available for viewing starting September 3. The deadline to get items to MPA or at least let us know what you will donate is August 23rd. Contact fortenberry@mspoultry.org.

Registration

- Formula/Allied Members Single or Couple \$375
- Member Single or Couple \$475
- Grower Member Single or Couple \$50
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- Fishing Tournament \$300

Golf Tournament \$175. Mulligans (4 for \$25, each golfer can only use two), Fishing Tournament \$300. A \$100 late registration fee will be charged on registrations received after September 3, 2024. Registration fees will not be refunded after September 3 due to contractual obligations with the resort. It is important that you pre-register for the activities in which you wish to participate. We must give the resort guarantees on all events.



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YOUTH LEARN MORE ABOUT THE INDUSTRY IN MSU'S FARM TO FORK POULTRY ENRICHMENT CAMP

By Tannah Christensen, MSU Poultry Science Extension Instructor



Students, faculty, and staff of farm to fork camp.

On the first week of June, five 3rd-5th graders from the Starkville-Oktibbeha County School District came through the doors of the Poultry Science Department eager for the week ahead. They registered for the second annual Farm to Fork: Poultry Enrichment Camp with curiosity about poultry science. From layers to broilers, we spent the four-day camp exploring the industry through tours, hands-on demonstrations, and lots of activities!

Days one and two of our adventures took us to the layer side of the industry and our nutrition lesson. From hatch to home, we visited MSU's poultry south farm hatchery, pullet house, and layer house to help us gain a better understanding of the process and operations. Before we left the farm, we stopped by our backyard flock to learn about some different breeds. After seeing our birds, we took a closer look inside the hen to see just how that egg is developed. With an understanding of fertile versus infertile eggs, we broke out different stages of embryo development to dive into how those chicks were formed. Once our chick is born, it must have a home, food, and water, so our next lesson led us to our nutrition talk and understanding more about the importance of nutrition and debunking those myths we so often hear. We mixed a little "chicken feed" for ourselves as well.

Day three was all about the meat side of the industry and boy did we end it with some fun! We started our lesson right in their home- where they go to get fat- gaining an understanding



Embryo breakout session with Farm to Fork: Poultry Science camp participants. Participants break out different stages of embryo development in a hands-on activity.

of how the houses operate and the management practices to grow the biggest and best bird possible. We start with a bird, but we end with our meat. Our tour ended at the processing plant and understanding how we get from the bird to the meat, but not forgetting we use each piece of the bird for different products and by-products.

We ended day three with some egg drop contest fun and picked up on day four with a little chef challenge making omelets. Straight from our farm to our fork! A good friendly competition is always how you want to end a fun week of learning, so we did just that. We

put our skills to the test and solved fun riddles to complete THE AMAZING RACE! It may have ended with a few eggs flying across the courtyard.

All in all, I would say it was an amazing experience, and they each walked away with new knowledge about poultry and the industry. One of the main goals of camp is to help youth understand food doesn't simply end up in the store. There is a whole industry bringing that food to your table. These kids come in eager and excited to learn. It truly makes my job one of the best around!

Huge thank you to the Mississippi Poultry Association for their support in this camp! For more information or to donate to the fun, please contact Tannah Christensen t.christensen@msstate.edu. ■



Jonathan Collin Robertson with his favorite chicks.



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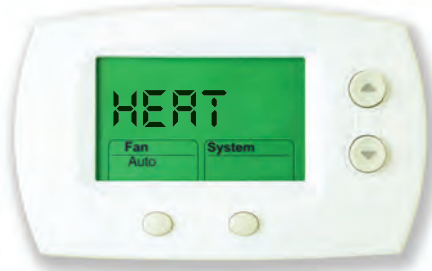
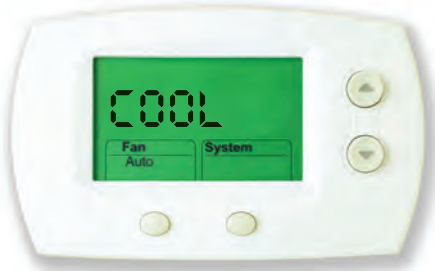
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"BIRD FLU" AND DAIRY COWS

By James A. Watson DVM, Dip. ACVPM
State Veterinarian



I'm sure many of you have heard by now about the unusual finding of the virus that causes Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza in dairy cattle.

The Food and Drug Administration recently conducted a national study of around 300 retail milk samples from 38 states and identified PCR positive samples, but no live virus in any of the samples. These studies validated the claim

that the pasteurization process of milk destroys the bacteria and viruses that can cause disease that may be found in raw milk and that our milk supply is safe. Currently there are 51 herds in 9 states with positive cows. Unlike in domestic poultry where the affected birds suffer basically 100% mortality, the affected dairy cows are only mildly affected and recover in 10-14 days. The udder is the primary target of the virus in the cow, causing milk to contain extremely high levels of virus during the several weeks the cow is affected. With few exceptions, only the lactating or milking cows are affected and while the disease spreads from cow to cow, the exact mechanism is not yet known but nose to nose or respiratory spread does not seem to occur within an affected herd.

The disease originated in the Panhandle of Texas back in December of last year, but it took until March to determine that the HPAI virus was the culprit. For months dairies were undergoing a very strange condition, only affecting about ¼ of the herd causing cows to go off feed, run low fever, have thick yellow milk for 10-14 days and then recover. It wasn't until a connection was made between dead birds and dead cats at these facilities that avian influenza was tested for and found to be the cause of the strange disease. The disease was also found to spontaneously occur in Kansas and New Mexico. The positive herds in the other 6 states were a result of moving cows from affected herds in the Texas/new Mexico area to herds in those states. Unfortunately, there have been two instances where the dairy cow virus has

infected 2 poultry farms, one each in Michigan and Texas. Many of you may have also heard of the human case of influenza caused by the HPAI virus by a dairy farm worker in Texas. The symptoms were conjunctivitis and the worker fully recovered. The genetic sequencing of all these viruses has shown researchers that the virus originally came from wild birds, which then adapted to dairy cattle, and it was the dairy cattle virus that then infected the poultry farms.

The purpose of this article is to give everyone an update on the dairy cow situation, but also to remind everyone that the HPAI virus continues to plague our country. We were very fortunate in Mississippi that the number of HPAI positive migratory waterfowl was drastically lower than last year, however the virus continues to persist in the wild bird population and continues to be a threat to

our poultry industry. Just as for the dairy industry, biosecurity is the primary tool to prevent devastating diseases such as HPAI but also other diseases such as Infectious Laryngotracheitis (ILT) that we are experiencing right now in Mississippi. Unfortunately, when the virus is in the environment, brought in on contaminated equipment or because of contact with individuals from infected farms, we must consider each poultry house when developing our biosecurity plans. At a minimum, there needs to be footbaths at the entrance to each



house and a dedicated pair of boots and hair nets or caps for each house in the computer room or similar location along with hand sanitizer. The foot baths must be kept fresh and free of organic matter to be effective. Of course, it is imperative that any equipment or tools that have been on other poultry farms be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected before bringing onto your farm. There have been several cases during our recent ILT outbreak where there were definite links between infected farms, indicating people had not taken appropriate precautions to change clothes, clean vehicles etc. before entering their farm and bringing disease with them. Practicing proper biosecurity is a very difficult task, but it is our most reliable tool to keep our farms free from disease.

I would like to thank each of you for the hard work you do to produce the safest food in the world! ■

LITTER MANAGEMENT

Jonathan Moon, MSU Poultry Science Extension Professor

We asked Jonathan Moon to expand his talk at the Poultry Management School on Litter Management into an article for this edition of Emerging Trends.

Proper Litter management is critical because broilers live their entire life in constant contact with it, and therefore it can seriously impact bird performance and welfare.

With cost and availability of new bedding and No Antibiotics Ever (NAE) production using built-up litter has become common, but potential moisture situations can lead to increased ammonia production stressing birds causing poor performance seen with reduced weights, higher feed conversions, and more condemnations at the plant. These same

conditions can increase pathogen growth which can have a carryover effect to the next flock. When raising birds under an NAE program reused litter has can have beneficial effects such as reducing Necrotic enteritis and jump starting the chick's immune system with a heathy challenge. Total cleanouts and new bedding can make issues with Necrotic enteritis worse.

Moisture is the #1 influencing factor in litter quality, so naturally we want to manage the house to reduce moisture. Birds consume 2 pounds of water per pound of feed and 80 % of this is added back to the house through respiration or manure. The amount of moisture the birds add back to the house goes up each day as birds age and consume more feed and water. Nipple drinker systems can also be a litter moisture source. Moisture is a byproduct of burning propane as well, one gallon of propane burned will produce .8 gallons of water.

The ideal litter moisture level of the litter is 20-25%. A rule of thumb to judge litter moisture. If a handful of litter stays in a ball, it is too wet, and if it won't stick together at all, it may be too dry, if it sticks together slightly and then falls apart it is probably just right. To reduce moisture, he recommended properly managing your drinker system with routine flushing, cleaning, and sanitation, as well as managing height and pressure.

The main mode of removing moisture in a chicken house is through proper ventilation, especially in the winter with proper minimum ventilation. You want to start your ventilation early and increase throughout the flock to remove increasing amounts of moisture added daily. It may be difficult at times but, ventilate to try to maintain 50-70% relative humidity inside the house. Stir fans can also be a useful tool to bring the

warm air down from the ceiling to help dry the litter and cut back on heater run time.

Between flocks, removing caked litter from the house is critical to managing moisture, and make sure you do a good job and get it out of the corners and down the walls. This caked litter is made up of as much as 40-60% moisture and it can trap moisture and ammonia in the litter. Also, windrowing litter can be a cost-effective method of managing the pathogen load in the litter, when done correctly. The windrows need to heat the litter to 130-140 degrees to kill most bacteria, viruses, fungi and parasite eggs.

When windrowing you need enough time to do it properly, minimum of 10 days but longer is better. Start immediately after birds are caught and build the first rows and let them set for three days. Next turn the rows and let set another three days, this moves the litter on the outside of the row to the inside. You should lay the rows back out level out and ventilate with a couple fans for a minimum of four days to remove ammonia and dry out the litter, ammonia will be high, so this is verry important. Not doing windrowing correctly is a waste of time.

Using acidifying litter amendments is a popular way of reducing ammonia and conserve fuel in the chicken house for the brooding phase. Preheating houses for 24-36 hours with ventilation will dry out the house, reduce ammonia, and get the chicks off to a good start.

Finally, keep your house dry, ventilate, get cake out, manage drinkers, windrow to manage pathogens, and use liter amendments to help control ammonia. ■



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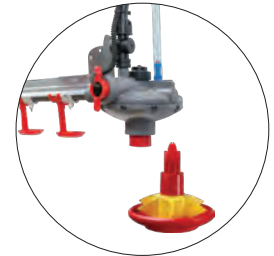
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THE 2024 POULTRY MANAGEMENT SCHOOL DRAWS 150

The 2024 Poultry Management School focused on communication styles, combatting diseases and crawfish. Yes, the crawfish boil was back at management school for the 150 people from all sectors of the industry who attended.

Communications: Social Styles/personality training
Cade Reynolds with Elanco led participants in determining their communication styles and how generational differences play into conversations. The audience took an online test that told them their individual communication style.

Reynolds said, “80 percent of our failures in life are based on our inability to relate to people – poor communication.”

Everyone is more assertive or more receptive. Characteristics of assertive types include telling, fast paced, firm statements, louder voice, interrupts. A receptive: asks questions, is slow in speech, subtle, soft-spoken.

Another continuum is from reserved to responsive. The reserved do not share emotions easily, prefer getting the job done first, getting to know people second. The responsive more easily share emotions, discusses people issues first, then focuses on the task second.

The four communication styles that resulted from the online test were: Director, Thinker, Relator, and Socializer.

Thinkers are analytical and systematic, great problem solvers, detail oriented, work well independently, slow decision-makers, and can be perfectionists, while Directors like to be in charge, are goal and results oriented, work quickly by themselves, and can be stubborn, impatient, and insensitive.

Socializers are friendly and enthusiastic, like being in the spotlight, are excellent collaborators, impatient, have a short attention span and an aversion to being alone, while Relators are warm nurturing, excellent team players, have excellent listening skills, are risk-averse, don't like to speak up and are more concerned about participating than winning.

Reynolds said everyone needs to “find the way the other person wants to be communicated with.”

The generation a person belongs to influences how they relate to others.

- Traditional, those born up to 1945 value obedience over individualism, believe age equals seniority, and have advanced through hierarchy.

- Boomers, 1946-64, believe achievement comes after paying one's dues. They are motivated by loyalty, teamwork, duty, and prefer specific goals and deadlines.

- Generation Xers, 1965-80 are motivated by diversity, move on if employers fail to meet their needs, are resistant to change at work if it affects their personal lives. Managers should give them immediate feedback, provide flexible work arrangements and work-life balance, as well as extend opportunities for personal development.

- Millennials, 1981-96, are motivated by responsibility, the quality of their manager, unique work experiences, communicate electronically, seek challenge, and a fun work life. They will leave if they don't like changes. He suggested managers get to know them personally, manage by results, be flexible on their schedule and work assignments, provide

immediate feedback.

- Gen Z, 1997-2015, are motivated by personalization, individuality, creativity, and prefer innovative coworkers and new technologies. Managers should offer opportunities to work on multiple projects at the same time; provide work-life balance; allow them to be self-directed and independent. Want to interact with their boss daily or several times each day and expect their employer to provide them formal training.

In summary, he suggested that successful communication results from adapting to others' communication styles, asking more questions, listening to answers, “accept, acknowledge and adapt to generational gaps.”

Ventilation

Dr. Jody Purswell, USDA ARS, gave advice based on ARS research into fans, reminding those in attendance that “Installed performance can vary dramatically from laboratory values” by as much as 15% lower capacity in the field.

Dr. Purswell recommended putting fans on the end wall to take the burden off the fans on the side wall. Fans run on average 3000 hours per year and performance begins to degrade at 100 hours due to belt slippage.

He said most poultry houses have too much in cool cell pads based on decades old design guidance and a shorter distance down the house with taller pads would be better.

Infectious Laryngotracheitis (ILT): What We Learned

Drs. Randi Cran, Wayne-Sanderson Farms; Jim Watson, state veterinarian, and Natalie Manginsay, MSU PRDL, provided perspectives on the ongoing ILT outbreak in south and central Mississippi that began in August 2023.

Dr. Manginsay said her laboratory had done 482 ILT PCR tests with 123 positive tests in 70 flocks from August 7, 2023, to May 10, 2024.

While the number of new cases has reduced since the peak of the outbreak in January, the PRDL is “is still getting a couple of cases per week, mainly in broiler flocks from 45-59 days old. Five broiler companies have been impacted but half of the cases have come from one company. Some cases submitted to the lab had a history of a daily doubling of mortality over the past few days, which is typical of ILT in broilers, she said.

Dr. Watson said it is too early to assess what lessons can be learned from the ongoing outbreak,

He said this is the third outbreak he has “We have been able to keep it from blowing up like we have seen in the past. With HPAI, they (growers) are all doing a much, much better job of biosecurity.” Dr. Watson reminded the audience that ILT is tracked by people, not animals.

Dr. Cran said the first case was on August 3, when the temperature was 100 degrees and the second case was not until eight weeks later. “It has been more of a slow crawl than was expected” in terms of the spread of the disease.

She said CEO vaccine is an important tool in managing this outbreak and administration through the medicator has proven successful.

Enterococcus

Drs. Ahmad Mueez, Church & Dwight; Martha Pulido-Landinez, MSU's Poultry Research and Diagnostic Lab (PRDL); and Kevin Kessler, Tyson Foods, gave their perspectives on enterococcus.

Dr. Pulido said, "Hatchery contamination must be considered an important source of Enterococcus. Transmission by egg fecal contamination may result in late embryo mortality." Enterococcus infection can be an indicator of future disease.

Dr. Mueez said "Hatchability reduced significantly from 6 to 30 percent due to enterococcus." Thirty years ago, he said hatchability rates were around 85 percent and now are 79.1 percent.

He also said that spinal problems known as kinkyback is "a small piece of the iceberg 0.5 to 2 percent."

Dr. Kessler said kinkyback was a problem with individual birds but it has become a flock problem that begins at about 35 days of age.. It can be controlled by strategic use of probiotics. Lighting is important in forming good bones as is keeping birds cool in hot weather because there is a higher incidence in summer months.

He said that in recent years, pericarditis and femoral head

necrosis is a new presentation of the disease.

Inclusion Body Hepatitis

Dr. Tim Cummings with Zoetis spoke about Inclusion Body Hepatitis, caused by an adenovirus, which typically shows up when birds are 15 to 30 days of age. "You tend to see sulfur-colored droppings and "a liver that doesn't look right – swollen, mottled, and discolored," he said. At the farm level, we have had to rely on vaccination of the pullets with autogenous vaccines to help control this bug, as there is not a lot you can do other than minimize stress during an outbreak in broilers. Properly managing today's modern broiler and biosecurity is simply more important today than ever.

Water, the Forgotten Nutrient

Dr. Mueez, in his second presentation at the 2024 Management School, said water for chickens needs to be pathogen free and odor free. He noted that every well has its own attributes and testing water for birds is different from testing it for human consumption. Water should be tested for minerals, heavy metals, and microbial contamination because, "water refusal can kill the birds."

So much is added to the water - vaccines, nutrient supplements, probiotics, and prebiotics - that these additives can plug up the water lines. In addition to cleaning the water lines, he said the well should be disinfected two to three times per year. ■

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EPA'S WASTEWATER GUIDELINES TRUE COST IS OVER \$1 BILLION AND OVER 100,000 JOBS

On March 26, 2024, a coalition of meat and poultry industry groups published comments that the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA or the Agency) proposed January 23, 2024 wastewater Effluent Limitations Guidelines (ELGs) will (1) cost hundreds of millions more than Agency estimates, (2) kill at a minimum tens of thousands more jobs and (3) close many processing facilities - resulting in hardship for livestock and poultry producers.

These ELGs require reductions of nutrients and other pollutants in discharges from slaughterhouses and meat and poultry processing and rendering facilities into waterbodies and publicly owned treatment works (POTWs). A POTW is usually a municipal sewer system. Some processors discharge into a stream and are called direct dischargers, those that send water to a POTW are indirect dischargers. These pollutants include oil and grease, organic material, salts, ammonia, and significant quantities of the nutrients, nitrogen and phosphorus. EPA Fact Sheet, <https://www.epa.gov>

The Meat and Poultry Products Industry Coalition (MPP or the Coalition) is made up of the American Farm Bureau Federation, the Meat Institute, National Chicken Council, National Pork Producers Council, National Turkey Federation, North American Renderers Association and the U.S. Poultry & Egg Association. The full and extensive comments (87 pages including appendices) are available at <https://www.meatinstitute.org> ("Coalition Comments")

Poultry and Meat Industries' Concerns

The Coalition Comments concerned EPA's proposed ELGs for wastewater discharged by meat and poultry processing and rendering facilities. Last amended in 2004, the meat and poultry ELGs currently apply to about 180 of the estimated 5,300 meat and poultry facilities nationwide. In the proposed ELG, EPA estimates that between 845 and 1,620 facilities would be subject to and incur costs should the proposed ELGs become final. This applicability estimate is vigorously disputed by the Coalition comment as explained below.

EPA's proposed three regulatory options for the ELG are:

Option 1, the preferred option by the EPA, would include new phosphorus limits and revised nitrogen limits for large direct dischargers and new pretreatment standards on certain conventional pollutants for large indirect dischargers.

Option 2 would consist of the requirements in Option 1 and add nutrient limits for indirect discharging of first processors and renderers above specified production thresholds.

Option 3 would be similar to Option 2 but with lower production thresholds for the nutrient limits and conventional pollutant limits for both direct and indirect dischargers.

The Coalition made the following key arguments in its Coalition Comments regarding these options and related issues:

(1) The Agency has grossly underestimated how many MPP facilities - Industry analysis of the projected number of MPP facility closures for Option 1 without chlorides would jump from 16 sites that EPA estimates in the proposed rule to 74 sites. The projected number of near-term job losses associated with these facility closures would increase from nearly 17,000 that EPA estimates in the proposal to over thirty thousand to nearly 80,000 direct job losses from plant closures. The projected closures and job losses for the more stringent regulatory options would increase similarly. For Option 2 with chlorides, for example, the projected number of facility closures would increase to 139, 15 % of facilities that exceed the Option 2 threshold, or 340 closures for Option 3.

(2) The proposed rule harms the relationship between MPPs and publicly-owned treatment works (POTWs) - Indirect discharging MPP facilities often make significant financial investments in maintaining and upgrading the POTW or shouldering major surcharges for the POTW's continued operation and maintenance, which reduce public treatment costs for residential ratepayers and improve the quality of local and downstream waters.

(3) EPA's analyses of pollutant loadings are inconsistent with its cost analyses - EPA is taking credit for pollutant removals that are already occurring.

(4) EPA has not timely provided complete information on its analysis - EPA has not provided complete information for public and industry stakeholder verification in a timely way.

"Meat and Poultry Coalition: EPA's Wastewater Guidelines True Cost Is Over \$1 Billion and Over 100,000 Jobs, Meat Institute, <https://www.meatinstitute.org> (March 26, 2024).

Paul Bredwell, executive vice president of regulatory programs for the U.S. Poultry and Egg Association, explained the difficulties of working through the proposed ELGs within the EPA comment period. Bredwell noted in the EPA virtual hearing about the proposed ELGs that about 660 documents were made available by EPA in the Federal Register, with a short comment period of 60 days. "It's unrealistic to think that the incredibly short comment period will provide stakeholders with ample time to perform the very important task of reviewing EPA's cost estimation, which is the basis for claiming that the rule of the environmental benefits outweighs the financial



impact,” Bredwell said. McCarthy, Ryan, “Industry groups navigate EPA’s latest wastewater guidelines, Meat+Poultry, <https://www.meatpoultry.com> (March 15, 2024) (abbreviated herein as “McCarthy”)

Legislation to block the EPA proposed EGLs

To reinforce the deficiencies of the EPA’s proposed ELGs, Congressional legislation has been introduced. Rep. Eric Burlison (R-Mo.) and Rep. Ron Estes (R-Kan.) introduced the Banning EPA’s Encroachment of Facilities (BEEF) Act that looks to prohibit the EPA from finalizing, implementing or enforcing the proposed ELGs. In support of the legislation, the Executive Director of the American Association of Meat Processors (AAMP), Chris Young, stated:

“I want to be clear that AAMP believes we as an industry

need to be environmentally responsible, but the proposed rule in its current state is greatly flawed.... The proposed rule is based on limited wastewater collection and limited visits to meat and poultry facilities and is based largely on a study performed by one of the activist groups that sued EPA. EPA quotes the study more than 20 times in the proposed rule, a study that has not been peer reviewed. EPA needs to start over and do its due diligence in collecting data and work with the industry to understand its diversity and how we can work together to come up with cost effective sustainable answers to wastewater issues.” Id. (McCarthy)

If you have any questions concerning this article, please contact John Milner, MPA Counsel, at (601) 960-6842 or jmilne@brunini.com; or Mark Leggett, MPA President, at (601) 932-7560 or leggett@mspoultry.org. ■

CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE FINDS POULTRY IS 50.3 PERCENT OF ALL STATE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION

Poultry is 50.3 percent of Mississippi’s total agricultural production, and Mississippi’s 3rd Congressional district ranks second in the nation in poultry and egg production. Those are just two of the insights from the 2022 Census of Agriculture released this spring.

The 2022 Census is the 200th anniversary of the federal government asking questions about farming. The first time was in the 1820 Census of population . (See sidebar).

The 2022 Census lists 2,826 farms producing poultry or eggs with total sales statewide of \$4.15 billion. This includes any farm that sells more than \$1,000 of any product, so the number of farms is higher than just contract poultry growers. Poultry and eggs represent 50.3 percent of total agricultural sales in Mississippi, but the Census does not include forestry. Looking back, in 2017, poultry represented 50.1 percent of all agricultural sales and in 2012 it was 42.6 percent.

Poultry and eggs ranked first by sales of all agricultural products in Mississippi and Leake County again ranked first in poultry and egg sales among the eighty-two counties in 2022. Total agricultural sales in Mississippi for 2022 was \$8.25 billion and Leake County is also the number one county for total agricultural sales.

Other state products, their farmgate value, the percentage of total sales statewide, and the leading counties for that product are

- Grains, oil seeds, dry beans, and dry peas, \$2.49 billion, 30.2 percent - Bolivar
- Cotton and cotton seed, \$529 million, 6.4 percent- Coahoma
- Cattle and calves, \$399 million, 4.8 percent – Covington
- Aquaculture, \$261 million, 3.2 percent – Leflore.

Mississippi’s 3rd Congressional District ranks 2nd in the nation in poultry and egg value at \$2.77 billion. There are 435 Congressional districts nationwide and 403 produce poultry or eggs. Arkansas’s 4th district is first at \$3.45 billion in value of sales of poultry and eggs.

Poultry and egg production in Mississippi’s other Congressional districts are:

- 4th district ranks 39th at \$703 million.
- 2nd district ranks 43rd at \$609 million
- 1st district ranks 114th at \$65 million.

In terms of total agricultural products sold, Mississippi’s

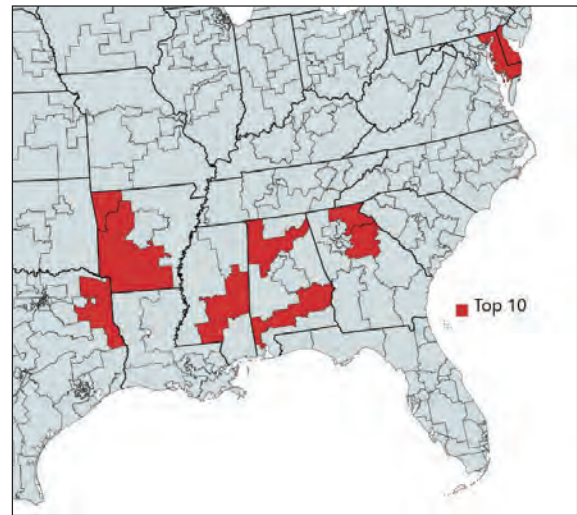
- 2nd district ranks 38th nationally at \$3.44 billion, which is 42 percent of all agricultural sales statewide.
- 3rd district ranks 40th nationally at \$3.23 billion, 39 percent of the state’s total
- 4th district ranks 141st at \$848.8 million, 10 percent
- 1st district ranks 155th at \$723.6 million, 9 percent.

The nation’s top agricultural district in terms of total sales is the 3rd district of Nebraska at \$23 billion. Nebraska’s third district encompasses three-quarters of the state’s land area.

Since the last Census of Agriculture in 2017, Mississippi’s total market value of products sold in 2022 was up 33.1 percent. The value of poultry and egg production is up 33.6 percent compared to 2017.

The 2017 Census of Agriculture reported there were 745.2 million broilers sold, dropping in 2022 to 668.7 million sold, a 10.2 percent decrease. Below is a chart of the number of broilers produced by year. ■

| Census of Agriculture | Total Mississippi Poultry Production in Head | Top County |
|-----------------------|--|------------|
| 2007 | 823,427,574 | Smith |
| 2012 | 761,180,486 | Smith |
| 2017 | 745,189,499 | Leake |
| 2022 | 668,652,465 | Leake |



Top 10 Poultry Producing Congressional Districts

CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE: 200 YEARS OF QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT FARMING

The Census of Agriculture began as part of the 1820 U.S. census of population, when U.S. marshals began to ask how many people within each household were engaged in agricultural pursuits, according to the U.S. Census Bureau website. In 1840, marshals (census takers) began using separate census schedules to collect data related to agriculture.

The Census of Agriculture continued to be conducted during the same year as the decennial census of population until 1950. Between 1954 and 1974, the U.S. Census Bureau conducted the census of agriculture in years ending in “4” and “9.”

In 1978, the Census Bureau and the U.S. Department of Agriculture decided to conduct this census in years ending in “2” and “7.” In 1997, Congress transferred budgetary responsibility for the Census of Agriculture to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Despite the shift in funding, the Census Bureau continues to design the questionnaires, mail questionnaires, manage returns, and process the data for the Department of Agriculture.

The Census of Agriculture is a complete count of U.S. farms and ranches and the people who operate them if \$1,000 or

more of agricultural products were produced and sold. The Census of Agriculture, conducted once every five years, looks at land use and ownership, producer characteristics, production practices, income, and expenditures. The Census of Agriculture provides the only source of uniform, comprehensive, and impartial agriculture data for every state, county, and U.S. territory.

A few facts from the 2022 Census of Agriculture for Mississippi:

- Mississippi ranks 25th in the value of agricultural production.
- 40 percent is from crops and 60 percent is livestock and poultry.
- The top three counties with acres in farms are Bolivar, Washington, and Sunflower.
- Soybeans cover the most acres at 2.4 million, corn is second at 593,000 and forage crops are 584,000 acres.
- 73 percent of Mississippi farms have internet access.
- 3 percent of farms sell directly to consumers.
- 23 percent of farms hire farm labor, and
- 94 percent are family farms. ■

LAWMAKERS ALREADY PREPARING FOR 2025 SESSION

In early June, House Speaker Jason White created an 18-member committee to look at the state’s tax code. House Ways and Means Committee Chair Trey Lamar, R-Senatobia, and Appropriations Committee B Chair Scott Bounds, R-Philadelphia, are co-chairs.

“We want to look at moving away, continuing to move away from the personal income tax and moving to a consumption tax,” Speaker White said in media reports. “We want to cut the grocery tax . . . from seven (percent) to three and a half (percent) as soon as possible. That would be a part of any package you saw.”

Cities receive 18.5 percent of the sales taxes collected within their borders and in many small towns, the grocery store is a major source of the sales taxes collected. Speaker White said that fact makes any changes “not only tricky math, it’s tricky politics to make all that work.”

He also said, “between eliminating the personal income tax, cutting grocery tax in half, we would probably, of course, have to look at sales tax. The way we divert it to cities, the gas tax we collect - 18 and a half cents on a gallon, you know is there room there? You know, what do Mississippi taxpayers and drivers on our roads and bridges want to do there? So,

you're going to see a lot of discussion. We'll have hearings."

Speaker White said, "As we continue to run \$800 million to \$900 million, billion-dollar surpluses there's certainly room for a tax cut there."

He also named committees on prescription drugs and reforming the system by which hospitals and other medical providers must get certificates of need from the State Department of Health before building new facilities. The select committee on prescription drugs will look at Pharmacy Benefit Management companies that employers contract with to get lower prescription prices.

Some of the other issues on the table for the 2025 legislative session include:

- Both Lt. Gov. Delbert Hosemann and Speaker White said increasing the number of people covered by Medicaid would be considered.

- The Legislature could not agree on a plan this year to redraw Circuit and Chancery Court districts. If the Legislature does not agree on a plan in 2025, the state Supreme Court will draw new lines to reflect population and The 90-day 2025 session begins Jan. 7.

Quotes from WLBT, WJTV, Mississippi Today, and the Magnolia Tribune. ■

THREE ISSUES DOMINATED THE 2024 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Most of the debate in the 2024 legislative session revolved around three issues: Whether to expand Medicaid, what to do about the Public Employees Retirement System, and how to create a new public school funding formula, but lawmakers did pass bills to aid agriculture.

The number of people eligible for Medicaid was not increased. The Legislature put \$110 million into the retirement system and said the Legislature would decide future PERS rate increases. Finally, schools received an additional \$250 million using a new distribution formula.

Tax revenues appear to be slowing and costs in state government are rising, so the Fiscal Year 2025 state support budget of \$7.87 billion is 2.28 percent lower than FY2024.

Soon after the session ended, House Speaker Jason White, R-West, announced the creation of a committees to study the state's tax system, prescription drugs and the way new health care facilities are approved.

While it was a small amount of money, the \$92,000, lawmakers put into the Animal Disease Response Fund shows legislators commitment to maintaining the fund. This \$250,000 fund was created in 2023 for the Board of Animal Health to use in responding to disease outbreaks such as highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI). The board used \$92,000 in two outbreaks on commercial farms in 2023. The Board of Animal Health also received a \$154,581 increase in its general funds.

Transportation needs were at least partially met but it was not the long-term funding the Transportation Commission requested.

The Mississippi Department of Transportation fiscal year 2025 budget is \$1.44 billion. MDOT is a special fund agency funded by state fuel taxes and federal funds. Transportation funds are in several bills in addition to the agency's appropriation.

The funds include \$337 million from the Capital Expense Fund to MDOT projects. Included in the total is \$30 million

for the Emergency Road and Bridge Repair Fund created in 2018. The ERBRF received \$100 million in each of the last two years, but there is still \$60 million of that money that has not been spent.

MDOT also received \$50 million for maintenance projects on state highways in addition to the \$80 million it receives annually from the state lottery.

Throughout what is known as the Local Projects bill, totaling \$250 million, there are local road and bridge projects among the 340 projects.

Of interest to poultry growers is legislation authorizing the Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation to offer a health plan to its members. MPA poultry growers, as small businesses, pay extremely high rates for coverage.

Gov. Tate Reeves signed the legislation that exempts nonprofit agricultural membership organizations (NAMOs), such as MFBF, from insurance regulation and allows the NAMO to provide coverage for healthcare benefits or services for its members and their families based on contracts between members and the organization or its affiliates.

The healthcare benefits or services may be sold or solicited only by an insurance producer licensed to sell or solicit accident and health insurance in Mississippi. The plan will be self-funded and administered by a third-party administrator. The plan must include a level of coverage for ambulatory patient services; hospitalization; emergency services; and laboratory services.

Lawmakers also placed limits on ownership interests in agricultural or forest land to less than 50 percent held by individuals, parties or governments that are nonresident aliens from a country whose government is designated as a foreign adversary by the United States Secretary of Commerce. ■



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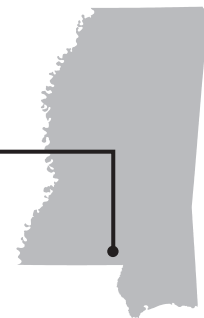
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Bill joined York Ag in 2011 as Sr. Sales Manager and has grown in both role and responsibility ever since. He has over 35 years of livestock production and business development experience with an emphasis in poultry and swine.

Bill's extensive industry experience allows him to understand costly pain points at the farm level and identify the best solutions for feed mills and farms.



TERRITORY SALES REPRESENTATIVE
Emily Goebel

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Emily joined York Ag in 2022 as a Territory Sales Representative for the poultry industry.

Graduating from Purdue University in 2022 with a B.S. in Animal Sciences, Emily supplemented her formal education with hands-on experience working in hatcheries and alongside broiler producers.

In her role at York Ag, Emily assists producers and integrators in navigating various challenges, with a special focus on implementing stress mitigation strategies through feed, water, and enrichment solutions.



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Associate Professor and Director, Poultry Research and Diagnostic Laboratory

Department of Pathobiology and Population Medicine, College of Veterinary Medicine, Mississippi State University



Introduction. During the first five months of 2024, avian metapneumovirus (aMPV) exploded in turkey and chicken flocks across the U.S. While the disease at the time of writing this article has not yet been detected in Mississippi, the state is currently surrounded by aMPV to the north, east and west. aMPV is a reportable disease in some states, including Mississippi, and detections must be reported to the state veterinarian.

Avian metapneumovirus is a highly contagious RNA virus in the family Pneumoviridae, genus Metapneumovirus. Four distinct subtypes (subtypes A, B, C, and D) of aMPV are recognized, and subtypes A and B are widespread in chicken and turkey producing countries across the world. aMPV infects the upper respiratory tract of poultry, causing swollen head syndrome (SHS) in chickens and turkey rhinotracheitis (TRT) in turkeys. The virus can also affect the reproductive system, resulting in significant drops in egg production.

aMPV characteristics and how it spreads. aMPV spreads horizontally, both directly from bird to bird in nasal secretions and indirectly on contaminated fomites. The movement of birds, people, equipment, and feed trucks from infected to susceptible farms has been implicated in the spread of the virus. Airborne transmission is also possible. Migratory wild birds and pigeons are considered natural reservoirs of infection and may play an important role in the spread of the virus. There is currently no clear evidence of vertical (egg) transmission of aMPV from hen to progeny. The virus demonstrates prolonged survival in cooler environmental conditions, remaining viable for up to 12 weeks at 4°C. Fortunately, a wide range of disinfectants are effective against the virus.

How aMPV attacks and what makes the disease worse. Avian metapneumovirus infects birds via the respiratory route and acts by damaging the cilia lining the respiratory tract and causing immune suppression. This makes birds more susceptible to secondary bacterial infections, resulting in more severe respiratory disease and mortality. In this way, the virus acts as a “trojan horse”, opening the door to other pathogen invaders which cause worse disease.

The disease is exacerbated by poor environmental conditions, with significantly more severe disease and higher mortality seen in farms which are poorly managed, and those with poor ventilation. Younger birds tend to be more susceptible to the disease, and turkeys are more severely affected than chickens. While up to 100% of the birds in infected flocks may have the disease, mortality varies significantly, ranging from 0.4% to up to 50%, particularly in young turkey flocks with secondary infections.

A brief history. A few years after its first detection in

turkeys in South Africa in the late 1970s, aMPV was reported in the United Kingdom, after which it spread rapidly across multiple European countries, including France, Spain, Germany, Hungary and Italy. The virus was not detected in the U.S. until 1996, when aMPV subtype C was diagnosed in commercial turkeys in Colorado and later in Minnesota. Since then, sporadic outbreaks of aMPV subtype C have occurred in turkeys in the Upper Midwest.

The current outbreak. Everything changed in January 2024, when outbreaks of severe respiratory disease were reported in chicken and turkey flocks across the eastern United States. Avian metapneumovirus subtype B was identified as the cause of this outbreak, and this was the first detection of subtype B in U.S. poultry. Subsequent surveillance resulted in the detection in California, Texas and several other states of subtype A, another new subtype for the U.S. These subtypes spread like wildfire across the North America, with subtypes A, B or both A and B confirmed in 26 U.S. states and 2 Canadian provinces in the space of only 5 months (Figure 1).

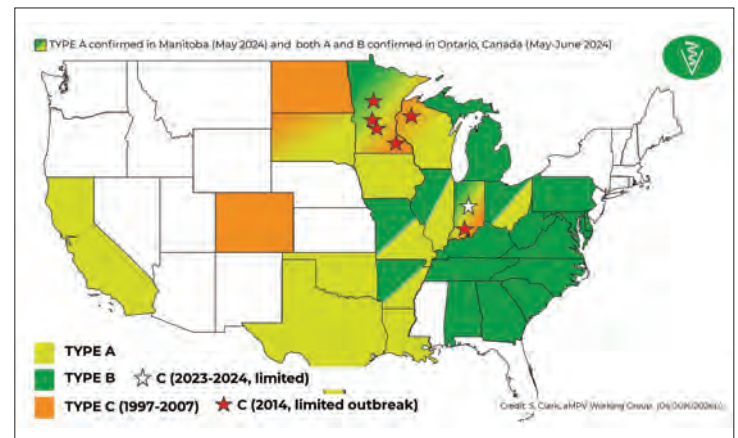


Figure 1. Map of avian metapneumovirus subtype A, B, and C detections in the U.S. as of June 4, 2024
(Image credit: Dr. Steven Clark, aMPV Working Group)

Clinical signs and lesions. Most cases in the current outbreak in chickens have involved 4- to 9-week-old broilers as well as broiler breeders. More severe disease with higher mortality has been reported in older broiler breeder flocks (older than 40 weeks) compared with younger breeder flocks. Respiratory signs typically appear 3-5 days after infection and include snickering, nasal and eye discharge, head shaking and sometimes difficulty breathing.

In infected broiler breeder and layer flocks, egg production drops and elevated mortality are common. Birds develop swelling around the eyes, sinus swelling and/or swelling of the whole face/head a few days after the appearance of the

first respiratory signs (Figure 2). Neurologic signs in affected flocks are common, with some birds showing twisted necks, stargazing, head shaking, and loss of coordination (Figure 3). Broiler breeder hens have been reported to be more often affected than roosters, and widespread bacterial infections may be observed in hen mortality. The disease in broilers typically causes decreased feed and water consumption. Birds are depressed/lethargic with swollen heads. At necropsy, there is evidence of secondary bacterial infections, mainly due to *E. coli*. An increase in processing plant condemnations is typically seen in broilers.

In broiler breeder and commercial layer flocks in the current U.S. outbreak, egg production drops ranging between 0.5 and 10% have been reported. Severe egg production drops between 10 and 40% in turkeys are not uncommon. Eggshell changes appear to be rare in the current outbreak in the U.S., but egg quality changes (including a loss of pigmentation and eggshell deformities) may occur and have been reported internationally. Affected broiler companies have not reported noticeable effects on the hatchability of the eggs from infected flocks.



Figure 2.

aMPV-infected broiler breeder hen with marked facial and sinus swelling
 Photo: Dr. Cole Taylor, University of Georgia



Figure 3.

aMPV-infected broiler breeder hen showing neurologic signs (stargazing)
 Photo: Dr. Cole Taylor, University of Georgia



Figure 4.

Bacterial infection of subcutaneous tissue of the head in a 43-day-old broiler chicken infected with aMPV subtype B
 (Photo credit: Dr. Dallas Clontz, Veterinary Diagnostic Pathology)

The importance of secondary bacterial infections.

Secondary bacterial infections exacerbate the disease, and these infections, rather than the aMPV virus itself, are the most important cause of the mortality and economic loss experienced in infected flocks. The swollen heads, sinusitis, peritonitis, septicemias and neurologic signs (caused by bacterial infections of the middle ear, skull and brain) seen in affected birds are all a consequence of secondary bacterial infections (Figure 4). Common bacterial coinfections include *E. coli*, *Enterococcus* spp., *Mycoplasma* and *Ornithobacterium rhinotracheale* (ORT) infections. The extent to which a flock develops bacterial infections secondary to aMPV directly impacts the mortality experienced by the flock. Under good management conditions and in the absence of secondary infections, chickens may be infected with aMPV without showing clinical signs.

Diagnosis and diagnostic challenges. The biggest challenge with aMPV diagnosis is that the virus has a relatively short period of replication (peaking 2 to 4 days after infection) before it clears from the birds, reducing the chance of detection. By the time secondary bacterial infections set in, the virus can be difficult to detect. This is compounded by the fact that clinical signs are typically only seen 3 to 5 days after infection. Consequently, the period of highest viral replication (which is the best time to detect the virus) occurs before or at the beginning of the appearance of the first clinical signs. To maximize the chance of viral detection, it is therefore very important that producers remain on the alert for any suspicious clinical signs (including decreased feed consumption, respiratory or neurologic signs and egg production drops), and submit samples to the laboratory for testing as soon as signs are detected.

Avian metapneumovirus has proven to be a challenging virus to isolate, and only a few laboratories in the U.S. have reported successful isolation of subtypes A and B. Fortunately, PCR testing is available for aMPV, and Mississippi State University's Poultry Research and Diagnostic Laboratory (PRDL) in Pearl is equipped to do real-time PCR for aMPV subtypes A, B, and C. PCR testing for both subtype A and B should be requested on submitted samples, since both subtypes have been diagnosed in neighboring states.

Because the period of virus detection is short and clinically healthy birds may harbor the virus, it is recommended to collect samples from affected and unaffected houses on the farm, and from sick, fresh dead and clinically healthy birds. If birds are being submitted to the laboratory for necropsy, it is recommended to submit only fresh dead or euthanized birds that are triple bagged with the outside of each layer sprayed with disinfectant. Live birds should not be submitted because of the biosecurity risks involved. If submitting samples, the whole head and neck is recommended, as this enables the laboratory to obtain the samples required for PCR testing for aMPV, as well as for other pathogens that could cause similar signs and need to be ruled out (including Avian Influenza, Newcastle Disease, Infectious Laryngotracheitis, Infectious Bronchitis, *Mycoplasma*, Fowl Cholera and Infectious Coryza). Other very good sample types are nasal cavity/sinus swabs or oropharyngeal/choanal cleft swabs in BHI broth. Maintaining the cold chain is critical; once collected, samples should immediately be placed on frozen ice packs in a cooler to maintain refrigeration temperature during transit, and

transported to reach the lab the same day (preferably) or the next morning.

The detection of antibodies by ELISA serology is a useful tool for aMPV diagnosis and surveillance because the virus level (and therefore the ability to detect the virus by PCR) decreases quite soon after infection. In suspect flocks, collection of sera for testing at the time clinical signs are noted, and then again 3 weeks later is recommended to facilitate aMPV detection by obtaining acute and convalescent antibody titers. Currently, there are no licensed aMPV ELISA kits in the U.S., but laboratories can import these kits with USDA permits.

Control and prevention. It is critical that producers adhere to rigorous biosecurity programs and practices to ensure that avian metapneumovirus is not introduced into Mississippi flocks. Control options are limited as there are currently no commercially available aMPV vaccines in the U.S. and there is no treatment for aMPV infection. Antibiotic

treatment may be used as a tool to reduce the severity of the disease by controlling secondary bacterial infections. Good flock husbandry and management significantly reduce the losses experienced in infected flocks.

Conclusion. Avian metapneumovirus has spread like wildfire across the U.S. with major impacts on broiler, broiler breeder and turkey health since the emergence of subtypes A and B five months ago. Mississippi is the only state in the Southeast that has not been affected by this virus. It is very important that everyone who works with poultry in the state understands the presentation of this disease and remains vigilant for suspicious signs. The importance of biosecurity cannot be overstated as control options are currently limited. Early detection is of key importance, and the PRDL stands ready to support the poultry industry in testing and surveillance for this virus. ■

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MPA POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE BACKING BRANNING, BEAM IN NOVEMBER SUPREME COURT RACES

Voters will be electing state Supreme Court justices and Court of Appeals judges in November in addition to four Congressmen, one U.S. Senator and the President.

There are two contested races for the Supreme Court and one on the Court of Appeals. Two incumbent Supreme Court justices -Jimmy Maxwell and Bobby Chamberlin in the northern district, District 3 - are unopposed. Two incumbent Court of Appeals Judges are unopposed, Ceola James in District 2 and Jack Wilson in the District 3.

The Mississippi Poultry Association Political Action Committee in the election for Central District (District 1 Place 3) is supporting state Senator Jennifer Branning. The following information on candidates is from BIPEC, the Business and Industry Political Education Committee.

- **Senator Jenifer Branning**, R-Philadelphia, is a member of the Mississippi State Senate, representing District 18 (Leake, Neshoba, Winston counties). She assumed office on January 5, 2016. Her current term ends on January 4, 2028. Branning (Republican Party) ran for re-election to the Mississippi State Senate to represent District 18. She won in the general election on November 7, 2023.

- **Byron Carter** ran unsuccessfully for the Court of Appeals in 2018. He practices law in Byram.

- **Ceola James**, a Vicksburg attorney, was elected in 2012 to fill an unexpired term on the Mississippi Court of Appeals. She lost her re-election bid to Latrice Westbrooks in 2016. Prior to her election as a judge, James was a solo practitioner, representing clients in civil and criminal matters.

- **Incumbent Justice James W. Kitchens** is a lifelong resident of Crystal Springs, Copiah County. Born on April 29, 1943, he graduated from Crystal Springs High School in 1961, then earned a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Southern Mississippi in 1964. He was elected to an eight-year term on the Mississippi Supreme Court (Central District, Place 3), commencing in January of 2009. In 2016,

he was elected to a second eight-year term.

- **Abby Gale Robinson** is an attorney from Hinds County. She ran unsuccessfully in 2022 for Hinds County Chancery Judge.

The other contested Supreme Court Election is in South Mississippi, District 2. **The MPA-PAC is supporting incumbent Dawn Beam.**

- **Justice Beam** joined the Mississippi Supreme Court on February 16, 2016. Gov. Phil Bryant appointed her to fill the unexpired term of former Justice Randy Pierce. Beam won elected to a full eight-year term in November 2016

- **David P. Sullivan** is a lawyer. His office is in Gulfport. Candidates in the only contested Court of Appeals election, an open seat in District 5 are:

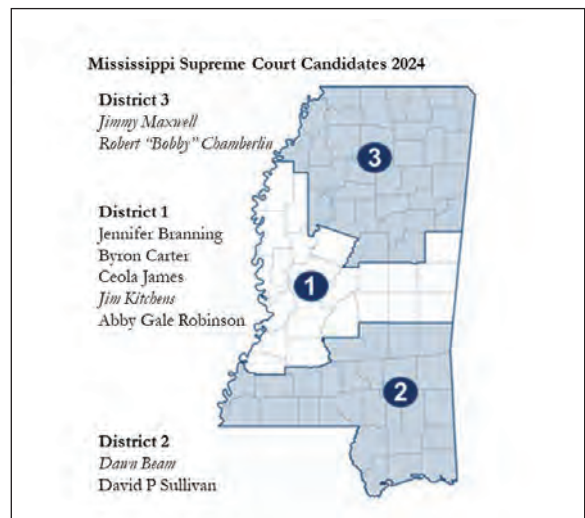
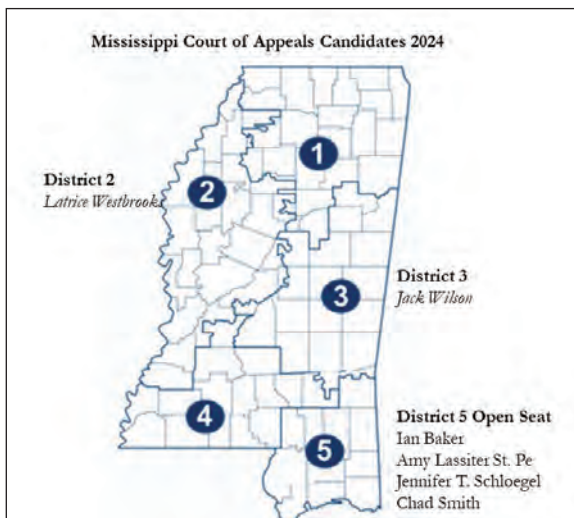
- **Ian Baker** is an Assistant District Attorney for the Second Circuit Court District (Hancock, Harrison, and Stone counties).

- **Amy Lassitter St. Pe** is the founder and managing partner of the Amy Lassitter St. Pe', P.A. law firm in Pascagoula, where she specializes in governmental law. She has been the City Attorney for Moss Point for the past 15 years and serves as the Attorney for the Pascagoula Redevelopment Authority and the Moss Point Redevelopment Authority. She currently serves as Municipal Judge for the City of Gautier.

- **Jennifer Schloegel** is a judge of the Mississippi 8th Chancery District Court (Hancock, Harrison and Stone counties). Prior to first being elected in 2010, she practiced law for 19 years in the areas of business law, estate planning, wills and probate matters.

- **Chad Smith** is a Chancery Judge in the 10th District (Forrest, Lamar, Marrion, Perry, Pearl River counties). Prior to being elected in 2022, he was in private practice, specializing in product liability, divorce, and personal injury.

- **Ian Baker** is an district attorney for the 2nd Circuit Court District (Hancock, Harrison, and Stone counties). ■



SEPTEMBER

6th Qualifying Deadline for Independent Candidates for the office of President of the United States.

11th General Election Sample Ballot Published.

23rd Earliest day to vote by an absentee ballot in the Circuit Clerk's Office.

OCTOBER

7th General Election Voter Registration Deadline.

NOVEMBER

5th GENERAL ELECTION

26th GENERAL and SPECIAL RUNOFF ELECTION DAY:

Independent candidates for President have until September 6 to qualify.

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| 3rd CD | Michael Guest | |
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MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY POULTRY SCIENCE DEPARTMENTAL UPDATE

By Tannah Christensen, MSU Poultry Science Extension Instructor



Productive. If there were a word to describe the spring semester, it very well would be productive. From the International Poultry Science Forum and International Production and Processing Expo in Atlanta to the nonstop search for faculty to serve the needs of the industry and department, it's been an eventful Spring semester, to say the least.



Graduate students attending and presenting at the 2024 International Poultry Science Forum

Students

We've seen an increase in enrollment college wide as well as departmentally. We entered the Spring semester with 46 undergraduates and graduated 6 this May. As the summer progresses and with orientations underway we'll see an increase in student enrollment before the beginning of the Fall semester. As of now, the enrollment count for Fall 2024 sits at around 54 poultry majors.

Proud is an understatement as we reflect on the past semester. Not only are our students participating in the classroom, but they reach far beyond the classroom with

internships, research projects, and more. Presenting research at a scientific meeting isn't an easy task, but our students are always up for the challenge. Nine oral presentations and four posters were presented at this year's International Poultry Science Forum (IPSF) with three receiving a Certificate of Excellence. Congrats to our very own Peyton Taylor, Fozol Ovi, and Anna Kathryn Riggs for their success at the forum this year. In addition to the IPSF, eleven undergraduate students traveled to Atlanta to participate in the International Production and Processing Expo (IPPE) College Student Career Program. Above and beyond is not an expectation, it's essential to our students. Our Poultry Science Club is the perfect place to bring our poultry students together. Huge congratulations to our club for receiving 3rd place for Club of the Year as a part of the IPPE College Student Career Program.

Our collegiate judging team traveled down to Baton Rouge to compete in the 2024 US Poultry Foundation



Advisors and County Agents attend the Poultry Judging Workshop

Ted Cameron National Judging Contest at LSU. Our team was ready to compete and worked hard to prepare for the competition and it paid off placing 4th in production and 2nd in breed selection with some exceptional individual winners. Cade Davis placed as the top highest individual overall as well as high individual in market products and 2nd highest individual in production. Also, Anna Kathryn Riggs placed 5th highest individual in breed selection.

Annually, the Alabama Feed and Grain Association accepts applications, and awards scholarships to select students who major in agricultural related fields. This year scholarships were awarded to eleven accomplished students. Mississippi State University was well represented with seven deserving students who received scholarships, five of which call the Poultry department home. We would like to congratulate undergraduate William (Ches) Grisham, and graduate students Dalton Dennehy, Jorge Urrutia, Michael Carroll, and Emily Meyers for receiving these scholarships.

The Poultry Department has long taken pride in the fact that we offer 100% job placement to its graduating students. An important part of this success is getting students connected to industry leaders, and fostering an environment where relationships can be built, through networking events. The department hosted several networking events for industry that provided them a formal setting to showcase the opportunities they offer, introduce themselves on a personal level, answer questions, give advice to students, and an informal meet-and-greet meal that allows one-on-one interactions between industry employees and students. Companies such as Aviagen and Tyson Foods have found these types of events very useful in building relationships with prospective employees.

The 2024 Annual Poultry Crawfish Boil was once again a huge success. Our alumni, students, staff, faculty, friends, and family look forward to this event as a time to kick back, relax,



Choctaw County School District Agricultural Science Class visits the Poultry Science Department

and enjoy fellowship, networking, fun, games, and good food. A special thanks goes out to Bank Plus and Pilgrim's for their sponsorship support that helps make this event what it is.

The Team

MSU's Poultry faculty, staff, and students work together to provide for the poultry industry.

Whether it's conducting industry-relevant research, facilitating networking opportunities, or extending knowledge across the state to both youth and adults, the MSU poultry team has been hard at work this semester. The department has worked with the Mississippi Poultry Association to aid in planning, facilitation, and providing information at industry

important events such as the annual Poultry Health Seminar and the Poultry Management School.

Poultry Science has also had a presence at numerous MSU Producer Advisory Council Meetings and the Magnolia Beef and Poultry Expo to present information and speak with commercial and backyard producers to keep them up to date on practices and current trends as well as collecting information to aid the department with producing relevant research.

The department's youth program has been in full swing this semester. There have been several agent and youth trainings, workshops, and competitions held geared towards 4-H'ers and students in the community and surrounding counties. The workshops, tours, and activities such as bird necropsies are designed for and quite effective at sparking local youths' interest in poultry production. The MPA Poultry Management School saw a new change this year with the addition of some special guests. 4-H participants from Avian Bowl and the Poultry Chain Project joined in on the fun to showcase to industry the activities they are involved in.

Positions

If you visit the department, you might come across some new faces around the building and farm. Ms. Christy Wilder joined our front office staff this past fall in the vacancy of our Business Manager position due to Ms. Lindsay May's relocation back to the accounting world. Additionally, Tracy Martin joins our farm crew after years of service to the industry. Currently, there is one available farm position, Agricultural Technician open.

The spring semester brought an intense search for three much-needed faculty positions focused on Reproductive Physiology, Processing, and Poultry Management/Health. We are proud to announce that of the three open positions, two have been filled. Dr. Luis Munoz, Poultry Management/Health, and Dr. Hudson Thames, Processing, will join the department this coming year, while our Reproductive Physiology position is still in the works along with an additional shared Health position with Animal and Dairy Sciences.

Feedmill

Our Feed Mill Advisory Board is still working endlessly on building a state-of-the-art feed mill. With 25 representatives across 14 companies, the advisory board is dedicated to seeing this project through to fruition. A recent meeting had the board revisit the project and brought about new ideas to begin the construction of the facility with a phased approach. With just north of \$3 million in current commitments, the goal is to begin construction within the year. Not only will this facility offer additional experiential learning opportunities for our student programs, it also will increase our research abilities to support the industry by offering training and workshops. Thank you to our donors for this opportunity. Donors include Peco Foods, Cal-Maine, Aviagen, Mar-Jac, Wayne-Sanderson Farms, Phibro Animal Health, Hy-Line North America, Novus, Personal Gifts, and Mississippi State University Miss. Agriculture and Forestry Experiment Stations.

For more information on the feed mill project: contact Dr. Kelley Wamsley k.wamsley@msstate.edu. ■

SCAN TO GIVE



YOUTH COMPETE FOR STATE CHAMPION AND LEARN ABOUT THE INDUSTRY AT THE 2024 CLUB CONGRESS

By Tannah Christensen, MSU Poultry Science Extension Instructor

The 2024 state 4H Club Congress at Mississippi State University was filled with more than just contests, it was full of learning and adventure for not only our participants but advisors as well.

Senior 4-H participants ages 14-18 moved onto the MSU campus for the two-day event. Contests, workshops, and events bring youth from across the state together to compete, network, experience, and first and foremost have a great time! During Club Congress, the Department of Poultry Science stayed busy offering three contests including Poultry Judging, Egg Chef Challenge, and Avian Bowl, as well as a half-day workshop called the People Behind the Bird. Over two days, the bright faces, eager minds, and competitive atmosphere far exceeded our expectations for our 2024 state event.

We started off the event with our Egg Chef Challenge and People Behind the Bird workshop on Wednesday afternoon. Egg Chef Challenge takes a spin on presentations by spicing up a presentation with a little chef masterpiece. Each participant presents knowledge and understanding of the egg industry while showcasing their cooking skills to the judges. Not only is the Mississippi Poultry Association a huge donor to these great contests and programs, but always there to lend a helping hand at events. Dr. Ryn Laster, Cal-Maine Foods, and MPA's Mrs. Lauren Fortenberry traveled to State to join us and judge our chefs along with Mrs. Donna Morgan- Poultry Science Department. Seven participants across six counties joined the fun. It was a close race with Jasper County's Lucy Holloway bringing home the gold with her fiesta themed Mexican Chorizo Quiche. Congratulations, Lucy!

Feeding the next generation is critical, and our People Behind the Bird workshop opened the minds of participants by exposing, networking, and exploring just a few pieces of our huge world of poultry. Participants gained a greater understanding of the processes and components of the industry by first visiting the poultry unit on MSU's south farm. After touring the facilities, participants were introduced to and able to network and discuss with industry representatives. Again, the support of these youth from our industry representatives, MPA members, and board members has been phenomenal. We were joined by Steve McLaurin- Peco Foods, Bobby James- Amick Farms, and Brian Ballard- Cal-Maine Foods as they gave insight into their journey to the poultry industry and their experiences throughout that journey. Additionally, participants and industry representatives jumped into the necropsy hands-on activity to end the workshop.

Think fast! If you don't, you might not make it to the top. Memorizing sections, definitions, spelling, and mastering the skill of quick thinking are all highly sought-after skills when it comes to our Avian Bowl team members. One of our most fierce competitions brings in a lot of fun and excitement. Not only does this contest allow youth to gain a better understanding of poultry, but memorizing the Avian Bowl sections and competing in the contest only strengthens their



ability to compete in other poultry contests in the future. The 2024 MS State Avian Bowl champions are the team from Union County. Congratulations to Mae Garrett, Levi Thompson, Lily Grace Voyles, and Maddie Willard.

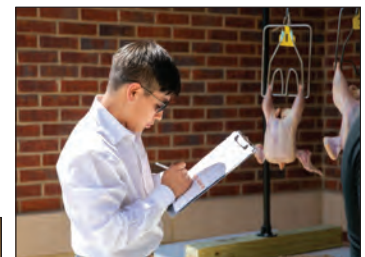
Understanding the real-world application of USDA standards, making decisions, and communicating those decisions is the world of poultry judging in a nutshell. There are numerous opportunities for judges to participate in poultry judging whether through 4-H, FFA, or Collegiate. In our state 4-H Judging contest, 16 participants from six counties joined in on the fun and competition with our Rankin County Team bringing home the gold. Congratulations to Matthew Grice, Paxton Lemoine Wyatt Sebren, and Brayden Tullos.

Our poultry participants were excited to showcase their skills and compete for the state champion titles. Each of the state champions will advance to the national contest in Louisville, KY to compete against the nation's best of the best. Competition will be fierce, and our Mississippi 4-H judges, chefs, and quiz bowl geniuses are ready for the challenge.

Expanding minds and opening a world that youth never knew was at their fingertips is our number one goal with our youth programs!

Thank you to the Mississippi Poultry Association for the continued support of not just the programs but investing in the future generation! If you would also like to support these programs and participants or need additional information on all the youth possibilities offered in the state, contact: Tannah Christensen t.christensen@msstate.edu. ■

Judging participant making his decisions on the Ready-to-cook carcass class.



Participants and industry reps from our People Behind the Bird Workshop.



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John Milner serves as counsel to the Mississippi Poultry Association and has special expertise in poultry-related environmental issues. Partner Gene Wasson also has impressive abilities in the environmental sector. Partner Trey Jones has significant environmental litigation experience.

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MEXICAN CHORIZO QUICHE

Recipe by Lucy Holloway

COOK TIME: 70 MINUTES
SERVES: 6
CALORIES PER SERVING: 560

INGREDIENTS

- 2 FROZEN PASTRY SHEETS, THAWED
- 16 OUNCES DRIED BEANS
- 2 CHORIZO SAUSAGES, CHOPPED
- 1 RED BELL PEPPER, CHOPPED
- 1 GREEN BELL PEPPER, CHOPPED
- 2 GREEN ONIONS, THINLY SLICED
- 1/3 CUP THICK CHUNKY SALSA, MILD
- 6 EGGS
- 1/2 CUP HEAVY WHIPPING CREAM
- 3/4 CUP SHREDDED MEXICAN CHEESE
- FRESH PARSLEY, TO GARNISH
- 1 LIME, CUT INTO WEDGES, TO GARNISH
- SALT AND PEPPER, TO TASTE



Lucy Holloway

COOKING INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit.
2. Grease 9-inch round, loose base tart pan. Place on a cookie sheet.
3. Join pastry sheets together with edges slightly overlapping. Press to seal. Line pan with pastry. Trim edge. Cover with a sheet of baking paper. Fill with beans.
4. Bake in an oven at 350 degrees Fahrenheit for 15 minutes. Remove paper and beans. Return to oven. Bake for another 5 minutes or until lightly golden.
5. Heat an oiled frying pan over medium heat. Add chorizo. Cook, stirring for about 3 minutes or until golden. Add bell pepper and onions. Cook, stirring for about 5 minutes or until peppers and onions are soft. Transfer to a medium bowl. Stir in salsa. Cool.
6. Spoon chorizo mixture into pastry. Whisk eggs, cream, and cheese in a medium bowl until combined. Season with salt and pepper. Pour over chorizo mixture.
7. Bake in oven for about 35 minutes or until golden.
8. Garnish with parsley and lime wedges. Optional: Salsa on the side.

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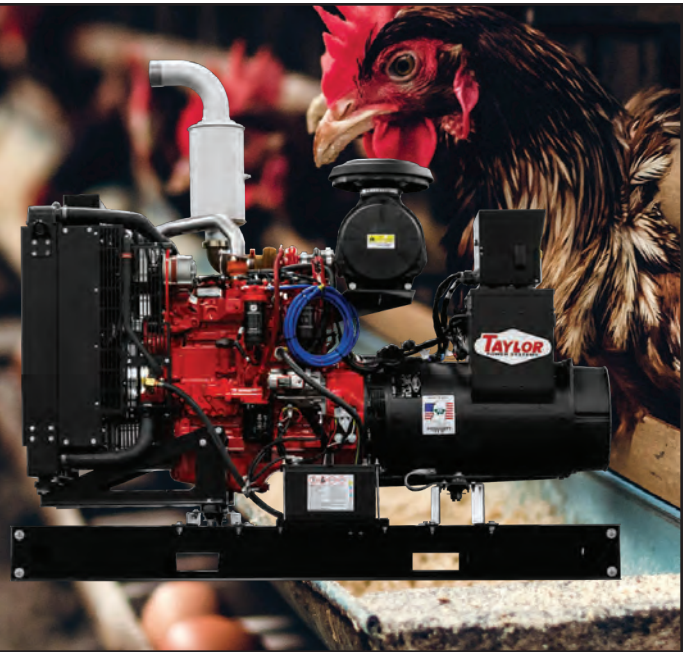
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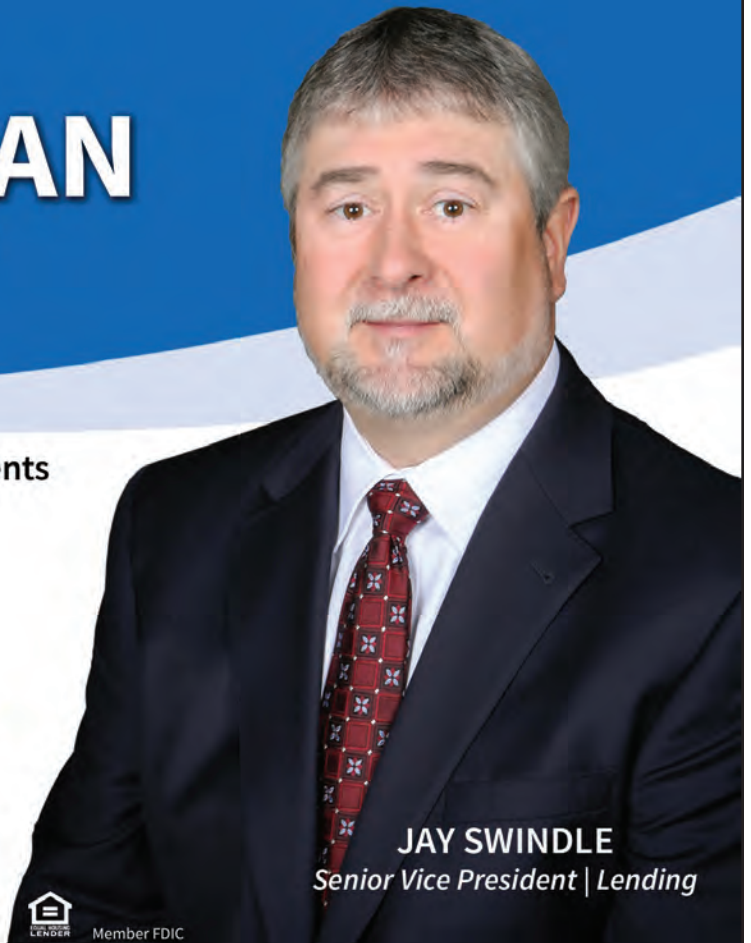
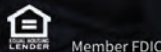
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Wesson, MS
- **MPA 87th Convention**
SEPTEMBER 12-15, 2024
Hilton Sandestin Resort,
Destin, FL

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

Growers can attend convention for \$50, all other events are free



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