

TN POULTRY ASSOCIATION

# news letter

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**WINTER 2025 ISSUE**

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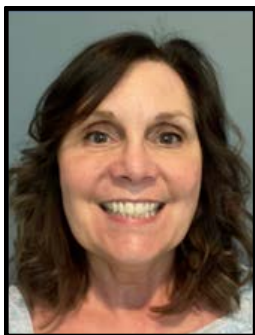


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Hi everyone! I hope this newsletter finds you well.

Let me start with a huge thank you to all of the sponsors and vendors who were so gracious when our November grower meetings were canceled due to HPAI precautions. Your understanding and generosity are appreciated more than we can say.

We had a great program planned and were expecting the highest attendance to date for TPA grower meetings. We will do our best to make sure the same topics are covered next year. While the dates aren't set yet, we fully expect to be back on schedule in 2026.

Blaine Hyle from USDA-APHIS had planned to share information about a program that many Tennessee poultry growers may find helpful. As part of ongoing efforts to help commercial poultry growers strengthen biosecurity against avian influenza, USDA-trained experts are offering voluntary free assessments of wildlife activity on your property. There's no obligation, but if you choose to make any of their suggested improvements, you could qualify for cost-share funding up to 75% for high risk biosecurity concerns. To learn more about this free program, please see pages [44](#) and [45](#) of this newsletter.

Jocelynn and I are looking forward to a great 2026. Save the date postcards for next year's events will be sent in late January, and we hope to see all of you soon.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

*Tracy*



## VISION STATEMENT

The Tennessee Poultry Association (TPA) is dedicated to advancing and strengthening the integrated broiler/breeder industry in Tennessee and beyond. Our mission is to foster the growth and sustainability of the poultry sector through a comprehensive approach that encompasses education, policy advocacy, and public relations. We represent poultry stakeholders - including growers, integrators, genetics companies, and allied poultry companies - in legislative matters, advocating for their best interests. Moreover, TPA actively nurtures the next generation of poultry industry leaders by supporting higher education programs and youth initiatives. Through scholarships and legislative advocacy, we empower students pursuing poultry-related degrees and provide support to poultry growers and their families.

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# TRACY RAFFERTY

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☎ 931-225-1123

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# JOCELYNN MAGAN

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270-290-0193 ☎

270-363-9839 ☎

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## LIDA PHENGMAN: A TPA SCHOLARSHIP SUCCESS STORY

*December 3, 2025 by Tracy Rafferty*

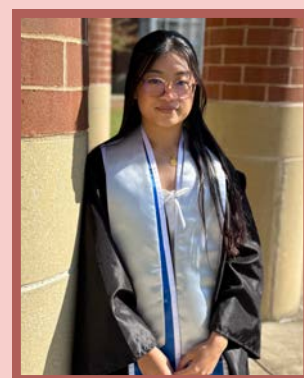
If you've never met Lida Phengmany, you're missing out. She is one of the most genuine, gracious people you will ever encounter.

Back in 2022, when Dale Barnett needed someone in the Shelbyville office who could assist a few hours a week with TPA bank deposits and mail, Lida was the first person who came to my mind. Her first scholarship essay left a lasting impression on me because I could clearly feel her kindness and her love for the poultry industry as I read it.

I suggested to Dale that she might be a good fit, and after interviewing her, he hired her immediately. What a tremendous team member she turned out to be, and it all began with a TPA grower member scholarship application.

For the past two and a half years, Lida has served as a TPA intern while attending MTSU. She has handled the deposits and mail with great reliability, supported special projects like updating our grower contact list, and shown up at every event with a warm smile and a willingness to help wherever needed. If you've attended any TPA function recently, you've seen her in action.

Throughout her college journey, Lida received \$6,500 in scholarship support from TPA. She originally planned to become an engineer, (*continued on page 7*)





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but her hands-on experience in and around the poultry industry shifted her career path. She recently accepted a full-time position as a breeder tech at the Tyson complex in Shelbyville. We are going to miss her terribly, but we couldn't be more proud of her.

Since 2014, TPA has raised more than \$300,000 for scholarships. Just as importantly, the connections forged through this program have opened the door to countless full-time positions for past scholarship recipients. That is exactly what the program is designed to do, and Lida is a shining example of how to make the most of it.

The 2026 TPA scholarship application process opens January 15. The online forms can be found at [tnpoultry.org](http://tnpoultry.org), and Jocelynn and I are always happy to answer any questions.

### TPA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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### TPA BOARD MEMBERS

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Darryl Brown - Grower (Lawrenceburg)  
Jeri Beth Davis - Tyson Foods Humboldt  
Tony Delk - Tyson Foods Albany  
John Elmore - Huvepharma  
Andy Goldman - Aviagen, Inc.  
Daniel Hatcher - Koch Foods Chattanooga  
Will Hightower - Tyson Foods Shelbyville  
Clint Lauderdale - Poultry Guard  
Jeremy Martin - Aviagen NA  
Scott Seabrook - Cantrell-Gainco  
David Tallent - Grower (Spring City)  
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## NOT A CURRENT MEMBER OF TPA?

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for more information about member benefits

### TPA POULTRY COMPANY MEMBERS



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**This is a great opportunity to network with others who share similar interests and concerns.**

To take advantage of the reduced admission fee, you must be a U.S. contract grower and bring this coupon along with a completed registration form to a cashier in the B or C Building registration lobby of the Georgia World Congress Center. Preregistration is not available.

# News from our ALLIED MEMBERS & COMPLEXES

WANT TO BE FEATURED? PLEASE SEND YOUR SUBMISSIONS TO [JOCELYNN@TNPOLTRY.ORG](mailto:JOCELYNN@TNPOLTRY.ORG) BY FEB. 24TH TO BE INCLUDED IN THE SPRING ISSUE



Aviagen is pleased to announce the appointment of **Derrick Tice** as president of Aviagen North America, effective immediately. Tice brings more than 15 years of combined experience with Aviagen, supported by a distinguished background in operational leadership, quality assurance, and strategic account management across the poultry industry.

[Click here for full article](#)



Derrick Tice, Aviagen



Georgia Poultry partners with Fienhage Poultry-Solutions as authorized U.S. distributor.

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Cobb Strengthens Veterinary Team with Addition of Dr. Montana Oubre


[Click here to read full article](#)




**Rachel Breeding** has recently been promoted to Director Quality Assurance for Aviagen Inc covering GGP's and Pedigrees.



**Matt Lawson** joins Jones-Hamilton.  
[Click here for full article](#)



TPA's very own **Lida Phengmany** is graduating from MTSU and has started her career with Tyson Foods Shelbyville as a Breeder Tech



Cumberland Launches New Products To Enhance Poultry House Production: HOTRHOD Radiant Heaters and Plastic Feed Line Hoppers.

[Click here for full article](#)

Merck Animal Health announces FDA approval of EXZOLT™ for chickens to treat northern fowl mites.

[Click here for full article](#)



## POULTRY GROWERS OFFERED SPECIAL DISCOUNT TO ATTEND IPPE 2026

October 2, 2025 at [IPPEExpo.org](https://IPPEExpo.org) by Victoria Broehm, Sarah Little, and Hannah Keck

Poultry growers are invited to attend the 2026 International Production & Processing Expo (IPPE) for a special onsite registration fee of only \$5, offering a fantastic savings of \$130! This program is open to U.S. residents only. [Click here for full article](#)

**SEE PAGE 7 FOR  
IPPE COUPON!**

# 2026 EVENTS CALENDAR

**16**  
MARCH

**TPA SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION DEADLINE**  
[TNPOULTRY.ORG](https://TNPOULTRY.ORG)

**15**  
APRIL

**TPA SERVICE TECH WORKSHOP**  
FARM BUREAU EXPO CENTER - *LEBANON, TN*

**19**  
MAY

**TPA SCHOLARSHIP FUNDRAISER GOLF SCRAMBLE**  
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**20**  
MAY

**TPA SCHOLARSHIP FUNDRAISER SPORTING CLAYS SHOOT**  
CROSS CREEK CLAYS - *PALMYRA, TN*

**31-1**  
JULY - AUGUST

**TPA ANNUAL MEETING & SUMMER GETAWAY**  
GAYLORD OPRYLAND RESORT - *NASHVILLE, TN*

**TBD**  
TBD

**TPA GROWER MEETINGS**  
*MARTIN, TN & CLEVELAND, TN*



**Scholarship Applications go live January 15th!**

Go to [tnpoultry.org](https://tnpoultry.org) > Click the "Awards Program" tab > Click which scholarship you want to apply for & get started!

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Ryan King

## TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE NAMES KING AS DEPUTY COMMISSIONER

October 27, 2025 at [TN.gov](https://www.tn.gov)

NASHVILLE – Tennessee Agriculture Commissioner Andy Holt has announced the appointment of Ryan King as Deputy Commissioner for the Tennessee Department of Agriculture (TDA) beginning October 31.

As Deputy Commissioner, King will oversee day-to-day operations for TDA, support programs and services, and collaborate on policy development. [Click here for full article](#)

The TPA office will be

# CLOSED

December 24th - 26th



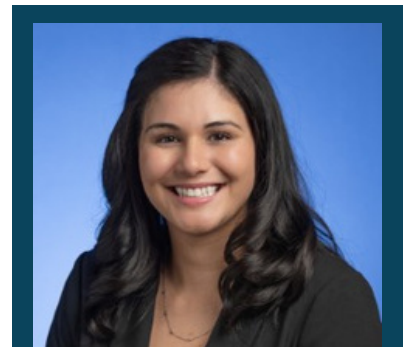
## TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE ANNOUNCES NEW LEADERSHIP APPOINTMENTS

October 28, 2025 and November 11, 2025 at [TN.gov](https://www.tn.gov)

The Tennessee Department of Agriculture (TDA) has announced two key leadership appointments, naming Logan Hess as Assistant Commissioner for Policy and Legislation and Maria Ramsey as Assistant Commissioner for Public Affairs. Agriculture Commissioner Andy Holt highlighted the significant experience both leaders bring to their roles. Hess has more than a decade of legislative work and Ramsey possesses a strong background in public affairs, communication, and agricultural education. Their appointments position TDA to continue advancing policy priorities, strengthening public engagement, and supporting Tennessee's agriculture and forestry industries.



[Click here for Logan's article](#)



[Click here for Maria's article](#)

## A LIFE BUILT IN POULTRY: DAVID TALLENT'S JOURNEY THROUGH HERITAGE, HARD WORK, AND HEART

By Jocelynn Magan

For David Tallent, poultry farming isn't just a career, it is a way of life rooted deeply in his childhood. "I started in the 4-H Chick Chain," he recalls, crediting both the program and his grandmother's backyard flock for sparking his interest. That small beginning eventually led to a role with River Valley AgCredit as a Poultry Specialist, then to the Hubbard (Aviagen) breeder hen houses that anchor his farm today, and ultimately to his involvement on the Tennessee Poultry Association (TPA) Board of Directors.

What began as a hobby grew steadily into a full-time family livelihood. "I still wanted financial stability, so I worked at River Valley," David says, "but now the farm is our full-time income." As the farm evolved, so did the roles within his family. Today, his son, Garrett, manages the poultry houses while David focuses on the cattle herd

that includes 100 momma cows and about 400 acres of land. "We've kind of switched roles over the years," he explains. "My dad, my son, and me have all traded places as the farm changed."

Many people may be surprised to learn that David is a fifth-generation farmer—and the sixth and seventh generations are already part of the operation. "I think about what my grandparents would say," he laughs, "seeing our 20,000+ flock compared to their backyard chickens." Family remains the heart of everything. His wife, Krissy, helped run the poultry farm, his kids grew up working there, and now his son manages the poultry side. And at 83, David's dad still contributes where he can.

Despite the size of the operation, David's favorite task remains one of the simplest: walking the chicken houses early in the morning. "Walking the birds is a peaceful time. It's when I gather my thoughts," he says. He doesn't get to do it as often these days, but when he does, he savors the quiet rhythm.

That calm contrasts with how rapidly the industry has shifted in his 25+ years of involvement. "Automation and construction have changed so much," he notes. "The products are more consistent now." Staying current has meant constant upgrades like changing from wooden slats to plastic,



adding more fans, and a long list of improvements both inside and outside the houses.

Challenges, of course, come with the territory. Rising operating costs are among the hardest. "Pay levels have stayed the same, but everything else has gone up," he says. Labor can also be difficult, but David approaches it with compassion. "I've hired guys from recovery (continued on next page)

centers and even jail, trying to give them jobs to get them back on their feet.”

There is pride in the work, especially after producing more than 3 million eggs from his last flock. But for David, the deeper pride comes from what the farm has made possible. “I’m proud of my farm,” he says. “It’s helped put my kids through school. We’ve been blessed.” His message to fellow growers is one of encouragement -- stay involved and take advantage of financial and educational programs. There’s always something that can help.

In addition, he encourages anyone considering getting into poultry with this straightforward advice: “Research what you’re getting into, then go work on an actual farm. Spend time learning hands-on.”

Off the farm, David enjoys simple pleasures like golfing, fishing, and being active in his church. Some of his favorite memories come not just from his farm, but from the people he’s met through TPA events, especially the scholarship fundraisers.

David joined the TPA Board of Directors in 2013, and he considers his time as a board member an honor. He still remembers how excited he was when Hubbard asked him to represent growers. With experience as both a lender and a grower, he works to provide meaningful perspective and often helps mediate between growers and companies during meetings. Looking ahead, he hopes the board continues strengthening its vision by investing in TPA’s new Young Leadership Program, an idea he introduced as a way to raise up young leaders for the future of the industry in TN.

David’s story is one of heritage, steady growth, and resilience, all reminders that a farm becomes a legacy when each generation commits to carrying it forward. 🐔



## USDA INCREASES 2025 BEEF, POULTRY PRODUCTION ESTIMATES, LOWERS PORK

December 9, 2025 at [BrownfieldAgNews.com](https://BrownfieldAgNews.com) by John Perkins

The USDA has raised its 2025 beef and poultry production projections, while lowering their outlook for pork.

Broilers are pegged at 48.086 billion pounds, rising 121 million thanks to pre-shutdown data, with an average price of \$1.247 per pound, steady with a month ago, no changes to trade and slightly larger consumption. [Click here for full article](#)



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Jeri Beth Davis &  
Dr. Craig Darroch

## TPA COLLEGE VISITS

*December 9, 2025 by Tracy Rafferty*

It has been a pleasure to visit with college students across Tennessee this semester to share about the poultry industry in our state. We have had successful visits with classes at TN Tech, UTK, MTSU, and UTM, and the students seem very eager to learn and hear about career opportunities available to them. Pictured are TPA board member Jeri Beth Davis from Tyson Humboldt with Dr. Craig Darroch, Professor of Animal Science at UT Martin.



TN POULTRY ASSOCIATION'S

# 2025 EVENTS



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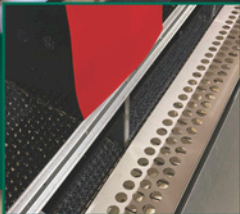
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## WARNING LINKS RAW MILK TO BIRD FLU

September 10, 2025 at [FoodSafetyNews.com](https://www.foodsafetynews.com) by Coral Beach

The CDC is warning that drinking raw milk can lead to human infections from the bird flu virus. In a research report released Sept. 8, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention outlined the risks of H5N1 virus in unpasteurized dairy products. The report said the risk is low, but should be considered, especially for children, older adults and people with immune compromised systems. [Click here for full article](#)

### TECHNOLOGIES CAN HELP PRODUCERS REDUCE RISKS OF DUST-BORNE AVIAN INFLUENZA

September 11, 2025 at [ModernPoultry.Media](https://modernpoultrymedia.com)

Dust particles in poultry houses can exacerbate the spread of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI), but using electrostatic precipitation and UV-C lighting can help producers reduce these risks. [Click here for full article](#)

### SWANS AND POULTRY DISEASE: TRACKING MIGRATION TIMING, HPAI RISK

October 19, 2025 at [ModernPoultry.Media](https://modernpoultrymedia.com) by Matthew Hardy

Powerful yet graceful, swans sweep across North America's skies in timeless journeys, following ancient pathways that span thousands of miles along the continent's great flyways: Pacific, Central, Mississippi and Atlantic. [Click here for full article](#)

## TIME TO REEVALUATE AVIAN INFLUENZA TRADE RESTRICTIONS

November 12, 2025 at [PoultryWorld.net](https://poultryworld.net) by Fabian Brockotter

Highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) can remain viable in raw frozen meat. This fact is at the core of trade restrictions based on the precautionary principle of halting the spread of the virus. Despite its persistence in raw poultry products, recent research from intergovernmental organizations shows that the risk is virtually zero. Revision of trade policies is therefore advocated. [Click here for full article](#)

### WILD BIRDS DRIVE SPREAD OF H5N1 ACROSS NORTH AMERICA

November 24, 2025 at [ThePoultrySite.com](https://thepoultrysite.com)

Since late 2021, a panzootic, or "a pandemic in animals," of highly pathogenic bird flu variant H5N1 has devastated wild birds, agriculture, and mammals. [Click here for full article](#)

# FORMER TYSON CEO: 'PEACH TREE' LEADERSHIP DRIVES PROFITABILITY

*Flipping traditional management styles on its head boosts poultry productivity, said Donnie Smith, former CEO for both Tyson Foods and Foster Farms.*

November 11, 2025 at [WattAgNet.com](https://WattAgNet.com) by Elizabeth Doughman

Former Tyson Foods and Foster Farms CEO Donnie Smith believes the key to exceptional performance in the poultry industry isn't traditional top-down management — it's servant leadership.

Speaking at the Fryar Price Risk Management Center of Excellence Future of Arkansas Agriculture and Beyond speaker series, Smith contrasted two leadership models: the traditional pyramid structure where executives view themselves as superior to frontline workers, and what he calls the "peach tree" model, where leadership exists to support those doing the actual work.

"Far too many leaders inform their leadership style from the organizational structure," Smith explained. "They think because they're paid more and sit higher on the org chart, they're more valuable people."

This self-serving leadership style prevents executives from hiring top talent and ultimately diminishes results, Smith argued. By contrast, servant leaders focus on supporting their teams rather than protecting their positions.

During the talk, he shared how a servant leadership philosophy helped Tyson achieve record profitability. Smith worked at Tyson Foods for 36 years, serving as CEO from 2009 to 2017. After that, he joined Foster Farms as CEO from 2022 to 2024.

## *Six habits of effective leaders*

Smith identified six daily habits of servant leaders, starting with being intentional. Leaders must focus ruthlessly on what matters, even if it offends others.

"If I took time to care about [the things that don't matter], I wouldn't have time to care about the stuff I have to care about for us to accomplish the mission," he explained.

Accountability and responsibility go hand-in-hand. Leaders must hold people accountable, not let poor performance slide, Smith maintained.

"You're not being caring when you avoid accountability — you're being a coward, and you're hurting the team," he said. "It takes courage to hold someone accountable."

Taking responsibility means owning outcomes completely.

"My life is my fault," Smith emphasized. "Whatever I did, I did it on purpose. I ain't blaming nobody but me for me."

Servant leaders lead from the middle, which means never acting superior to frontline workers. Smith spent a week monthly visiting facilities, sitting in cafeterias and talking with employees about their lives.

"Nobody at that table thought I thought I was better than them. Because I don't," he said.

Smith learned from Chick-fil-A CEO Dan Cathy to demonstrate willingness to do any job in the organization. After watching Cathy pick up trash in a parking lot before a store tour, Smith understood the message: "These people will never ask me to do something that they're not willing to do."

Finally, surrounding yourself with thoroughbreds — hiring people smarter than you — accelerates success. Smart people do smart work, so leaders should give them resources and autonomy without micromanaging, he explained. 🐔



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PRODUCTS THAT MAKE A POULTRY FARMER SMILE

## USPOULTRY FOUNDATION COLLEGE STUDENT CAREER PROGRAM NOW ACCEPTING COMPANY INTERVIEW SIGN- UPS FOR 2026

November 11, 2025 at [USPoultry.org](https://USPoultry.org) by  
Hannah Keck

The USPOULTRY Foundation is now accepting company sign-ups for the 2026 College Student Career Program, held in conjunction with the 2026 International Production & Processing Expo (IPPE). For decades, the College Student Career Program has played a vital role in connecting poultry industry employers with talented students, fostering workforce development and strengthening the industry's future. It is one of the largest career events of its kind for students seeking professions in the poultry and egg industry. [Click here for full article](#)



## USPOULTRY FOUNDATION AND POULTRY SCIENCE ASSOCIATION HOST PH.D. AND VET STUDENT CAREER FAIR AT THE 2026 IPPE

November 13, 2025 at [USPoultry.org](https://USPoultry.org) by Hannah Keck

The U.S. Poultry & Egg Harold E. Ford Foundation (USPOULTRY Foundation), in collaboration with the Poultry Science Association (PSA), is pleased to announce the Ph.D. and Vet Student Career Fair, taking place during the 2026 International Production & Processing Expo (IPPE). The Career Fair will be held Tuesday, Jan. 27, from 8 – 11:30 a.m. in Room B-401 at the Georgia World Congress Center, in conjunction with the International Poultry Scientific Forum. [Click here for full article](#)



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## AIRBORNE ANTIMICROBIAL-RESISTANCE THREAT REVEALED THROUGH DNA SEQUENCING FROM LAYER HOUSES

September 3, 2025 at [ModernPoultry.Media](https://modernpoultry.media)

Studying genetic material from the air in layer poultry-production facilities has shed new light on potential opportunistic pathogens with antibiotic-resistance genes. [Click here for full article](#)

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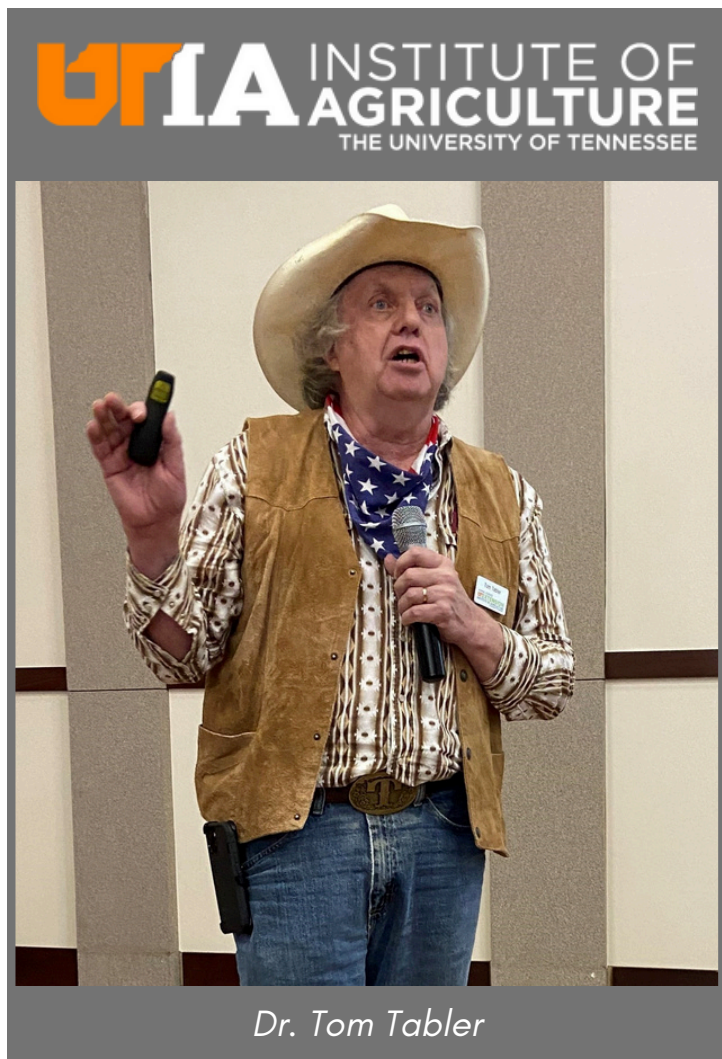
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## USDA ANNOUNCES OPENING OF STERILE FLY DISPERSAL FACILITY IN TAMPICO, MEXICO

November 13, 2025 at [Content.GovDelivery.com](https://content.govdelivery.com)

Today, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced the next milestone in the fight against New World screwworm (NWS) – the opening of a sterile fly dispersal facility in Tampico, Mexico. The Tampico facility will allow USDA to disperse sterile flies aurally across northeastern Mexico, including in Nuevo Leon. [Click here for full article](#)

## MUSINGS FROM TOM - AVIAN INFLUENZA: THE 2025-2026 EDITION



Dr. Tom Tabler

Like many of y'all, I rely heavily on Tracy and Jocelynn for all things TPA. In a recent conversation with Tracy, she suggested that I should consider writing something a little less technical than my normal newsletter offerings so this an attempt at something a little more off the cuff. I won't drift too far off point, however. Avian influenza is just getting started this season but I expect it to cause serious issues again, much as it did last year about this time. Folks in the Dakotas, Minnesota, Michigan, and Indiana are already seeing serious outbreaks. I expect avian influenza to work its way toward us here in Tennessee as colder weather forces migratory waterfowl farther south.

Years ago (mid-1980s, maybe), there was a Peter, Paul and Mary song called Right Field. The song is a humorous, yet quite accurate,

perspective of playing right field. I played left field as a kid but I was well aware that there wasn't a lot of activity over in right field. As the song correctly points out, "Little Leagues never have lefties that pull." However, on those rare occasions when they do, one must be ready in a heartbeat. You can't let your mind wander or you may find that everyone is looking at you and you don't know why. Avian influenza is somewhat like playing right field. One second, it's the farthest thing from your mind, and the next, it has dropped into your glove (or your chicken house). When that happens, the stress can be both heartbreaking and devastating. It will test your resolve so it helps to know where your boundaries are. Without boundaries it's often difficult to find the resolve you need to remain in control when things go south. And should your farm be affected by avian influenza; things will go south in a hurry. The stress associated with an avian influenza break (lost revenue, farm quarantine, euthanizing the flock, disposal of the flock, cleaning, sanitation, testing for remaining avian influenza virus) can easily break the resolve of most producers, no matter how strong that producer may be.

Over the years, I've had a number of what I call "handlers", the folks that tell me what to do... parents, teachers, bosses, my wife, my kids, the list goes on). A couple years ago, I was trained as a subject matter expert (SME) in mass mortality composting to assist USDA with mass mortality composting of avian influenza-affected flocks. In short, I work with the disposal crew that disposes of avian influenza infected flocks. Among my current handlers is a third-party contractor that supplies SMEs to send out when USDA asks for help. Yes, even USDA asks for help sometimes. I was in California in late December last year helping dispose of avian influenza-affected flocks (Figs 1 and 2). My handlers contacted me last week and told me to get a flu shot, get a current respirator fit test, and get a doctor's statement saying I'm in good health. They expect (*continued on next page*)

the avian influenza situation to get worse in the near future.

As a young broiler service tech in southwest Arkansas many years ago, back when safety laws were, how shall I put this, “less stringent” than they are today, my fellow service techs and I crawled around on numerous occasions (usually in the dark and the rain with flashlights) in tornado-damaged, collapsed broiler houses trying to salvage what chickens remained alive. Once daylight came, the look of despair, grief, heartache, and shock on the faces of the growers was always difficult to witness. Everyone handles stress differently but there is nothing cheery about that kind of work. Nor is there anything cheery about mass mortality composting of avian influenza-affected flocks today. Not for the depopulation crews, the disposal crews, service techs, integrators, USDA site managers, workers hauling tons and tons of carbon material for composting, and certainly not for the growers that have lost so much. I saw the same shell-shocked looks on the faces of those farmers in California last December and, to be honest, it’s still difficult to be caught up in that type of situation. It is not for the faint of heart.

However, in situations like this, we all need help at times, and there’s nothing wrong with that. The poultry industry is a very tight-knit family. Please check on your poultry family when things go wrong. Let them know that they are not in this alone. I know farmers are supposed to be tough and not need help, but in the real world, everybody needs help when things go wrong. Farmers are no different than anyone else when bad things happen. Many of them wear their heart on their sleeve, much as I do. The University of Nebraska recommends learning how to recognize the signs of stress and depression:

- Persistent worry and fear
- Apprehension and uneasiness
- Avoiding others
- Feeling sad
- Lack of interest or pleasure in activities
- Significant weight change or changes in appetite

- Problems sleeping
- Slow or fidgety body movements
- Low energy/fatigue
- Difficulty concentrating
- Frequent thoughts of death/suicide
- Substance misuse
- Unexplained changes in physical appearance or behavior
- Headaches
- Feelings of isolation
- Anger
- Feeling numb



*Figure 1. Commercial turkeys depopulated after an avian influenza break.*

It’s OK to ask for help. I do it all the time, and I’m supposed to at least appear as if I know a few things. I’m not near as smart as I may seem. I just know lots of folks that I can ask for help and they are more than happy to give it. They don’t expect anything in return, they give their help freely and are glad to do so because they have been there too....we all have. Again, the poultry industry is a family and family take care of each other. So, check on each other and ask questions when someone is experiencing hard times. It’s pretty amazing what folks will tell you if you ask.

I was asked to teach the Broiler Production class my last semester at Mississippi State University before coming to the University of Tennessee. This was a junior/senior/graduate level class, so for students about to be thrown out into the real world. I asked them on *(continued on next page)*

the last day of class to write out and tell me what they thought of the class. I told them about a week ahead of time that this was coming so that they could think about it. Again, it's amazing what folks will tell you if you ask. Most of the answers I got would have never happened if I had asked the question in class where all their peers could have heard their response but a lot of them were pretty forthcoming when they wrote out their answers. A few responses are below:

"I would like to thank Dr. Tabler for the work he put into this class. At the beginning of the semester, he told us he was an extension guy and teaching classes wasn't his strong suit. I will be honest I was a little nervous about how this class would go but I have no complaints. I never once dreaded going to class. He made sure to teach us about the poultry industry, but he always made a point to teach us life lessons. I will always be grateful for everything that he taught us. Most of these professors don't take the time to learn their students name or anything but he did. He knew most of our majors and our names. He genuinely cared about his students, and we all knew that. Thank you Dr. Tabler for everything you did and do for this class!"

"On a different note, I want to thank you Dr. Tabler for sharing some personal information with the class a couple of weeks ago. When you spoke about being a true introvert and how you have learned to seem like an extrovert to become successful. Even down to the fact that making friends is very difficult for you. This truly resonated with me, I am someone who struggles with interactions like you discussed. I am continually working on this because I know how important it is to my future success. So again I want to thank you. It was an inspiration hearing you share your struggles because sometimes I have my doubts that it is possible. Seeing that someone with your success struggles with the same things meant a lot to me that day."

"This lab was fascinating and has been my favorite class thus far in my college career. My

favorite part of this lab was getting to hatch the chickens and take them into the house. Something about giving life to little chickens without a hen was an exciting process to me. But the most significant factor of this being my favorite class is because of Dr. Tabler. He was always nice and always answered any questions that we had. I know that teaching was not what he thought he would be doing, but he has been my favorite professor and will probably always be."

Based on how everyone behaved in class all semester, I never expected answers like this. It just goes to show that you never know what someone else is thinking or going through if you don't ask. I'm glad I had enough common sense to ask them what they thought. I likely learned a lot more from them than they did from me. The point is, don't pass up the opportunity to help someone else whenever you can. We all have our own problems but we also have the ability to help our friends and neighbors. Practice good biosecurity and do all you can to avoid an avian influenza break, but if things go south for you, remember that you have friends and neighbors, your service tech, the Extension Service, and (if needed), 988 (the suicide prevention hotline). If things go south for someone you know, check on them and make sure that they are OK. We are all part of the poultry family and we want to be around for each other in the future. 🐔



Figure 2. In-house windrow composting of mass-mortality avian influenza-affected turkeys.

## A SILENT TRUTH HIDDEN IN THE FARM ECONOMY: FARMER SUICIDES ARE ON THE RISE

August 5, 2025 at [AgWeb.com](https://www.agweb.com) by Tyne Morgan

Signs of stress in the farm economy are everywhere you turn, and with corn futures hitting fresh lows again this week, crumbling commodity prices are painting a dreary outlook for 2025, and the financial pressures are causing another bleak reality: farmer suicides are also on the rise.

In 2024, used equipment prices were plummeting at auction, with values of larger horsepower tractors dropping more than 20%. As used equipment flooded the auction market, Alex Kerr, owner of Kerr Auction and Kerr Equipment, noticed another troubling trend.

"This is really odd for me," Kerr said in a video he posted to social media last year. "Three tractors up here that I bought on auction, and I'm not going to tell you which ones, but they came off of suicide — the reason is that the farmers are no longer here. It's the reason I've got the tractors."

Kerr noticed the silent truth happening in the midst of the current downturn in the farm economy, which was the fact he was seeing an uptick in the amount of equipment coming to auction as a result of farmer suicide.

"If anybody needs to talk, call your friends, call us. We don't need to sell you anything. I don't want to buy more tractors this way," Kerr went on to say in the video.

Kerr says he typically doesn't know all the stories behind the tractors he sells, especially if it's a consignment auction. As an auction company and used equipment dealer, his focus is on the numbers. But at this particular auction, he was compelled to do something.

"I noticed at one point after I had bought some stuff, and I had it all sitting on my lot together advertised for sale. I'm lining this stuff up, and it just kind of hit me. I'm like, 'What happened to these guys to get them to a point they wanted to do that rather than continue on?' I'm lining up those tractors, and I thought about it for a while and turned around and made the video," Kerr says.

While there aren't any stats on the exact number of farmer suicides happening across the U.S., according to a CDC study published in January 2020, farmers are among the most likely to die by suicide, in comparison to other occupations. And with 259 farm bankruptcies filed between April 2024 and March 2025, it's clear the financial stress on farms is only growing more severe this year.

"In most cases, if it's a financial problem, the stereotypical answer people will tell you is, 'Oh, keep your head up. It'll get better.' Well, if it's a financial thing, the odds are it's not going to get better. If you just keep digging the same hole, it only gets worse. So, you need to stop and make changes in your life or your business," Kerr says.

Kerr's video ultimately (*continued on next page*)

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reached Bridgette Readel, a retired agronomist who is bringing more awareness to mental health among farmers through her social media following on X (formerly Twitter). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BlIfAJjuVRc&t=1s>

"To be honest, I got Alex's video sent to me by a mutual friend — a farmer from Wisconsin. Alex had listened to one of the Twitter chats that I do on Fridays and heard the discussion which had been about farmer suicide, depression and anxiety," Readel says. "Alex never wanted to step in front of the limelight, but he could see a trend, particularly in the geography where he works. And he wanted to do something just to raise a little bit of awareness."

She says Kerr's video struck a chord because not only was it bringing awareness to a topic not often discussed, but other farmers could relate to it.

"So many folks could recognize themselves in it: 'That's my same tractor' or 'I have thought about these very same thoughts or problems. How do I get away from them?'" Readel says. "For those who are closer to my age and remember what the '80s were like, there were a lot of farm 'accidents' that weren't accidents. And now it's a fear of what if myself, my neighbor, my brother, my sister or someone else is that next person?"

Agriculture is full of doers. If farmers see a problem, they immediately want to fix it. But when it comes to mental health, it's not an easy fix — and not one that can be resolved on your own.

That's why Readel says there's one main message farmers need to hear right now: it's okay to not be okay, but you have to ask for help.

"My message to farmers is to remember that you're not alone, and when you see something with one of your friends or neighbors, ask them. Don't be afraid. You don't have to be a professional at it. You can help them find a professional, but sometimes it's as simple as sitting in the buddy seat and asking how they're doing. They might not answer you the first time, so ask it the second time," she says.

As AgWeb reported in 2024, it's important the friends, family, and business professionals close to farmers are prepared and able to effectively communicate in a mental health crisis. You can read more in this story, [Your Mental Health Toolbox: How To Recognize The Warning Signs](#).

***In the U.S., you can call or text the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 988, chat on [988lifeline.org](https://988lifeline.org), or text HOME to 741741 to connect with a crisis counselor.***



## HOW TO ADDRESS MENTAL STRESS IN POULTRY WORKERS AFTER HPAI

November 18, 2025 at [WattAgNet.com](https://WattAgNet.com) by Elizabeth Doughman

More than half of all workers involved in avian influenza depopulation events experience behavioral health issues during and up to six months after the crisis, making mental health support as critical as biosecurity protocols. [Click here for full article](#)

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## POULTRY PROCESSING GAME CHANGERS: ROBOTICS, VIRTUAL REALITY AND AI

September 24, 2025 at [FeedStuff.com](https://FeedStuff.com) by John Lovett

Robotics, virtual reality and artificial intelligence could be game changers for poultry processors following promising results in research to integrate those technologies, according to Jeyam Subbiah, a professor of food science specializing in food safety engineering with the Arkansas Agricultural Experiment Station. [Click here for full article](#)

## ELECTROSTATIC DISINFECTION COULD TRANSFORM POULTRY PROCESSING

September 30, 2025 at [WattAgNet.com](https://WattAgNet.com) by Elizabeth Doughman

Electrostatic spraying technology could help make the disinfection of poultry processing plants more efficient. [Click here for full article](#)

## Christmas Cards



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## WHY STRATEGIC COCCIDIOSIS CONTROL STILL MATTERS: MERCK'S EMILY KIMMINAU SHARES HER INSIGHTS FOR SMARTER COCCI CONTROL PROGRAMS

August 5, 2025 at [ModernPoultry.Media](https://modernpoultry.media)

She might not have a background in poultry farming, but Emily Kimminau, PhD, has firmly become one of the industry's go-to specialists in coccidiosis — a disease that remains one of the most prevalent and costly challenges in global poultry production. [Click here for full article](#)

## USDA RESEARCHER: HPAI THREAT IS CLEAR DESPITE AIRBORNE TRANSMISSION UNCERTAINTIES

August 21, 2025 at [ModernPoultry.Media](https://modernpoultry.media)

Questions remain around the transmission of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) into and within poultry houses, but the infectious nature of the virus is its biggest weapon, according to a USDA expert. [Click here for full article](#)



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## USING TECHNOLOGY TO ADDRESS THE TRIPLE THREAT OF DUST IN POULTRY HOUSES

August 26, 2025 at [ModernPoultry.Media](https://ModernPoultry.Media)

Air pollutants in poultry houses significantly impact poultry health and production. Not only is dust a problem, but the airborne bacteria and viruses that cling to the dust pose substantial health risks. [Click here for full article](#)

## ENGINEERED BACTERIA COULD STOP POULTRY NECROTIC ENTERITIS

September 12, 2025 at [FeedStrategy.com](https://FeedStrategy.com) by Elizabeth Doughman

An engineered probiotic could replace antibiotics to prevent mortality associated with necrotic enteritis in broilers. [Click here for full article](#)

## NO EASY ANSWERS FOR PREVENTING GANGRENOUS DERMATITIS OUTBREAKS

October 7, 2025 at [ModernPoultry.Media](https://ModernPoultry.Media)

Known for high mortality and low morbidity, gangrenous dermatitis (GD) continues to evade answers as researchers investigate potential stressors that trigger an outbreak. [Click here for full article](#)

## AVIAN METAPNEUMOVIRUS IS BACK AND IT'S IMPACTING MORE THAN JUST TURKEYS

October 23, 2025 at [RalcoAgriculture.com](https://RalcoAgriculture.com)

Avian metapneumovirus, also called turkey rhinotracheitis or, in chickens, a cause of "swollen head syndrome", has re-emerged in the United States with virus subtypes A and B. This resurgence is changing day-to-day decisions for broiler, layer and turkey operations, especially around day-28 broiler breaks, turkey vaccination logistics and management of secondary bacterial challenges. [Click here for full article](#)



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## OVARIAN TRANSCRIPTOME LINKS INFLAMMATION TO POULTRY MEAT SPOTS

November 11, 2025 at [Bioengineer.org](https://www.bioengineer.org).

In an intriguing development for avian health, researchers have unveiled a significant association between inflammatory responses and the incidence of high blood and meat spots in chickens. This breakthrough study, conducted by Wu et al., presents a comprehensive exploration into the transcriptomic landscape of chicken ovaries and oviducts, showcasing how these biological structures respond to inflammatory stimuli. With the poultry industry's reliance on wholesome meat production, these findings are poised to influence both veterinary practices and poultry management strategies. [Click here for full article](#)

## ENTEROCOCCUS CECORUM FOUND 'EVERYWHERE' IN POULTRY HOUSES — WITH BIOSECURITY IMPLICATIONS

November 12, 2025 at [ModernPoultry.Media](https://www.modernpoultrymedia.com)

Pathogenic *Enterococcus cecorum* is proving to be a growing problem on broiler farms, and infection extends beyond bird-to-bird contact to the farm environment, according to a study led by Martine Boulianne, DMV, PhD, DACPV, at the University of Montreal. [Click here for full article](#)

## PRECISION FEEDING SIMULTANEOUSLY CUTS FEED COSTS, ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

May 28, 2025 at [FeedStrategy.com](https://FeedStrategy.com) by Raven Brackx

In the evolving landscape of agricultural innovation, precision nutrition has emerged as a promising paradigm of modern livestock management. As a critical component of precision livestock farming (PLF) — defined as the management of livestock using process engineering principles and technologies — precision nutrition represents a significant shift in how we approach animal feeding systems. [Click here for full article](#)



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## HOW'S OUR BROILER BREEDER HATCHABILITY?

August 21, 2025 at [CanadianPoultryMag.com](https://CanadianPoultryMag.com) by Jane Robinson

A recent study at Texas A&M University predicts a rather dire downward trend for broiler breeder hatchability rates in the United States over the next few decades, and raises the call for greater collaboration to change the trajectory. [Click here for full article](#)

## WATER CONSUMPTION INCREASES WITH AGE IN HEAVY BROILERS RAISED TO 9 WEEKS

September 9, 2025 at [ModernPoultry.Media](#)

Regular monitoring of broiler drinking-water consumption helps track flock health and performance. A sudden dip or downward trend can alert the producer to potentially serious health or production problems. [Click here for full article](#)

## NEW VENTILATION SYSTEM DESIGN HOLDS PROMISE FOR HEAT AND AIR QUALITY CONCERNS IN MANURE-BELT LAYER HOUSES

September 18, 2025 at [ModernPoultry.Media](#)

Bird health and production are significantly impacted by air quality, humidity and temperature. Mechanical ventilation systems play a crucial role in maintaining indoor air quality and disease control, but the current systems have limitations, particularly in caged-layer facilities. [Click here for full article](#)

## BETTER BROILER OR BETTER BREEDER: DO WE HAVE TO CHOOSE?

September 29, 2025 at [WattAgNet.com](#) by Frank Siewerdt

Successful broiler genetics companies must improve their products, the day-old breeder chick, taking into account multiple factors that increase the economic return of their customers. At least since the late 1960s, broilers have seen continued genetic annual improvements for growth rate, feed conversion ratio (FCR), carcass and breast meat yield, leg health, and field mortality. [Click here for full article](#)

## TABLER: PRECISION LIVESTOCK FARMING CAN IMPROVE POULTRY PRODUCTION, ADDRESS WELFARE CONCERNS

September 16, 2025 at [ModernPoultry.Media](#)

Can technology address animal welfare and economic gain? This was the central question Tom Tabler, PhD, University of Tennessee poultry Extension specialist, addressed during a May 2025 Poultry Extension Collaborative webinar. [Click here for full article](#)

## ELECTROLYZED WATER AND OTHER OPTIONS TO MITIGATE DUST, BACTERIA IN CAGE-FREE LAYER HOUSES

September 24, 2025 at [ModernPoultry.Media](#)

Layer hens in cage-free housing systems have freedom of movement, but they also encounter high levels of dust and airborne bacteria. Feed, litter, manure and bodily shedding all contribute to dust within the rooms. The mixture of dust and bacteria challenges the hens' health and well-being, underscoring the need for a solution. [Click here for full article](#)

## HOW POULTRY ENRICHMENT CAN BENEFIT GROWERS TOO

September 29, 2025 at [WattAgNet.com](#) by Emma Cottrell

Installing enrichment devices in the poultry house is an opportunity to improve animal welfare, and it can bring economic benefits for producers. [Click here for full article](#)

## WATKINS: SIX TIPS TO CONDUCT WATER ASSESSMENTS FOR POULTRY

October 1, 2025 at [ModernPoultry.Media](#)

First in a two-part series. When it comes to drinking water for poultry, Susan Watkins, PhD, has a lot to say. Most important: Don't neglect it. "Water is the No. 1 nutrient input in poultry, and we give it second billing," she lamented. "Keep water systems clean." [Click here for full article](#)

## UNLOCKING THE TRUE VALUE OF POULTRY LITTER THROUGH SMART MANAGEMENT

October 2, 2025 at [PoultryTimes.com](#) by Paul Bredwell

Although poultry litter management has its challenges, its value is real. The nitrogen, phosphorus and carbon contained in poultry litter are highly valuable organic fertilizers that can support other agricultural operations that often occur on poultry and egg farms, which can lessen or entirely remove the necessity of purchasing energy-intensive synthetic fertilizers. [Click here for full article](#)

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## BROILER GENDER SORTING AS THE NEXT STEP IN IMPROVING EFFICIENCY

November 17, 2025 at [PoultryWorld.net](https://poultryworld.net) by Fabian Brockotter

In the coming decade, global demand for animal protein is expected to grow by 14%. Poultry meat demand will increase even more, by 22%. This so-called magic protein is efficient to produce, but given the demand challenges ahead, every gain in efficiency the industry can achieve is essential. [Click here for full article](#)



Shirley Jackson and Greyson Elmore at the TPA silent auction in July. Shirley noticed Greyson eyeing this auction item and couldn't resist purchasing it for him. What a kind gesture!



Emily Haskew, Director of Marketing & Communications at Tennessee Beef Industry Council, joined TPA board members to share about the beef industry's new young leadership program. Pictured with Emily is TPA Executive Director Tracy Rafferty.

Merry  
Christmas  
and Happy New Year

## NCC COMMENTS ON DEFINITION OF "ULTRA-PROCESSED FOODS"

October 27, 2025 at [NationalChickenCouncil.org](https://NationalChickenCouncil.org) by Tom Super

In response to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) request for information to assist in developing a uniform definition of "ultra-processed foods," NCC recently submitted detailed comments expressing recommendations and concerns.

NCC expressed general concerns about a classification system and contends that FDA and USDA should bolster existing frameworks and consumer education as science evolves instead of pursuing a classification system at all. However, should the Agencies choose to move forward with a classification system, NCC urges the use of a uniform, science-based approach to characterizing foods – one that prioritizes nutritional composition and ingredient function over the number of processing steps or ingredients.

Further, should the Agencies decide the science merits the development of a classification system for broader regulatory and policy use, they should do so in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act, to ensure that all interested parties are provided a meaningful opportunity to understand the Agencies' thinking and to formally comment on this important topic.

"We urge FDA and USDA to adopt a nutrition-led framework that promotes consumption of safe, affordable, and culturally important proteins like chicken, which millions of families, schools, and food assistance programs rely on for essential nutrition," said NCC Senior Vice President of Scientific Affairs Ashley Peterson, Ph.D. in the comments. "Should the Agencies choose to pursue a classification system, NCC is committed to working with FDA, USDA, and other stakeholders on a clear, science-driven system that protects public health without unintendedly discouraging consumption of nutrient-dense foods. As discussed further below, the so-called term "ultra-processed foods" is overly broad and can mislead consumers by implying a food is harmful based solely on how it is made rather than its nutrient content."

In summary, NCC's comments:

1. Use evidence from peer-reviewed research and government data, including comparisons of nutrient profiles (protein, vitamins, minerals) for chicken products versus other commonly consumed "UPFs" to emphasize the vital nutritional role that processed chicken products (e.g., frozen chicken patties or nuggets) play in the diets of all Americans by providing high-quality protein and micronutrients in an affordable, accessible form.
2. Highlight concerns with "ultra-processed-focused" classification systems (specifically the NOVA system), including a failure to consider nutrient density, protein quality, and the purpose of processing – and the inconsistent, often misleading categorization that results.
3. Caution against an overbroad use of the term commonly referred to as "ultra-processed" in policy, given that it groups together nutritionally distinct foods (for example, breaded chicken nuggets and candy are both labeled "ultra-processed" despite vastly different nutritional profiles).
4. Propose considerations that emphasize what is in the food – to include nutrient density, protein quality, and ingredients – rather than how it was manufactured.

"We stand ready to provide further data, expertise, and collaboration as FDA and USDA navigate this definitional challenge, and we share the goal of improving Americans' diet quality and health outcomes, especially for children," said Peterson. "Importantly, a definition that incorporates nutrient considerations can better guide consumers and policymakers in recognizing the differences between foods that may undergo processing but still deliver meaningful nutrition and those that offer little benefit to health." 🐔



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## CLEARING THE AIR ON MANURE: WHAT THE NEW RULING MEANS FOR AGRICULTURE

September 5, 2025 at [SouthernAgToday.org](https://SouthernAgToday.org) by Paul Goeringer and Tiffany Dowell Lashmet

A recent federal district court decision constituted a big win for livestock and poultry operations around the country. For years, there has been uncertainty related to livestock and poultry operations' obligation to report air emissions under two federal laws, the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) and the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA). Congress amended CERCLA in 2018 to exempt livestock operations from air emissions reporting; however, it did not include a similar exemption in EPCRA. Shortly after the change, the EPA exempted livestock operations from EPCRA's reporting requirements. Environmental groups sued over this exemption arguing that the exemption violated EPCRA. [Click here for full article](#)



## ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS FILE LAWSUIT AGAINST RECENT EPA WASTEWATER DECISION

September 18, 2025 at [MeatPoultry.com](https://meatpoultry.com) by Ryan McCarthy

A group of 10 organizations filed a federal lawsuit that could challenge the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) recent revisions to the Meat and Poultry Products Effluent Limitations Guidelines (ELG) for wastewater discharged by meat and poultry processing and rendering facilities. [Click here for full article](#)

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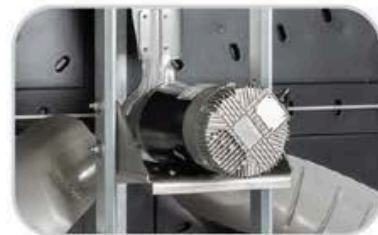
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## EPA'S ABORTED WATER QUALITY STANDARDS FOR MEAT, POULTRY NOW IN APPELLATE COURT

October 21, 2025 at [FoodSafetyNews.com](https://foodsafetynews.com) by Dan Flynn

Meat and poultry processing facilities received a reprieve when EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin signed a final action on Aug. 28 to withdraw a 2024 proposed rule that would have revised effluent limitations guidelines and established new pretreatment standards for the industry. [Click here for full article](#)

## USDA FINALIZES UPDATES TO NATIONAL POULTRY IMPROVEMENT PLAN REGULATIONS

September 29, 2025 at [MorningAgClips.com](https://www.morningagclips.com)

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has finalized amendments to the regulations governing the National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP). These changes were voted on and approved by industry delegates during the NPIP's 2022 National Plan Conference and are designed to strengthen biosecurity, clarify requirements, and align the Plan with current industry practices.

Key updates include:

- Conditioning indemnity for low pathogenicity avian influenza on adherence to approved biosecurity plans.
- Clarifying and updating provisions related to NPIP participation, testing procedures, and voting requirements.
- Aligning regulatory language with modern poultry production and disease-control practices.
- Correcting editorial errors to improve regulatory clarity.

The NPIP is a cooperative Federal-State-industry program that helps prevent and control poultry diseases, ensuring flocks, hatcheries, dealers, and slaughter plants meet rigorous health and disease-prevention standards. Participation is voluntary; however, all flocks must first qualify as "U.S. Pullorum-Typhoid Clean" to access additional program benefits.

The amendments follow a public comment period on APHIS' June 2024 proposed rule. These updates ensure that NPIP continues to serve as a trusted, science-based program that protects U.S. poultry health, strengthens disease prevention, and supports the long-term stability of the poultry sector.

This final rule may be viewed in today's Federal Register and is effective on October 30, 2025.



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### Challenge to Effluent Limitations Guidelines

On September 15, a coalition of environmental groups filed a [petition](#) for review in the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. The petition requests review of the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) [final agency action](#) that declined to finalize revisions to the pending CWA effluent limitation proposal affecting the meat and poultry products industrial point source category. These regulations would have imposed additional effluent limitations standards, impacting the rates of waste discharged from more than 5,000 meat processing, slaughtering, and rendering facilities across the country. By filing the petition for review, the plaintiffs are asking the court to determine whether EPA violated the law in declining to finalize the proposed revisions. To learn more about EPA's initial proposal, click [here](#) to view NALC article "EPA Proposes Updates to Effluent Limitations for Meat and Poultry Processors."

November 19, 2025

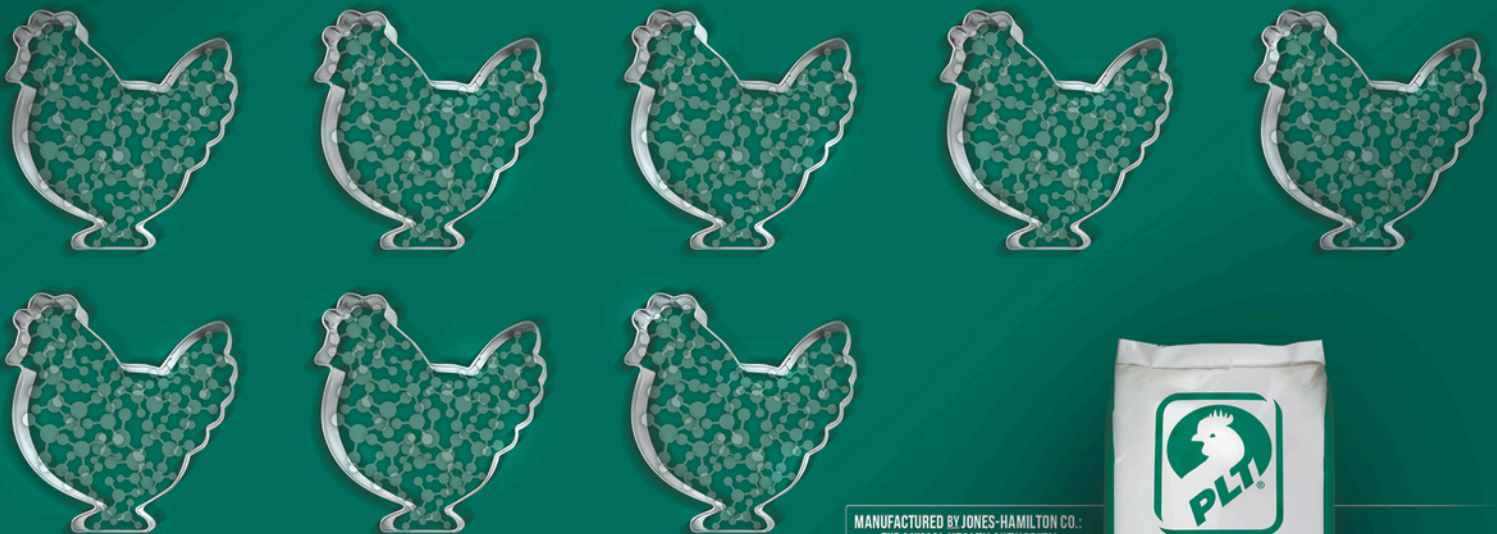
### Potential GRAS Changes

On November 6, U.S. Senator Roger Marshall (R-KS) [introduced](#) the "Better Food Disclosure Act of 2025" to amend oversight of federal "Generally Recognized As Safe (GRAS)" ingredients. GRAS is a federal regulatory process that allows certain ingredients that meet specific standards to be included in foods without first being approved for safety by the FDA or going through a traditional notice and comment period. [S. 3122](#) would amend the (*continued on next page*)

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Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to require that food manufacturers file a notice with the FDA proposing the inclusion of certain food substances on the GRAS list. The bill requires the agency to add the food substance to the list or make a preliminary determination to exclude the food substance, no later than 180 days after receiving notice. Additionally, the Act requires the FDA to promulgate regulations establishing procedures to create a publicly accessible list of GRAS food substances. To learn more about GRAS, click [here](#) to read Congressional Research Service Report, "Federal Regulation of Substances Generally Recognized As Safe (GRAS) and the Use of Carbon Monoxide in Packaging for Meat and Fish."

## SALMONELLA

### SCIENTISTS REPORT PROGRESS ON LIMITING SALMONELLA IN CHICKENS

November 5, 2025 at [MeatingPlace.com](#)

by Chris Scott

Ohio State University researchers found that a new use of antimicrobial peptides could limit the growth of Salmonella, the most prevalent

bacterial cause of foodborne illness from eating tainted chicken products. [Click here for full article](#)

### AAAP: SALMONELLA CONTROL STRATEGIES

November 24, 2025 at [ThePoultrySite.com](#) by Chris Wright

Ken Macklin, Mississippi State University, USA, said that Salmonella continues to pose a major challenge to the poultry industry, with official reports of some 1.35 million illnesses, 26,500 hospitalizations, and 420 deaths in the US each year. In response, USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) released a proposed framework that places greater emphasis on reducing Salmonella at the preharvest stage. While this regulatory spotlight is relatively new, the poultry industry and research community have long been exploring ways to minimize Salmonella on the farm. [Click here for full article](#)



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## SALMONELLA

### USDA INDEFINITELY DELAYS ENFORCEMENT OF SALMONELLA AS ADULTERANT IN RAW BREADED, STUFFED CHICKEN

December 1, 2025 at [Food-Safety.com](https://www.food-safety.com) by Bailee Henderson

After withdrawing its previously proposed regulatory framework for Salmonella in raw poultry in April, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service is continuing to delay sampling and verification activities for Salmonella in not-ready-to-eat, breaded and stuffed chicken products, and is beginning to explore alternative strategies for reducing salmonellosis cases attributable to poultry. [Click here for full article](#)

### USDA LAUNCHES NEXT PHASE OF SALMONELLA EFFORT

December 3, 2025 at [Feedstuffs.com](https://www.feedstuffs.com)

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety & Inspection Service announced in its latest constituent update it will host a hybrid public meeting to gather input on practical strategies for reducing salmonella illnesses attributed to poultry products. The meeting will take place on Jan. 14, 2026, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. ET at USDA's South Building in Washington, D.C., and will also have a virtual option. [Click here for full article](#)



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### THE CHICKEN OR THE EGG... PRODUCTIVITY IN 2026

September 30, 2025 at [SouthernAgToday.org](https://www.southernagtoday.org) by Dennis Brothers

This is not a question of which came first, we all know the answer to that. But, as was discussed in an earlier SAT for cattle, hogs and lambs, this is a question of productivity for the chicken and egg segments of the U.S. poultry market this coming year. [Click here for full article](#)

### LOCAL FEED FOR LOCAL BIRDS: HOW EXTRUDED-EXPELLED SOYBEAN MEAL COULD RESHAPE POULTRY SUPPLY CHAINS

September 18, 2025 at [ModernPoultry.Media](https://www.modernpoultry.media) by Tanner Thornton

I grew up in Tennessee, though my early experience was with cow-calf operations rather than poultry. That background taught me the importance of maximizing local resources, a lesson that still resonates as I study poultry systems today. [Click here for full article](#)



Tanner Thornton



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## NCC TO NEW YORK CITY OFFICIALS: DON'T TOUCH KIDS' NUGGETS

October 10, 2025 at [NCCWashingtonReport.com](http://NCCWashingtonReport.com)

NCC, in a letter this week sent to New York City Mayor Eric Adams, Acting Health Commissioner Dr. Michelle Morse, and Office of Food Policy Executive Director Kate MacKenzie, expressed serious concern about the recently announced New York City food standards that will prohibit “processed meats” in meals served by city agencies, including public schools. [Click here for full article](#)



**Congratulations to the Williamson County 4-H poultry judging team who competed at the State 4-H contest and won FIRST place. This team advanced to compete at Nationals in Louisville KY. Team members pictured left to right are Asa Israel, McKenzy Page, Laura Kennedy and Mary Elizabeth King. All four members placed individually in the top ten with Mary Elizabeth placing 1st overall and Laura placing third overall.**

# KIDS KORNOR



## PROPANE UPDATE

December 9, 2025 by Tracy Rafferty

The Mont Belvieu Propane Spot Price on December 1, 2025, was at \$0.68/gal., not including tariffs, handling, and delivery to most areas. Larger accounts can often negotiate a lower price agreement by as much as \$0.05/gal., or more. To follow Mont Belvieu spot pricing, go to [https://www.eia.gov/dnav/pet/hist/eer\\_epllpa\\_pf4\\_y44mb\\_dpgD.htm](https://www.eia.gov/dnav/pet/hist/eer_epllpa_pf4_y44mb_dpgD.htm) and scroll to the very bottom of the page. TPA's allied member propane companies welcome discussing this with you to provide best pricing and services. Their contact information is at the back of this newsletter within the allied member listings.

Propane futures can be followed at

<https://www.cmegroup.com/trading/energy/petrochemicals/mont-belvieu-propane-5-decimals-swap.html#>.

Current updates for FMCSA emergency declarations, HOS waivers, and exemptions can be found at <https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/emergency-declarations>.

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# Helping Producers Prevent Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza in Commercial Poultry Flocks



When highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) strikes a farm, the result is devastating. Biosecurity is the key to protecting your flock—and your investment—against this disease.

To help you bolster biosecurity, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is offering two free, voluntary biosecurity assessments for operations not affected by HPAI. The first is a wildlife biosecurity assessment; the second is a general biosecurity review. Producers can request one or both. USDA-trained staff will visit your facility and identify actionable strategies that you can immediately implement to strengthen your operation's defenses against HPAI. Additionally, USDA will share up to 75 percent of the costs to fix the highest-risk biosecurity concerns identified by the assessments.

If your operation is hit by HPAI or you're operating in an area impacted by the virus, we will conduct a mandatory biosecurity audit before you restock to help protect your flocks and ensure you are eligible for indemnity for your restocked poultry.

## Available to All Commercial Poultry Producers Not Affected by HPAI

While the biosecurity assessments are available to all commercial poultry producers not impacted by HPAI, USDA will prioritize assessments at commercial egg-laying facilities in the highest egg-producing States as part of our commitment to help lower egg prices for the American consumer.

### Wildlife Biosecurity Assessment

USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Wildlife Services will conduct on-farm assessments to identify how wildlife could spread HPAI to your flocks. We will recommend facility repairs and options for managing wildlife to shield your poultry from HPAI.

A wildlife biosecurity assessment is not a one-time service but a series of regular engagements between Wildlife Services staff and facility owners or managers. During these engagements, we will help you build upon and follow-up on risk mitigation recommendations.

Email [poultry.biosecurity@usda.gov](mailto:poultry.biosecurity@usda.gov) or call 844-820-2234 to request a wildlife biosecurity assessment.



## General Biosecurity Assessment

APHIS Veterinary Services will work with producers to review structural and operational biosecurity plans and practices. Structural biosecurity includes measures used to construct and maintain coops, pens, poultry houses, and other facilities. Operational biosecurity includes practices, procedures, and policies that farm owners and workers follow consistently. We will recommend strategies to strengthen your biosecurity plan and practices to prevent the introduction of HPAI.

Email [poultry.biosecurity@usda.gov](mailto:poultry.biosecurity@usda.gov) or call **844-820-2234** to request a general biosecurity assessment.

To help expedite the intake of your wildlife or general biosecurity assessment request, please provide the following information when you email or call us:

- Premises name
- Premises ID (if known)
- Premises 911 street address (the actual location of your flock)
- Premises city, State, and zip code
- Premises coordinates (decimal degree format, if known)
- Production type
- Requestor's name, phone number, and email address



## Required for Commercial Operations Affected by HPAI or Operating in a Control Area

### Biosecurity Compliance Audit

If your commercial poultry operation has been confirmed positive for HPAI, you must pass an Infected Premises Restock Biosecurity Audit before restocking if you wish to be eligible for indemnity for the restocked poultry.

If you are moving poultry into a designated buffer zone, you must pass a USDA Buffer Zone Placement Biosecurity Audit to be eligible for federal indemnity for any birds that moved onto the premises.

Contact the APHIS Area Veterinarian in Charge ([www.aphis.usda.gov/contact/animal-health](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/contact/animal-health)) or your case manager to request this audit.

### Cost Share Support

USDA will share up to 75 percent of the costs to fix the highest-risk biosecurity concerns identified by the assessments.

### For More Information

To learn more about the voluntary biosecurity assessments for operations not affected by HPAI or the required audits for operations confirmed positive for HPAI, visit [www.aphis.usda.gov/livestock-poultry-disease/hpai-poultry](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/livestock-poultry-disease/hpai-poultry).



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