

Egg Industry

News for the Egg Industry Worldwide

December 2007/Volume 112 Number 12

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H5N1 AI Unlikely to Hit U.S.

Global Avian Influenza Update 25 Nov 07

Confirmed Human Cases of Avian Influenza A/(H5N1) reported to WHO as of 12 Nov 2007

Country	2003		2004		2005		2006		2007		Total	
	Cases	Deaths	Cases	Deaths	Cases	Deaths	Cases	Deaths	Cases	Deaths	Cases	Deaths
Azerbaijan	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	5	0	0	8	5
Cambodia	0	0	0	0	4	4	2	2	1	1	7	7
China	1	1	0	0	8	5	13	8	3	2	25	16
Djibouti	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
Egypt	0	0	0	0	0	0	18	10	20	5	38	15
Indonesia	0	0	0	0	20	13	55	45	38	33	113	91
Iraq	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	2	0	0	3	2
Lao PDR	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	2	2
Nigeria	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
Thailand	0	0	17	12	5	2	3	3	0	0	25	17
Turkey	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	4	0	0	12	4
Viet Nam	3	3	29	20	61	19	0	0	7	4	100	46
Total	4	4	46	32	98	43	115	79	72	48	335	206

Compiled by Dr. Cheryl R. Gustafson, Global Business Unit, Ft. Dodge Animal Health.
The above table shows outbreaks of global avian influenza as of Nov. 25, 2007.

By Edward Clark, Editor

The highly pathogenic Avian Influenza (AI) strain that has caused so much havoc in Asia and Africa in recent years is unlikely to hit the Western Hemisphere, let alone U.S. shores, experts say.

“For it to come here would require very bad luck or it would have to be intentionally brought in,” says Steve Roney, senior staff veterinarian for the National Poultry Improvement Plan in Conyers, Ga.

One key reason why, he says, is that the strain everyone is concerned about—H5N1—has not been discovered in any wild bird populations that frequent Western Hemisphere flyways. Every year that goes by without an outbreak makes it less likely that one will occur, Roney says. “For it to come here would require illegal smuggling or have it be intentional,” he says.

Good news on the AI front, Roney adds,

is that it does not seem to be increasing globally, “It’s talked about less than it was a year ago.” He notes that there have been 300 cases in people in the past 10 to 11 years, which is actually quite low considering the level of outbreaks in birds and the intermingling of birds and humans in areas affected. “I’m not saying it’s not important, but it’s not a hugely important disease worldwide,” Roney says.

The odds are “very, very, very slim” of high path AI reaching the United States,

agrees John Brown, manager of veterinary services for Centurion Poultry Corp., Lexington, Ga. In addition, were an isolated case to occur, government and industry are well prepared “to clear it up.” He continues, “We’re in good shape for preparation on both a state and national level to react quickly to an outbreak.”

Brown says that were a case to occur in the United States, it would likely come here through other than legal channels. Brown adds that globally, H5N1 is down a little

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| H5N1 Unlikely to Hit U.S. |

compared to year-earlier levels, so if it's going to increase "it will have to start pretty soon." That said, he notes that an outbreak hit a small turkey flock in the United Kingdom in mid-November, but that flock was depopulated, and the outbreak does not pose a risk for the United States.

An important reason why H5N1 is unlikely to hit the United States is that U.S. flocks are segregated from people and other animals. Southeast Asia and Africa, meanwhile, have many backyard chicken flocks, making testing and eradication programs difficult, one veterinarian explains. "It's easy to test large production systems here," she says.

Another reason to be optimistic that no H5N1 will enter the United States is that "there has been no crossover detected from Alaska," says Eric Gingerich, staff veterinarian and adjunct assistant professor at the University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine in Kennett Square. And were it to occur, "we have pretty good biosecurity in place," he says. "But my thought all along has been that it wouldn't come here at all."

Still, H5N1 is the No. 1 layer disease problem globally, Gingerich says, and it has spread since it was first discovered in 1996-97.

Other Diseases

While things have been mostly quiet on the AI front, other diseases are not. "In the United States, there has been a slight increase in Salmonella enteritidis (SE) over the past year," says Roney, for no particular reason. SE seems to run on a five-year cycle, he adds, and overall the industry is doing a good job managing the disease.

There also were some cases of Mycoplasma gallisepticum (Mg) and Myco-

plasma synoviae in 2007. "It's always there and a challenge," Roney says. Of respiratory diseases, most important for layers economically is (Mg), says Guillermo Zavala, assistant professor at the University of Georgia. He believes that in the United States, "as a group, respiratory diseases are the most important concern."

"Overall health of the national table egg layer flock is very good," Gingerich said at the U.S. Animal Health Association annual meeting in Reno, Nev., in late October. But some diseases still are of concern. He conducted a poll of Veterinarians in Egg Production, which ranked the following concerns:

- No. 1: E. Coli/peritonitis;
- No. 2-3-4, a three way tie: coccidiosis/necrotic enteritis, Mg and calcium depletion/tetany; and
- No. 5, respiratory viruses (i.e., Infectious Bronchitis, Infectious Laryngotracheitis) and cannibalism.

Other diseases of concern for the industry, he said, are AI and SE.

Will Cage-Free Boost Disease Problems?

An important issue is whether diseases will increase as cage-free egg production rises. "When you put birds on the ground, you tend to have more parasites — coccidiosis and tapeworms, for example," Roney says, leading to more required medications or vaccinations.

Gingerich expects to see more fowl cholera under cage-free or pasture conditions.

Don Bell, Poultry Specialist (emeritus) at the University of California-Riverside, says that more cage-free production puts hens at additional disease risk. Reducing diseases, he says, "is why we went to cages in the first place." Specifically, he says that cage-free birds are at more risk to intestinal

parasites and worms.

Overall, cannibalism is a problem, though stable, Gingerich says, "but we're seeing more cannibalism in cage-free flocks."

Dennis Avery, director of Global Food Diseases and former USDA and Central Intelligence Agency analysts, says there is no question that more cage-free production means more disease and cannibalism by birds.

In the United States and globally, diseases have probably decreased in recent years, experts say. Neoplastic or tumor diseases continue to be of concern, says Zavala, as well as infectious bronchitis.

Globally, he says that Newcastle, in addition to AI, continues to be a concern. In some parts of the world — tropical areas with high humidity, he says, infectious coryza is a problem. Another bacterial disease he adds to the list of concerns is peritonitis, a condition caused by bacterial disease that is caused by producing eggs too early.

Overall, he says, layer diseases are down substantially over the past few years. Reasons why, he says, are genetics and stricter bird density regulations, and the fact that birds in the United States are raised in clean environments.

He agrees that cage-free birds might be exposed to more pathogens, which also raises food safety concerns.

One viral disease Brown sees is Marek's, even though he sees it a lot less in the United States than in other parts of the world. He also has been seeing a fair number of infectious bronchitis cases. Another viral disease he has been seeing is infectious laryngotracheitis, which has been on the increase in the United States during the last four years. A high mortality, fall and wintertime disease, he says, "It seems to cycle." Brown agrees that salmonella SE runs in cycles and is a little on the increase. **EI**

Egg Industry

published monthly by WATT
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SUBSCRIPTIONS:

Subscription print edition prices: USA \$84.00/yr, Canada \$102.00/yr, Outside USA & Canada via Airmail \$144.00/yr; \$14/copy unless marked. Digital edition sent by e-mail: \$36.00/yr. Prices in US Dollars. Business or occupation information must accompany each subscription order.

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Michael Foods Egg Earnings Rise in Quarter

Aided by strong performance by egg food ingredients, Michael Foods egg products division increased earnings in the third quarter 2007 ended Sept. 30 over results for the same quarter in 2006. Egg Products earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortization (EBITDA) were \$38.8 million in the third quarter, up from \$36.3 million for the same quarter in 2006. Sales in the third quarter were \$266.6 million, up from \$216.6 million for the same quarter in 2006.

For the nine months ended Sept. 30, Egg Products EBITDA was \$101.3 million, up from \$101.1 million, the same period in 2006. Sales for the period in 2007 were \$739.2 million, up from \$637.1 million for the same period in 2006.

"Once again our broad portfolio of egg products proved helpful in managing our

way through a period of unusually high egg costs," says chairman and CEO Gregg Ostrander. "Third quarter egg and grain markets were very high, causing our egg processing input costs to soar compared to 2006 levels," he says. "These factors pressured margins in the foodservice and retail channels, where price changes normally lag behind changes in our raw material costs. However, the food ingredients channel of the egg products division had strong results. This channel historically provides a good balance within egg products when markets are high, as has once again been the case with egg markets at historical highs so far in 2007."

Ostrander continues that food ingredients have helped to offset the weakness seen elsewhere in the division this year. He adds that in addition, "Our small shell egg business has benefited from the egg market's

strength and has seen meaningful profitability this year."

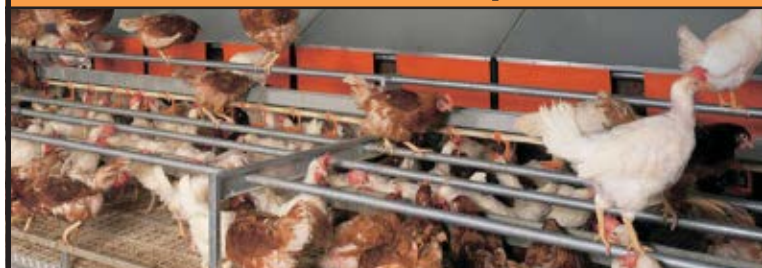
Layer Numbers Lag Behind 2006 Levels

Producers have still not responded to high egg prices with major expansion, according to USDA's Chicken and Eggs report released late last month. Layers on hand Nov. 1 were 2 percent below previous year levels, according to the report.

Looking at the top 10 egg producing states in flocks 30,000 and above, only one state, Iowa showed an increase in layer numbers. Iowa showed a 1 percent increase in layers during October; Ohio, down 5 percent; Indiana, no change; Pennsylvania, down 6 percent; California, no change; Texas, no change; Florida, no change; Nebraska, down 11 percent; Minnesota, down 7 percent; and Georgia, down 1 percent. **EI**



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AEB Supports California Egg Battle

By John Todd

The American Egg Board unanimously passed a motion at its recent fall meeting in California that \$3 million be held in reserve to assist the state if necessary in the industry's current battle with animal activists. Animal welfare groups are attempting to place a referendum on the November 2008 ballot that would eliminate cage production in California.

As pointed out by California egg producer Arnie Ribli, animal rights groups are also attempting to include hog farrowing crates and veal pens on the referendum. Ribli said there is virtuously no hog or veal business in California, so this is a direct and all-inclusive attack on the egg industry. He went on to make an impassioned plea for support on the issue. If California loses this one, animal rights groups will take the battle to the rest of the country.

Speakers said that a great deal of work needs to be done on this challenge as it is estimated that if the referendum vote were held today it would pass, and the California producers would be in grave danger.

Strategic Plan

AEB President Joanne Ivy gave a review of the new strategic plan resulting from the May meeting in Dallas of AEB staff, committee members, agency personnel, and industry experts. It is planned to have a similar meeting annually.

The basic mission of the plan is to increase the demand for eggs and egg products domestically. During this meeting all committees addressed the plan in their individual marketing programs and initiatives.

Plan strategies include developing and presenting nutrition science as part of a healthy diet to reduce barriers against eggs, as well as using a blend of traditional and new media to promote health and versatility of eggs. Strategies also include: programs directed to target business audiences such as food manufacturers, expanding advertising campaigns, and developing partnerships to enhance sales through additional size, scope and efficiency of marketing efforts. Detailed information and goals are part of this document and will target audiences such as consumers, foodservice, retailers, food

manufacturers, health professionals and public relations media.

Jim Brock, Chairman of the Industry and Market Development Committee reported, along with members of this team, how efforts will follow the strategic plan. He noted that better information for producers to take to their retail customers will be available. In addition, more work will be done by AEB staff with retailers. Relative to egg products, increased pressure will be exerted through related publications and ongoing communications with retailers in the National Accounts Program. There will also be a program called On-Pack that will be in effect during slower times in the egg business year. It was pointed out that 93 percent of households in the United States have eggs. Coupons and on-carton public relations can be used. Charts and graphs were presented to show the slow egg sales periods and how the On-Pack program can work within the time frames. Some USDA-approved carton and coupon ideas were shown. In addition, several ideas for billboard and truck signage were presented.

In 2007, a grocery study showed the tremendous opportunity that retailers have for profitability with egg sales. Eggs are the highest profit per unit sold in the entire store. Other statistics in this regard like high cash flow and square footage profit margins were also discussed. All features can be used by producers with their customers to promote the sale of eggs.

Selling Eggs to Food Manufacturers

John Howeth presented new ways that egg products can be sold to food manufacturers. The industry needs new and additional information it can share with food manufacturers. There are now many different ways to spread the messages using the web, in person, and printed messages.

Howeth reported that they have achieved

good scores on their advertising efforts in various food publications. Because of their timely advertising, they also have obtained many free pages that talk about egg products in articles. There is also much information on the web site regarding the nutritional benefits of eggs. Some of the publications that are featuring egg product ads and information are: *Food Prod-*



Dr. Glenn Froning and Lynn Froning, and Jennifer Geck, USAPEEC, at the American Egg Board's fall meeting in Napa, Calif.

uct Design and Prepared Foods magazines.

AEB publishes two related newsletters. *Eggsaminer* is a six-page newsletter relating to egg products and *Eggsolutions* is a digital piece covering the same data. In addition, there is the *Egg Products Buyers Guide* listing names of those that purchase these products. Recently a very positive article appeared in *Baking Management* magazine about the benefits of egg products. This committee also oversees the Research and Fellowship Program relating to Food Science. This supports a PhD prospect working in this field as well as other university projects relating to the egg products business.

Good News on Export Growth

Jim Sumner, USA Poultry and Egg Export Council, said there is good news regarding consistent growth of export sales in both shell eggs and egg products. The weak dollar has helped this business as well as the effort of the United States Egg Marketers. In 2007 Sumner expects about \$137 million in sales of both egg products and shell eggs. Japan is currently the No. 1 buyer followed by Hong Kong, Canada,

Mexico and Germany.

USAPEEC continues to conduct seminars in many countries and has used Howard Helmer, who is very popular overseas, in the promotion of eggs. They have also invited groups from several countries to the United States to study first hand how things are done here. These efforts have resulted in many inquiries and sales. Eggs have received good publicity in the foreign press and USAPEEC has sponsored advertising in baking and food manufacturing publications, as well.

The organization had a booth at the largest food show in the world held in Cologne, Germany this year. It was successful, obtaining over 60 trade references. Next year, a similar show will be held in Paris and Jim Sumner urged egg producers, processors and marketers to attend if possible. He also referenced the upcoming International Egg Commission meeting to be held in Shanghai and how important this will be to exports from the United States. Several motions were passed from the Industry and Market Development Committee relating to the Strategic Plan, support for the UEP Harvest Food Bank donation and future funding for AI research in egg products.

AEB's Kevin Burkum presented advertising plans and suggestions to the board. He reviewed the cracked egg campaign that is currently being seen on television and showed clips of the two ads called "PeeWee" and "Triathlon". Both ads feature the high protein, nutritional value of eggs. Burkum also commented on the work AEB is doing online. Yahoo.com, Food Network.com and Weight Watchers.com are just some of the web sites that can be seen with eggs as part of the program. Burkum reported results of some research that this committee has done regarding advertising efforts. The nutritional value of eggs, emphasized in current promotional material, is well known to heavy egg users. Target audiences have included "moms with kids" and it is found that they have a good knowledge of the nutritional value of eggs. For 2008, advertising will take a more focused approach, especially for television and radio. Much attention will be given to digital, print, a new web site, truck signage and a new initiative to use carton advertising. AEB currently has all materials ready for use by producers.

New Ad Idea

A new advertising idea was introduced to the board by Burkum. AEB would work with the Rachael Ray talk show, which would feature an accomplished, "Incredible", person to be interviewed at her VIP table. This would be partially sponsored by AEB and AEB's presence would be featured throughout the segment. Similar promotional work has been done in the past with other businesses, and currently Staples is the only other one doing this sort of thing. A total of 14 shows and an online presence would be included in the program.



Kevin Burkum, AEB, presented the board's new advertising plan.

Questions from the board relative to this project included concern over animal activists possible involvement.

United Egg Producers CEO Gene Gregory remarked that the industry needs to press on with plans and not hold back because of potential problems. The board unanimously passed a motion to continue work on this new idea, and agreed on its funding. The 2008 advertising budget was approved.

The AEB Nutrition Committee, chaired by Blair Van Zetten, featured a detailed report by Dr. Don McNamara, head of the Egg Nutrition Center (ENC) in Washington, D.C. McNamara gave an overview of the many research projects that the ENC is currently sponsoring and will be working on in the future. These projects have targets such as weight control, elderly and how eggs in the diet are beneficial, animal protein, choline and

even a breakfast program for college students eating eggs in one group and not eating eggs in another. In addition, a study is being done on free-range eggs versus other production systems.

Crack 300 Program

McNamara also mentioned a book by Gary Taubes pointing out that the cholesterol scare from eggs was totally invalid. Work is being continued by the ENC on the Crack 300 program. This is an effort to dispel the theory that egg consumption should be limited due to cholesterol limits. A steering committee is working on the issue, and making progress. Protein is becoming more important as a nutritional factor which benefits eggs.

In 2008, research projects will continue

with several new ones added. All will continue to discover how eggs are beneficial dietary choices for young and old. The Edelman Public Relations Co. reported on their many activities promoting the benefits of eggs. Recent research has proven that expecting mothers and those that are breast-feeding can see many benefits from consumption of eggs.

Edelman is using various methods for getting the word out to the right people. Press releases are a good way to spread the

good news of egg's benefits. Programs are continuing such as the Kristine Lilly project where a gifted, young athlete is shown using eggs in her training diet. In 2008, public relations will continue to work with health professionals, media outreach and consumer



Dr. Dennis Casey, former AEB allied consultant and retired president, Hy-Line International.

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education. Various clips were shared from television, radio and the Web depicting the free publicity that can be received from these media sources.

Dr. Hilary Thesmar updated the group on the activities of the Egg Safety Center, which she heads in Washington. Her remarks included information about the work being done with the Safe Quality Food (SQF) pro-

gram. She referenced several studies being done in egg processing plants regarding salmonella, E. Coli and Listeria potential problems. This office anticipates an improved programs relating to overall food safety.

Steve Gemperle, Chairman of the Consumer Education and Foodservice Committee introduced members of the AEB staff to report on that committee's many activities. Kristine

Lilly has been used with the school promotion kits emphasizing the nutritional value of eggs in her diet. A new design is planned for the newsletter "Eggscetera" which has been rated well in the industry. Many articles and news releases have appeared in all national food service magazines. The foodservice team has many plans to conform to the new AEB Strategic Plan. Among the efforts will be an increase in the volume and goals to influence breakfasts with major fast food chains and to increase advertising activities related to food service. They will better utilize the research data available with foodservice providers and increase the amount of advertising in foodservice publications.

Linda Braun and Howard Helmer updated the board on the activities in consumer education. There have been many features that include eggs in major publications as well as on radio, in newspaper and on-line outlets. The new media kit has included nutritional material, recipes and other positive information on eggs and it has paid off with positive results.

Media Exposure

Helmer has been used extensively with some new videos that show him making omelets. Some clips were shown at the meeting with Helmer performing on various television shows throughout the country. Other possibilities for media exposure are being planned with Helmer on TV programs such as Jay Leno, Mr. Food and the Food Network. Publications from the committee include the "Eggscyclopedia" and the Egg Handling Care and Guide. Strategic Plans relating the Consumer Education and Foodservice Committee will be an increase in the positive impressions presented and an increase in overall newspaper placements.

Also an increase in the use of the digital media is in the works as well as a more visual use of Helmer's activities. His activities continue to concentrate on maintaining contact with the major women's magazines in the United States. He was at the inauguration of the new Rachel Ray test kitchen this year with omelet making demonstrations. Many articles in the women's magazines including recipes containing eggs have appeared in the past four months. Total value to the industry for these timely articles is over \$6 million as compared to advertising costs. **EI**

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Effective rodent control helps break the cycle of infection, protects flocks from diseases

With the growing bio-terrorism threat and concerns about diseases, there's little question about the importance of a two-phase rodent control strategy as part of a successful biosecurity program.

Phase 1 – Cleanout Disinfection

An effective biosecurity program involves “cleanout disinfection” and “re-infection prevention” measures. Both match the production phases of the facility.

Cleanout disinfection occurs after a facility has been cleared to prepare the way for a new flock. It includes intensive rodent control. As a first step, eliminate as much feed as possible as soon as the birds have been removed.

For house mice, place a fast-acting rodenticide, such as Gunslinger™ mini-blocks with bromethalin as the active ingredient, in trays 8 to 12 feet apart around the interior perimeter of the building. Maintain an uninterrupted supply of bait. Move material from areas with no activity to areas with high activity. As feeding subsides, switch to a high-palatability bait such as Hombre™ mini-blocks. Use it as a “clean-up hitter” to eliminate any that did not feed on the bromethalin bait. Do not use rodenticide pellets for mouse control. Mice tend to translocate and cache the pellets, which creates a risk should they be accessible to chickens later.

For roof rats, use a rodenticide formulated with flavorings attractive to this species, such as Hombre. Place it in their runways, which are usually above the floor. Use wire, nails and bait stations to secure the material.

For Norway rats, pellets are an acceptable formulation because the rodent's view the rodenticide as seed. Additionally, Norway rats will not horde the pellets. Apply loose pellets directly into their burrow. BootHill® pellets are paraffinized to withstand the moist environment of the burrow. The pellets, labeled for burrow application, resemble seeds blown in by the wind and are readily accepted. Re-treat all burrows at least weekly until all signs of activity cease. Do not cave burrows in after treatment so pellets are not expelled when the rat reopens the burrow.

Phase 2 – Re-infection Prevention

Re-infection prevention maintains biosecurity throughout the process of raising the new flock. It includes a preventive rodent control program that calls for the need to:

- Eliminate food and harborage sources around buildings.
- Remove weeds, bushes, litter heaps, animal carcasses, feed spills, old equipment and debris. Keep grass mowed. Consider a crushed rock perimeter past the roof drip line around the building.
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Roof Rat

Breaking the cycle

Technically, biosecurity is defined as “a health plan to prevent the occurrence and transmission of infectious diseases.” Infection of poultry populations is essentially a cycle. If the cycle is broken the risk of infection drops significantly. There are several key control points where the entry or transmission of pathogens can be prevented. One that stands out is pest control – and rodents in particular are a major source and spreader of infectious diseases.

Implement a rotation strategy

Implementation of a rodenticide rotation strategy is often recommended because rodents may avoid a particular rodenticide flavor, texture or shape.

A simple and effective rotation program starts with a single-feed anticoagulant rodenticide containing difethialone (Hombre). After six months, switch to a product containing a different single-feed anticoagulant, such as bromadiolone in a different mixture of food ingredients (BootHill), for the next six months. During cleanout, use a product containing the acute toxicant bromethalin (Gunslinger). Some growers prefer a rotation with shorter cycles and without an acute toxicant, such as four months of difethialone then two months bromadiolone, then back to difethialone etc.



Biofuels will hit all sectors of the food chain

By Terry Evans

All sectors of the egg industry will feel the adverse effects of the higher costs arising from the growth in the biofuels industry. But while biofuels is one of the main drivers behind the rising commodity prices it isn't the only one, Nan-Dirk Mulder from Rabobank International in the Netherlands said at the recent International Egg Commission meeting in Budapest, Hungary.

He said that other factors driving egg prices higher include:

- More food demand in developing countries,
- Trade liberalisation in the soft commodity trade with some Asian countries,
- GMO-free buying restricted flexibility in purchasing,
- Tightening wheat supplies from major exporters (EU-27, Canada and the Ukraine),
- Concerns about wheat crop prospects in Argentina and Australia,
- Fears of Russian export restrictions,
- A demand push from the EU for corn due to high wheat prices, and
- Low corn production due to weather conditions in southeast Europe.

Mulder forecast that global egg demand will rise during the next two decades to more than 90 million tons. Egg production will expand by 15 metric tons between 2005 and 2015, some 70 percent of which would be in the developing countries. But he warned, "Price increases could reduce this growth. An egg price rise of 20 percent would deflate demand by 0.5 percent, which is equivalent to 300,000 tons a year."

Mulder said that in the long term, fast market growth for egg and meat production in combination with growing biofuel demand would lead to intensified competition for in-

puts. While it looks as though there will be higher raw material prices with more fluctuations, the use of other products to produce biofuels could reduce commodity market fluctuations. "But in the short term, the price of feed will remain high due to the tight commodity market," he added.

Mulder said the higher cost of producing eggs is likely to be passed on to consumers in developed countries, but it could hamper growth in the developing countries.

More Consolidation

The industry is likely to witness more consolidation and internationalization to obtain greater bargaining power and mitigate the risks, Mulder said. He stressed the importance of organizations in the poultry sector participating in the food and fuel debates.

Companies should strive to gain enough bargaining power in the value chain to ensure that the price increases can be passed on to their customers. Mulder said companies should pay more attention to the optimal management of feed ingredients and the better use of biofuel byproducts. Everything possible should be done to mitigate the risks involved with high and fluctuating prices, he said.

Mulder continued that there are two main categories of biofuels—biodiesel and ethanol. Some 80 percent of biodiesel is produced from canola oil but alternative sources include other vegetable oils like palm and soybean, while recycled oils and fats and animal fats might eventually be used. For ethanol, the main ingredients (80 percent) are corn and sugar beets, though other grains are also involved. Mulder holds out the possibility that in the future biomass/cellulose could be used.

Global ethanol production in 2005 amounted to 33 billion litres/8.8 billion gallons (45 percent of which was in the United States) but for 2010 the forecast is 72 billion

litres with 55 percent in the United States. The U.S. ethanol goal for 2017 at 136 billion liters/36 billion gallons is five times higher than the current goal of 29 billion liters/7.7 billion gallons. In the United States, current production is 23 billion liters/6 billion gallons from 120 ethanol plants with a further 80 plants under construction. Some 55 million tons (21 percent of national production) of corn is used, yielding a byproduct of some 18 million tons of dried distillers grains with solubles (DDGS). By 2017, corn usage could be about 320 metric tons, which would give some 105 metric tons of DDGS.

In Europe, biodiesel is the more popular biofuel with global production currently at around 3.5 million tons (75 percent in the EU), which was expected to rise to 24 metric tons (40 percent in the EU) by 2010.

Mulder said that the rapid growth in biofuels, coupled with increased financial support for its production—particularly in the EU—will attract investors from non-agricultural sectors.

With feedstuffs accounting for between 50 percent to 80 percent of the cost of biofuels, feed prices have a serious impact on margins in the biofuel value chain. If corn prices rise by \$40/ton, the ethanol price increases by 9 cents/litre and margins decline by 20 percent. Biodiesel costs are \$1 a gallon more than conventional diesel.

The good news was that in the long term (2010 to 2020) Mulder foresees that biodiesel production could start to be based on non-food crops e.g. jatropha, while biomass would be used for ethanol production.

To reduce the negative impact of these cost increases, he urges the industry to look closely at the possibilities for reformulating rations and to examine ways in which they could reduce fragmentation in the value chain, increase purchasing power and strengthen their bargaining power to be able to pass these costs on to their customers. **EI**



Nan-Dirk Mulder

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Continuous egg washing can aid food safety

By Terry Evans

Egg washing has been a well-established practice for more than 40 years in countries such as the United States, Canada, Australia, Japan, and Sweden, where authorized or licensed egg packing centers wash table eggs or eggs destined for the egg products sector under supervised conditions.

Egg washing also formed part of the Codex Alimentarius Code of Practice for Eggs and Egg Products adopted in July this year, Henry Kuhl of the U.S.-based Kuhl Corp. said at the International Egg Commission conference in Budapest, Hungary.

“When table eggs are washed under these regulations they would still be classified as Class A,” he said. “As regulators are increasing food safety awareness, egg washing is receiving renewed attention in countries where it is not yet allowed.”

However, he stressed, “If well done, there are clear advantages to egg washing because of the reduced microbial load, but Kuhl admitted that poor practices increase the risk.” Non-washed eggs have on average 31,000 counts of shell-borne bacteria, but when washed and sanitized,

this count could be reduced by between 90 to 100 percent.

“A continuous commercial washing system will remove salmonella and most other disease-causing bacteria and viruses on the shell and is complimentary to other egg safety schemes such as flock vaccination,” he asserted.

Regarding the procedure, Kuhl said that the only economical way to provide warmed wash water with detergent is to filter and re-circulate it, thus proper filter trays must be provided as part of the system. Because the openings in the filter screens are smaller than the openings in the spray nozzles, the incidence of plugged spray nozzles is substantially reduced.

Recommended Time

The recommended time for eggs in the wash chamber is 45 to 60 seconds. The use of a detergent concentrate differs from area to area depending on the softness or hardness of the water. In some instances a defoamer is needed because of the soil load in the wash water.

Crucially, a pH of 10 to 11 is recommended to eliminate shell borne salmonella and other microorganisms. Washed eggs are spray rinsed with water having a temperature equal to or warmer than the wash water in order to maintain a positive pressure inside the eggs.

Kuhl said the benefits of using continuous commercial capacity egg washers are:

- ▶ Eggs could be washed inline or offline, even at seven days after lay,
- ▶ It removes 99.98 percent of shell-borne bacteria including salmonella enteritidis,
- ▶ Bacteria counts could be reduced from 31,000 to 50 after washing,
- ▶ The inner membrane is expanded preventing anything from entering the shell,
- ▶ It improves egg shell appearance and user acceptance,
- ▶ Seventy-five percent of the labor required to pick out dirty eggs from incoming conveyor lines is eliminated,
- ▶ No extra labor is needed to operate the egg washer connected to egg graders or breakers,
- ▶ By keeping egg graders, packers and plants cleaner, less labor is required for clean up,
- ▶ Leaking eggs are washed out and not delivered to the grader, but sound eggs pass through undamaged,
- ▶ When choosing not to wash, an outside lever allows the system to become a dry conveyor,
- ▶ If the proper ink is used for stamping free-range eggs, it will not be washed off,
- ▶ Eggs can be oil-sprayed if requested, though since the cuticle was not removed, oiling isn't necessary, and
- ▶ It provides for improved food safety and reduces the cost of processing the eggs.

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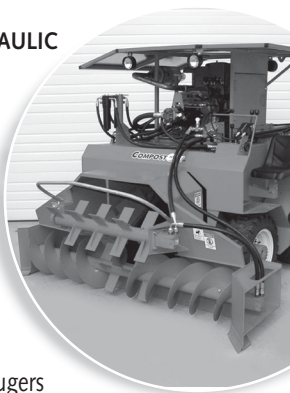
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Good future for products in Russia

By Terry Evans

Egg products in Russia currently contribute 33 percent to their total domestic supplies with some 67 percent imported, but there are reasons to believe this ratio will favor more local production in the future.

In the view of Evgeny Kusnetsov of Praxis Ovo, Russia, reasons for this are:

- ▶ Increasing domestic consumption of liquid products,
- ▶ More interest in local production,
- ▶ Improved quality of domestic egg products,
- ▶ Rapid development of the food technology related to egg products,
- ▶ The manufacture of specialised products with complex recipes,
- ▶ Increased exports of liquid eggs to Europe where it would be pasteurised and packed or dried,
- ▶ Expanding domestic sales of liquid eggs, and
- ▶ The development of national support to Russia's agri-industrial sector.

Prior to the early 1990s, there was no commercial egg processing industry in Russia. There was some local production from cracked eggs but the products were of poor quality. The first modern, well-equipped

plant was established in 1999.

As products appeared on the market, consumer attitudes started to change and a demand emerged for separate egg products for different sectors of the food industry.

"Today, egg products are well accepted and will increase in importance in the future, being used not only by the food industry but also in non-food industries such as the medicinal and pharmaceutical sectors," Kusnetsov said.

Mayonnaise Output Triples

Egg products account for about 10 percent of production. In the food sector, mayonnaise (containing 5 to 8 percent of whole egg powder and egg yolk powder) production had tripled since the 1990s, with consumption currently averaging 3kg/person/year, second only to the United States.

The biggest user is the confectionary sector, accounting for 90 percent of the egg product market. Nevertheless, he foresees significant growth in product usage for the production of macaroni, sausages, and ice cream.

Kusnetsov added that world experience has shown that Russia would have increased difficulties selling eggs in the shell in the not-too-

distant future. But again, world data points to a possible minimum 20 percent of domestic egg output going for products. Currently, Russia's egg product production represents no more than 1 percent of global production.

Quality is Variable

While the quality of eggs throughout the European Union is more or less standard, in Russia it is widely variable and buyers cannot be assured that there are no residues of antibiotics, or pesticides. "This is why, if you wish to produce high quality egg products, it is better to build an integrated facility from feed production through to processing, where you have overall control of quality," he added. Several such projects had been built with a daily capacity of around two million eggs.

Standards are not always the same as elsewhere and he felt that these should be adjusted to be as close to world standards as possible.

In 1990 egg production stood at 47.5 billion, but it then went into decline to a "low" of 31.9 billion in 1996. It has since grown almost annually to reach an estimated 39.5 billion in 2007. A 20 percent increase is forecast to 2012 when output is expected to be in the region of 47.4 billion. In terms of egg consumption per person, the annual average is expected to rise to 340 by 2012 from a 2008 estimate of 286.



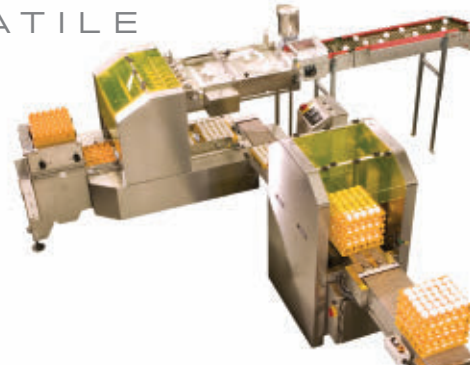
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Denver Meeting Educates Executives on Egg Production

Grocery and food service executives got a first-hand look at how eggs are produced at a meeting held in Denver last month. A trip to Morning Fresh Farms near Denver was the first order of business for the attendees of the United Egg Producers Grocery & Foodservice Executive Animal Welfare Conference.

United Egg Producers, led by President and CEO Gene Gregory, the GolinHarris public relations firm, Dr. Jeff Armstrong of Michigan State University, and several egg producers, hosted the event to demonstrate and educate attendees about how eggs are produced.

The Morning Fresh Farm offered the opportunity to view both cage and non-cage production units and proved to be an outstanding example of how to produce eggs in an extremely clean and sanitary environment.

Egg producers Paul Sauder and Bob Krouse made presentations on their operations and confirmed the way they handle the many varieties of eggs that are required from customers. A constant theme throughout the meeting was that egg producers are prepared to supply the needs dictated by their consumers.

Eighty-five percent of the eggs produced in the United States currently come from laying hens that are under the UEP Certified program. The UEP Guidelines for certification have been established by the independent scientific committee made up of top university scientists that have studied the issue and developed the written format. A statement that appears on the cartons of eggs produced at Paul Sauder's farm sums up the position of egg producers regarding cage layers:

"You can take comfort in knowing that these eggs are from chickens raised by caring poultry farmers under strict United Egg Producer

Certified Guidelines. These guidelines provide the highest quality eggs and the best treatment for chickens. The cages protect and provide for their welfare. These guidelines were developed by an independent group of the nation's top animal welfare and behavioral experts. Our farms are audited by USDA or other third party inspectors. In addition to being good for the quality of the eggs and the welfare of the chickens, cage production also provides the most economical eggs for the consumer to purchase."



Dr. Jeff Armstrong, Dean of Agriculture, Michigan State University. Chair of the UEP's Scientific Committee.

Speakers said that in the egg laying industry, animal rights groups have chosen to try to eliminate one of the features that allows high quality eggs to be produced safely, without contamination in an environment that is both efficient and comfortable to the layers. Eliminating cage systems is only the beginning of the activists attempt to stop animal agriculture.

Attendees at the Denver conference were represented by university foodservice personnel, representatives from leading grocery store chains, restaurant representatives, state legislators and representatives of the Colorado Department of Agriculture. Most or all of them are feeling the pressures from the animal activists to only use eggs from non-cage laying hens. Starting with the trip to the actual egg laying and processing facility and going through the presentations by the experts, the meeting was an eye opener for many in attendance.

Cage-Free Initiatives

There are two major initiatives currently on the table by the activists. First, Colorado is facing a legislative attempt to ban cages, and

second, California residents are being asked to sign a petition that could lead to a referendum on the November 2008 ballot to eliminate cages in that state. These actions are of concern to producers and they are meeting to find ways to combat these threats.

Should activists be successful in eliminating cages in these areas, eggs from cage layers in other states, or even foreign countries, could be brought in, creating even bigger problems and costs. It was pointed out that costs of new buildings and land to accommodate non-cage facilities would be prohibitive.

Egg producers, however, intend to provide any and all types of eggs that the public requests. A variety of specialty eggs are available and will continue to be available as consumers demand them. Regular carton shell eggs produced in cages account for over 95 percent of the eggs sold at retail.

The regular eggs are less than half the cost of the specialty eggs and therefore this would create an additional problem if cages were eliminated. This factor is very important to the attendees of the meeting as they purchase eggs in large quantities.

For example, if a university which serves thousands of meals per day were suddenly to change to cage free eggs at double or more the price, their overall costs would go up considerably.

This was the situation seen recently at Notre Dame University, however, instead of accepting activist demands, the university did an investigation on its own as to why they should accept the extra expense and go to non-caged eggs in their foodservice facility. They visited local egg production farms with both UEP Certified cage and non-caged layers. This resulted in their decision to continue using the more efficient product. Several other institutions throughout the country conducted similar studies with the same results, saving their organization the excess costs of specialty eggs while maintaining their high standards.

In the European egg industry, it is evident

that organized producer groups were not in place to combat animal activist efforts. This was pointed out to the group at the UEP meeting. Emotions and public perceptions influenced the results in Europe instead of the scientific approach that is being done in the United States. As a result, conventional-sized cages are being phased out in most

requirement and costly situation.

The opposition to the egg industry, as well as other animal production industries, is indeed formidable. For example, The Humane

Society of the United States (HSUS) claims over 10 million members and has a budget of hundreds of millions of dollars. Obviously, many of these members are pet lovers and



Left to right: Mitch Head, GolinHarris Public Relations, and Gene Gregory, President and CEO, UEP.

countries, causing some producers to go out of business and others to spend large sums of capitol to provide alternate housing. In some cases there has been an elaborate "enriched" cage system that creates a much greater space

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know nothing about the organization's efforts to end animal agriculture. Several other groups have the same goals.

Using their vast resources, people from these groups have committed farm break-ins and falsified entry to take pictures and obtain negative comments from workers. They use their websites effectively to spread this misinformation as well as distribute videos to television and radio stations. In one incident, activ-

ists attempted to blame Asian Avian Influenza on large confined poultry houses.

Just the opposite is true. In Asia, the outbreaks were caused by open air poultry facilities and the contact they had with wild bird carriers. All of this information, and much more was presented to the attendees at the UEP Grocery & Foodservice Conference by UEP staff, scientific advisors and egg producers.

Gregory commented on a few of the markets

that the activists have targeted. He referenced a well-known retailer that tried to avoid the pressure to buy all cage-free eggs. When the retailer resisted, the activists punished them by jamming their system with over 30,000 e-mails. This is only one example of the intimidations that UEP is aware of in the effort to ban cages. Gregory also remarked that the U.S. egg industry has become the model in the fight against the animal activist's efforts. Other species also under pressure have taken some of the initiatives accomplished by the egg industry for their own use.

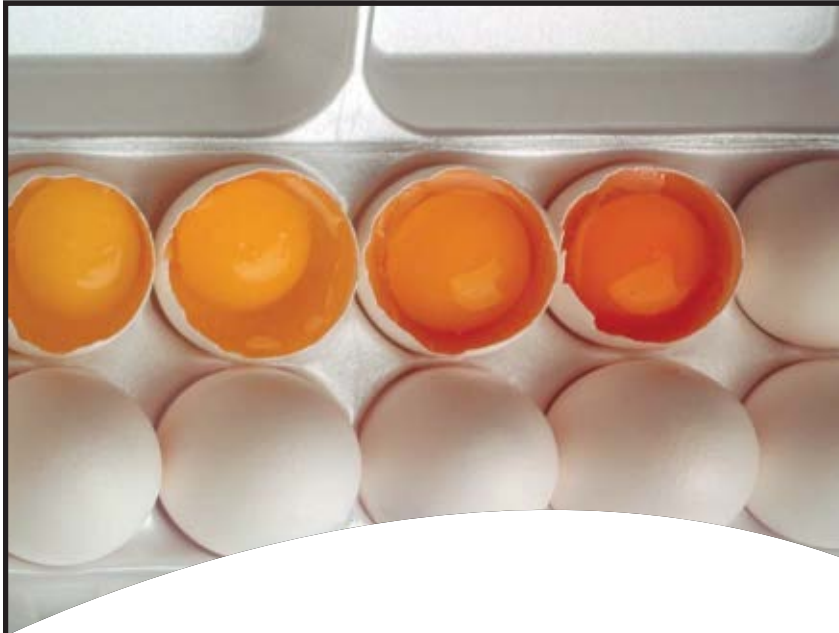
As a matter of interest, the International Egg Commission has adopted the UEP Guidelines



Left to right: Egg producers Paul Sauder, Pennsylvania, and Bob Krouse, Indiana.

for their standard. This is a big plus for the U.S. industry and the facts were pointed out to the attendees at the conference. There was a large amount of literature and information distributed during the conference. A copy of the *UEP Animal Husbandry Guidelines* as well as *The Egg Industry and Animal Welfare*, a scientific approach booklet, were part of the information packet taken home by the attendees. UEP has assembled a wealth of information on the animal welfare subject and will provide answers to anyone with questions on how to combat the activist's efforts.

Producing eggs in cages under the UEP Guidelines is both humane and safe for the product, speakers said. Those who are using great numbers of eggs in their operations can be assured of a high quality food product at a reasonable cost. Egg producers have assured those that prefer non-cage eggs and other specialty eggs that they will be available depending on the consumers' wishes. Animal activists, promoting the end of animal agriculture, should not be the deciding factor on how the egg industry produces their product. **EI**



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Join Forces Again in Atlanta

For the second year running, the International Poultry Expo (IPE) and the International Feed Exposition (IFE) will be held together at the Georgia World Congress Center (GWCC) in Atlanta, from Jan. 23-25. The joint expositions include new products and services, educational programs, and social activities. IFE's audience reflects every facet of the feed industry.

Both expos attract business owners, executives, managers, and growers from around the world. Every industry segment will be represented, including: feed manufacturers, ingredient suppliers, equipment manufacturers, feed milling, live production, hatchery, processing, further processing, packaging, commercial egg, marketing, and all support activities.

Egg producers will find products in packaging, equipment, and services, as well as the latest technology solutions to egg production throughout the 16 acres of exhibits.

Seminars

The InfoMart Theater returns for the 2008 IPE and IFE, at the GWCC. The theater, which debuted at the 2005 expo, features free educational presentations by exhibitors on the latest technologies and innovations for the poultry, egg and feed sectors of the industry. Theaters will be located in Section C1 of Building C and Aisle 5400 of Building B. The programs will run from 10:30 a.m. until approximately 4 p.m. on Wednesday and Thursday, Jan. 23-24.

Feed, Environment, Egg Processing, Health, Poultry Production, Incubation/Hatchery, Cooling/Refrigeration, Process-

ing, Sanitation, and Service are the topics to be covered in the InfoMart Theaters. Participating exhibitors include: Admix; BluePrint Automation; CDC Software; Commodity & Ingredient Hedging; Computerway Food Systems; CyberAgra; Danisco Animal Nutrition; Dosatron International; Dow Biocides; Egg Chick Automated Technologies (ECAT); Feed Management Systems; Fullscope; GTC Nutrition; Habasit Belt; Heat and Control; IDEXX Laboratories; The Industrial Fumigant; Innovative Equipment Solutions; Inverness Medical, Point of Care Diagnostics; Kemin; Kunafin 'The Insectary'; Leeson Electric; PraxAir Food Technologies; Lubrication Engineers; Meyn America; OCS Checkweighers; Peripheral Mowers; Quality Technology International; Schering-Plough Animal Health; Stork Food Systems; The Pelleting Answer; Trash Typhoon; Wm. Goodyear; and Xenobiotic Detection Systems.

Matching Buyers with Suppliers

The 2008 IPE and IFE initiates a new program designed to facilitate matching buyers with suppliers. The Buyer Connection Program will allow buyers to use a neutral area to meet with IPE/IFE exhibiting suppliers.

Meeting rooms will be set up as an enclosed office complex in C-Hall of the

GWCC. There will be no charge, and the room reservations are available on a first-come/first-served basis. The Buyer Connection area will have phone, fax and wireless capabilities and a receptionist. The room

➤ A full programming schedule is available on the International Poultry Expo Web site, www.WATTpoultry.com/IPEschedule2008.aspx.

availability is restricted to members of the U.S. Poultry & Egg Association who are actively involved in the production and processing of poultry meat and eggs and members of the American Feed Industry Association who make compounded feed and who are meeting with representatives of IPE /IFE exhibiting companies.

"We have developed the Buyer Connection as a means for the attendees who are members of our organizations to have a place to meet in a neutral, professional setting conveniently located on the floor of the show with suppliers who are exhibiting," says Charlie Olentine, executive vice president of the U.S. Poultry & Egg Association.

For more information on the Buyer Connection Program, e-mail colentine@poultryegg.org or phone (770) 493-9401.

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ECO-Innovation

With much of today's economic focus on using resources wisely and improving utility efficiency, the expositions include two special pavilions highlighting the latest in resource innovation. The new program, ECO-Innovation, will spotlight issues such as using poultry litter for fertilizer or fuel, using poultry fat as bio-fuel, fluorescent lighting, wastewater recycling, and high efficiency motors and equipment.

Both B and C-Halls of the GWCC will showcase exhibitors who specialize in

products to improve efficiency and utilization of natural resources. In addition to commercial exhibits, educational displays will provide information on current and future conservation technologies.

"People come to our show looking for answers and solutions to the issues that confront them in their daily operations. This program will enable our attendees to understand new eco-friendly technology that will ultimately save them money and make them good en-

► For more information about the expo, including how to register, go to www.ipe08.org.

vironmental stewards," says Olientine.

Free wireless Internet access will be available in Halls B and C to make it easier for attendees to stay in touch with the office and conduct business. The Wi-Fi service will be available Monday through Friday, Jan. 21-25.

UEP Events

In addition to the IPE and the IFE, the United Egg Producers has several planned events to be held in conjunction with the Expos. UEP committee and board meetings will be held Jan. 22 and 23 at the Omni Hotel. These events will be followed by the popular annual breakfast briefing on Jan. 24.

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January

23–25: International Poultry Exposition 2008

Georgia World Congress Center, Atlanta, Georgia. Contact: US Poultry & Egg Association, 1530 Cooledge Road, Tucker, Georgia 30084-7804. Tel: 770-493-9401. Fax: 770-493-9257. E-mail: expogeneralinfo@poultryegg.org. Website: www.poultryegg.org.

March

18–20: Midwest Poultry Federation Convention 2008

St. Paul, Minnesota. Contact: Midwest Poultry Federation, 108 Marty Drive, Buffalo, Minnesota 55313. Tel: 763-682-2171. Fax: 763-682-5546. E-mail: lara@midwestpoultry.com. Website: www.midwestpoultry.com.

June

29 – July 4: XXIII World's Poultry Congress.

Convention and Exhibition Centre, Brisbane, Australia. Event includes 6th Asian-Pacific Poultry Health Conference, 4th International Ratite Science Symposium & 2008 Australian Poultry Information Exchange. Contact: WPC 2008 Congress. Tel: +61 7 3858 5594; Fax: +61 7 3858 5510. Email: wpc2008@im.com.au. Website: www.wpc2008.com.

2009

January

January 21-22: International Poultry Scientific Forum.

Georgia World Congress Centre, Atlanta, Georgia, USA, US Poultry & Egg Association, Tel: +1 770 493 9401; Fax: +1 770 493 9257, expogeneralinfo@poultryegg.org, www.ipe08.com

28–30: International Poultry Exposition 2009

Georgia World Congress Center, Atlanta, Georgia. Contact: US Poultry & Egg Association, 1530 Cooledge Road, Tucker, Georgia 30084-7804. Tel: 770-493-9401. Fax: 770-493-9257. E-mail: expogeneralinfo@poultryegg.org. Website: www.poultryegg.org.

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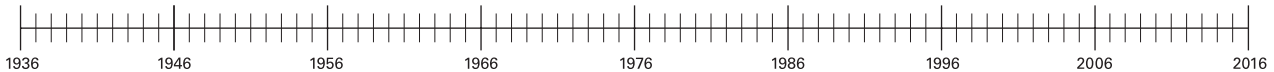
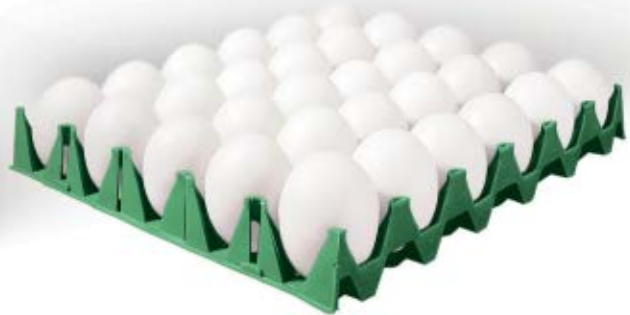
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