

TN POULTRY ASSOCIATION

news letter.

Annual Meeting Awards

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A TIME TO CELEBRATE!!!

I can't remember a summer with so many reasons to celebrate. My son, Zeke, is at the age where many of his friends and cousins are getting married or welcoming babies, so nearly every weekend brought a chance to shower a lovely young couple with gifts for a new baby or a new home. The open Saturdays were filled with weddings, and in July, I gained the sweetest daughter-in-law.

Family Celebrations

To close out the 2026 wedding season, Jocelynn and Nate were married last weekend. She is now Jocelynn Bruner, and you can see a beautiful photo of the happy couple on Page 14. Congratulations, Jocelynn! Your entire TPA family is so happy for you.

Remembering Marcy

Speaking of celebrations, my sister left strict instructions that she did not want a traditional funeral with visitation when she passed. Instead, we held a Celebration of Life that was originally intended for family and a few very close friends. By the end of the day, around 150 people who considered themselves close friends had gathered at my mom's house to share a meal with us and celebrate Marcy.

Thank you for every kind word and gesture from the poultry community. Y'all are an amazing group of people.

Celebrating TPA

There is also plenty to celebrate on the TPA front. We welcomed our largest crowd ever at this year's Annual Meeting & Summer Getaway. Apart from some sound issues during the awards banquet, which came with the growing pains of hosting such a large crowd, everything seemed to go exceptionally well.

Beginning on Page 6 of this newsletter, you can see all the deserving people we celebrated while we were in Nashville. The list of award recipients grows longer each year, which makes the Fall newsletter my favorite issue. We are so proud to honor everyone who represents our industry so well.

TAEP Updates for Growers

TPA grower members will have more to celebrate when they see this year's list of approved items through the Tennessee Ag Enhancement Program (TAEP). Additional approved items this year include incinerators, composters, and commercial whole-farm water filtration systems. The maximum cost-share amount is \$6,000, and the online application period runs October 1-7. More information will be shared at the grower meetings on September 22 and 24, so please plan to join us. You can also find more details on Page 26 of this newsletter or at the [TAEP website](#).

As we move from summer to fall, I hope this issue reminds you just how much there is to celebrate, not only in our families and personal lives, but also across this industry we are blessed to be part of. Thank you for showing up for one another, for supporting TPA, and for continuing to represent the poultry community with such heart. After a summer like this one, I'm reminded again how blessed I am to be surrounded by family, friends, and a poultry community that feels a lot like both.

Tracy

WELCOME NEW ALLIED MEMBERS

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WANT TO ADVERTISE WITH TPA? REACH OUT TO JOCELYNN@TNPoultry.ORG FOR MORE INFORMATION!

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931-225-1123 ☎

270-290-0193 ☎

jocelynn@tnpoultry.org ✉



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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ANDREW TODD HONORED AS 2026 TPA WORKHORSE OF THE YEAR

Nashville, TN — Some people set out to build a career in the poultry industry. Others discover it - and once they do, they dedicate themselves to making it better every single day. That perfectly describes Andy Todd.

Raised in Albertville, Alabama, Andy often joked that, despite growing up in one of the nation's largest poultry-producing regions, he wanted nothing to do with the chicken business. But after college, he recognized the opportunities the industry offered, and that decision began a career spanning more than two decades.

Andy started with Gold Kist in 2004 in the Shipping Department before advancing into Quality Assurance, where he developed a strong reputation for excellence in food safety, quality systems, and processing operations. He later joined Keystone Foods, partnering with poultry processors to improve efficiency, optimize production systems, and implement innovative solutions that enhance plant performance.

Today, as Southeastern Sales Manager for MP Equipment, Andy continues to put his technical expertise and problem-solving skills to work, helping customers succeed while building trusted relationships across the industry. His commitment extends beyond his job, serving on the Tennessee Poultry Association Board of Directors since 2021, where he helps strengthen and advance our industry.

Those who know Andy know he is dependable, humble, and always willing to roll up his sleeves to help others succeed. It is that unwavering dedication, servant leadership, and commitment to excellence that make him truly deserving of this honor.

Please join us in congratulating Andy Todd, the Tennessee Poultry Association's Workhorse of the Year. 🐔

2026 ANNUAL MEETING YOUTH ART CONTEST WINNERS!

Best In Show: Bella Russell Ages 9 & Under Division: Haidyn Russell 'Egg'ceptional Friends Division: Carson Crider



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BANTHER POULTRY FARMS NAMED 2026 TENNESSEE POULTRY ASSOCIATION FARM FAMILY OF THE YEAR

Nashville, TN – Behind every successful family farm is a story of hard work, resilience and a commitment to carrying the legacy forward. For the Banther family of Marion County, Tennessee, farming is more than a livelihood—it is a way of life. The Tennessee Poultry Association is proud to name JR and Lisa Banther of Dream Valley Farms as the 2026 TPA Farm Family of the Year.

The Banthers have been married for 19 years and are the parents of 15-year-old Ella. Their family farm celebrated a remarkable milestone in July 2026 celebrating 50 years of continuous operation. Today, Ella is actively involved in the farm and is already making plans to become the third generation of the family to carry the farming tradition forward.

Located in a remote area of Marion County, Dream Valley Farms is the only poultry operation within a 20-minute drive of the farm. JR and Lisa both spent more than 20 years working in the transportation industry in various regions of the country, gaining experience in operations, sales, safety and payroll. Although they built successful careers in transportation, their longtime goal was to farm full-time. The poultry industry ultimately helped make that dream a reality.

The Banthers began their poultry journey in 2012 when they decided to expand their agricultural operation by adding poultry to their existing Black Angus cattle farm. After several years of discussions with poultry companies, they were offered a contract with Tyson Foods' Shelbyville Complex.

Construction on four Tyson pullet houses began in the fall of 2018, and Dream Valley Farms received its first flock in the fall of 2019.

Since then, the Banthers have built a reputation for exceptional farm management, attention to detail, and a strong commitment to their birds. The farm is operated entirely by immediate family members, a practice the Banthers believe is an important part of maintaining strong biosecurity.

Biosecurity and farm cleanliness are priorities throughout the operation. Rodent stations are maintained around each poultry house, and the houses are sprayed for beetle control after every flock. Control rooms are kept clean and organized, while designated footwear and bleach footbaths are provided at entry and exit points.

The Banthers also maintain the farm's grounds year-round. Traveling surfaces are carefully maintained to meet erosion-control standards, while the areas surrounding the poultry houses are routinely mowed and kept clean to support both biosecurity and rodent control.

Water quality is another important part of their management program. The farm uses well water supported by a 2,500-gallon on-site holding tank to provide a consistent water supply, with city water available as a backup. A filtration system in the well house, along with additional filters in the control rooms, helps ensure clean, quality water for every flock.

Dream Valley Farms also incorporates technology and energy-efficient practices throughout its operation. Fiber optic internet provides reliable communication with monitoring systems in the poultry houses. LED lighting, energy-efficient fans and tunnel doors help improve efficiency and maintain appropriate environmental conditions throughout the year.



During the winter months, energy-efficient propane brooders provide radiant heat and help maintain consistent temperatures. Spray foam insulation in the walls further improves the energy efficiency of the houses.

Environmental stewardship is also a priority for the Banther family. Gravel has been placed around the poultry houses to help prevent soil erosion, while seasonal grasses provide year-round ground cover. Spillways are carefully maintained to control water flow and protect the farm's soil resources.

Mortality is managed through a fuel-efficient incinerator, helping keep the farm clean and minimizing potential of varments.

Biosecurity signs are posted at the entrance to the farm, cameras provide additional security, and an entry-and-exit log is maintained in a mailbox at the end of the driveway to document traffic entering the farm.

The Banthers' dedication to excellence has been recognized within the Tyson Foods Shelbyville Pullet Complex. They were named Grower of the Year in both 2023 and 2025, an achievement that reflects their consistent commitment to quality and flock care.

They are also active members of the Tennessee Poultry Association and have completed certification in overall farm management through the Tennessee Agricultural Enhancement Program.

For the Banther family, being a good neighbor is just as important as being a good farmer. They have made giving back to their community a family tradition by hosting a free fireworks show every July 4th. The 2026 celebration marked the third year of the event, providing an opportunity for friends and neighbors to gather and celebrate together.

From a family farm that has been in continuous operation for 50 years to a growing poultry operation preparing for its third generation, Dream Valley Farms represents the values that make Tennessee agriculture strong—hard work, stewardship, innovation, family and a commitment to the future.

"The Tennessee Poultry Association is honored to recognize JR and Lisa Banther and the entire Banther family as the 2026 TPA Farm Family of the Year," said Tracy Rafferty, Executive Director of the Tennessee Poultry Association. "Their commitment to their birds, their farm, their community and, most importantly, to building a future for the next generation is an outstanding example of what family farming is all about."

Congratulations to JR and Lisa Banther and Dream Valley Farms, the 2026 Tennessee Poultry Association Farm Family of the Year. 🐔



Scan here to see the full video honoring the Banthers on Youtube!



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JOHN HAWK INDUCTED INTO THE TN POULTRY ASSOCIATION HALL OF FAME

Nashville, TN — The Tennessee Poultry Association (TPA) has inducted John Hawk into its Hall of Fame, recognizing a career defined by entrepreneurship, innovation, leadership, and a lasting commitment to advancing the poultry industry.

Hawk's journey began on his family's cattle farm, where he developed the work ethic and determination that would shape his future. After attending the University of Tennessee, he returned home in 1977 to establish a 125-sow farrow-to-finish swine operation and grain farm with his father. His path eventually led him to the poultry industry, where he would build a career spanning more than three decades.

In 1989, Hawk established a broiler farm and began his career with SBM Infrared Heating as Technical Director.

In 1990, he helped establish Suntech Poultry Watering, which later became Lubing Systems Corp. In 1991, he joined Lubing Systems as Technical Director and was instrumental in developing the company's commercial layer business.

Hawk's leadership at Lubing Systems became a defining chapter of his career. In 2001, he became President and Managing Partner and oversaw the company's move into a new 50,000-square-foot facility in Cleveland, Tennessee. Under his leadership, Lubing Systems grew tenfold between 2001 and 2020, establishing the company as a respected supplier of poultry equipment and watering systems.

Hawk's entrepreneurial efforts extended beyond Lubing Systems. In 2003, he founded Barku Plastics LLC with the same German business partner, serving as President and Managing Partner. The company later expanded with a new 32,000-square-foot manufacturing facility in 2011.

His influence on the poultry industry also extended beyond his businesses. Hawk served on the Board of Directors of the U.S. Poultry & Egg Association from 2005 to 2007 and received the organization's Lamplighter Award in 2007. In 2018, he was honored with the M.C. Headrick Free Enterprise Award by the Cleveland Chamber of Commerce.

After nearly two decades of leading Lubing Systems, Hawk retired as President in 2020 and transitioned to a consulting role, continuing to provide guidance to his son, Chris Hawk, who succeeded him as president.

While Hawk's accomplishments are significant, those who have worked alongside him recognize that his greatest contributions extend beyond business success. His integrity, willingness to mentor others, entrepreneurial spirit, and commitment to advancing poultry production have made a lasting impact on the industry and the people within it.

John Hawk's career reflects more than business growth or professional achievement. It reflects a lifetime of putting in the work, recognizing opportunity and using that opportunity to move the industry forward. From the family farm to the leadership of a company that grew tenfold under his direction, Hawk has consistently demonstrated the vision, determination, and character required to build something lasting.

His legacy can be measured in the companies he built, the technology and equipment he helped bring to poultry producers, and the people he encouraged along the way. It is also reflected in the next generation of leadership he helped prepare to carry that work forward.

For a lifetime of leadership, innovation and service to the poultry industry, the Tennessee Poultry Association is proud to honor John Hawk as its 2026 Hall of Fame inductee. His contributions have left a lasting mark on Tennessee poultry and the broader industry, and his place in the TPA Hall of Fame is a fitting tribute to a career dedicated to making both better. 🐔





2026 ANNUAL MEETING

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AUCTION ITEM & NEW SPONSORSHIP TOP PRODUCER

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TPA BOARD MEMBERS

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John Elmore - Huvepharma
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Will Hightower - Tyson Foods Shelbyville
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Brad Nance - Pilgrim's Pride
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for more information about member benefits

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News about our ALLIED MEMBERS & COMPLEXES

WANT TO BE FEATURED? PLEASE SEND YOUR SUBMISSIONS TO JOCELYNN@TNPOULTRY.ORG BY DEC. 1ST TO BE INCLUDED IN THE WINTER ISSUE



Alltech named seven leaders to new roles within its U.S. specialty Alltech ingredients business.
[Click here for full article](#)



Please join us in welcoming **Dr. Victoria Drouet Pratt** in the role of Vice President of Veterinary Services at Aviagen NA.



Proxy-Clean Products announces **Dr. Jess Campbell** as Poultry Production and Ventilation Specialist



Composting, Simplified.

Ecodrum makes large donation for America's first community sustainability destination opens in Ozark, Arkansas

[Click here for full article](#)



KOCH FOODS

Tina Hurley has been promoted to Complex Purchasing Manager for Koch Foods Morristown. Tina has been a great volunteer supporter of TPA, and has been the winner of our auction item donation and sponsorship procurement contest for many years in a row. Congratulations, Tina!



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Boehringer Ingelheim opens a new U.S. animal health headquarters in Johns Creek, Georgia.

[Click here for full article](#)



Mr. + Mrs. Bruner
09.04.2026



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2026 GROWER MEETINGS

September 22nd

Martin, TN

Elam Center
on the campus of UT Martin

15 Mt. Pelia Rd
Martin, TN 38237

3:00 PM - 7:30 PM Local Time

September 24th

Cleveland, TN

L. Quentin Lane Gymnasium
on the campus of Cleveland State CC

NEW LOCATION!

3535 Adkisson Dr
Cleveland, TN 37312

3:00 PM - 7:30 PM Local Time

TOPICS AND SPEAKERS

- **Water Quality**
Dr. Mary Foy - Proxy-Clean Products
- **Proper Generator Maintenance**
Dr. Tom Tabler - UTIA
- **Evening Meal**
- **Legislative Session**
Kevin Hensley - Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation
- **Managing a Financially Successful Poultry Operation**
Dr. Dennis Brothers - Auburn University
- **Keeping Your Birds Healthy**
Dr. Cole Taylor - Tyson Foods (Martin, TN)
Dr. Nicholas Brown - Koch Foods (Cleveland, TN)

FDA PROPOSES TO REDEFINE GRAS

August 11, 2026 at [FoodBusinessNews.net](https://www.foodbusinessnews.net) by Keith Nunes

The Food and Drug Administration has published a proposed rule that would transition the agency's generally recognized as safe process from voluntary and that includes a self-affirmed option to mandatory. Under the proposal published Aug. 11 in the Federal Register, the new rule said that if the notification requirement is not met for a substance's conditions of intended use, the FDA would consider such noncompliance as a factor in its prioritization of food substances for post-market review. [Click here for full article](#)

FDA TO REQUIRE GRAS NOTIFICATIONS FOR ANIMAL FOOD

September 3, 2026 at [FeedStrategy.com](https://www.feedstrategy.com) by Lisa Cleaver

The proposed rule would end decades of voluntary reporting, and industry groups, legal experts and law firms are already flagging gaps that could leave newer ingredient pathways exposed. [Click here for full article](#)

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Hunter Ballew
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River Valley
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Congratulations to our 2026 Grower Member Scholarship Recipients



ALIYAH BLACKBURN

Chapel Hill, Tennessee
University of Tennessee at Martin
Agriculture, Animal Science
Daughter of Neal and Robin Blackburn
Flat Rock Farms
*\$1,000 scholarship sponsored by
Chore-Time*



YVAN DAO

Bradford, Tennessee
Vanderbilt University
Political Science, Business Administration
Daughter of Tuan Dao
Nora Farm
*\$2,500 scholarship sponsored by
Farm Credit Mid-America*



JALYYN KELLY

Pikeville, Tennessee
Tennessee Tech University
Sociology, Criminal Justice
Daughter of Jonathan and Linda Kelly
Kelly Farms
*\$1,750 scholarship sponsored by
River Valley AgCredit and Cumberland Poultry*



CHLOE LYLES

Ringgold, Tennessee
Bryan College
Business Admin and Doctor of Veterinary Medicine
Daughter of James and Tara Lyles
Dry Creek Farm
*\$2,500 scholarship sponsored by
Pilgrim's and Farmers Poultry Supply*



NATE MASON

Parrottsville, Tennessee
University of Tennessee at Knoxville
Ag Leadership, Education, and Communications
Son of Anthony and Julie Mason
Mason Farms
*\$4,000 scholarship sponsored by
Tennessee Corn and Koch Foods*



FENA PHENGMAN

Shelbyville, Tennessee
Middle Tennessee State University
Biology, Genetics and Biotechnology
Daughter of Saul and Vongxay Phenmany
Souk Lida Pullet Farm
*\$2,000 scholarship sponsored by
Jones-Hamilton and Sunbelt Rentals*



ELISHA RICH

Moss, Tennessee
University of Arkansas
Animal Science, Meat Science
Son of Reyes and Carla Rich
Ginny Ridge Farms
*\$4,000 scholarship sponsored by
Cobb-Vantress and Reliable Poultry*



ETHAN TRAN

Bradford, Tennessee
University of Tennessee at Martin
Psychology, Counseling
Son of Timmy Tran
New Waves Farm
*\$1,000 scholarship sponsored by
D & F Equipment Sales*



EMMA WOODCOCK

Lafayette, Tennessee
Tennessee Tech University
Animal Science, Pre-Veterinary Science
Daughter of Sean and Lana Woodcock
Rolling Hills Farm
*\$1,000 scholarship sponsored by
LiphaTech Ag and Poultry Guard*



Congratulations to our 2026 Career Track Scholarship Recipients

MADISON HAYSE

Celina, Tennessee
Tennessee Tech University
Pre-Veterinary Science, Poultry Science
Daughter of Stephanie Hayse
*\$4,000 scholarship sponsored by
Aviagen and BankPlus*



KAYLA MOORE

Bethel Springs, Tennessee
Tennessee Tech University
Animal Science, Poultry Science
Daughter of Brandon and Ginger Moore
*\$2,000 scholarship sponsored by
Darling Ingredients*



MADELYN NICHOLSON

Franklin, Tennessee
University of Tennessee at Knoxville
Animal Bioscience, Animal Behavior
Daughter of Ryan and Heather Nicholson
*\$2,000 scholarship sponsored by
Andy's Seasoning*



DANIEL PITTS

Troy, Tennessee
University of Tennessee at Chattanooga
Mechanical Agricultural Engineering
Son of Matthew and Laura Pitts
*\$4,000 scholarship sponsored by
Zoetis and Tyson Foods OBC*



Mark & Marie Harmon Scholarship Recipient

SANDHYA THAPA

Nashville, Tennessee
Tennessee State University
Food and Animal Science
Daughter of Nar Bahadur and Indira Thapa
*\$4,000 scholarship sponsored by
Tyson Foods Shelbyville*



Congratulations to our 2026 NextGen Young Leaders



BRANDON CARTER

Fayetteville, Tennessee
Tyson Foods Shelbyville - 6 Years
Tech Advisor Broiler
Tennessee Tech University
Animal Science
Nominated by Thad Smith



JACOB CHASTAIN

Brandon, Mississippi
Aviagen Pikeville - 4 Years
Poultry Specialist
Mississippi State University
Poultry Science
Nominated by Hannah Crouch



KEENA FLATEN

Cookeville, Tennessee
Aviagen Crossville - 3.5 Years
Production Manager, Pedigree-Lay
Vol State Community College
Associate of Arts, Foreign Language (*Spanish*)
*Nominated by Liesl Venter and
Andy Goldman*



ASHLEY GOINES

Crossville, Tennessee
Pilgrim's - 4 Years
Breeder Service Tech
Morehead State University
Veterinary Technician
Nominated by Tyer Cantrell



REAGAN GRIFFIN

Union City, Tennessee
Tyson Foods OBC - 3 Years
Breeder Tech I
University of Tennessee at Martin
Ag Business and Farm Ranch Management
Nominated by Jeni Simmons



NATHAN SPARKS

Alamo, Tennessee
Tyson Foods Humboldt - 4 Months
Pullet Tech
Austin Peay State University
Sports Medicine
*Nominated by Tim Howell and
Jeri Beth Davis*



TENNESSEE POULTRY ASSOCIATION CONTINUES TO RECOGNIZE THE NEXT GENERATION OF POULTRY LEADERS

Program honors young professionals making a difference in Tennessee's poultry industry

The Tennessee Poultry Association (TPA) is continuing its commitment to developing and recognizing the next generation of poultry industry leaders through its NextGen Young Leaders Under 30 recognition program.

Established in 2018, the program recognizes outstanding young professionals under the age of 30 who work for TPA-member poultry companies and complexes and are making meaningful contributions to Tennessee's poultry industry. It was created to engage and invest in young professionals who are directly involved in poultry production or processing.

The idea for the program came from former TPA President Jay Daniels, who believed strongly in encouraging young leaders to pursue excellence and recognizing their contributions early in their careers.

"Recognizing young professionals early in their careers is an investment in the future of our industry," said TPA Executive Director Tracy Rafferty. "These young men and women are already making a difference in poultry production and processing, and we want to celebrate their accomplishments while encouraging them to continue growing as leaders."

Each TPA-member poultry complex is invited to nominate one young professional annually for recognition. Nominees represent a variety of roles throughout the industry and demonstrate the leadership, dedication, innovation, and work ethic that will help shape the future of Tennessee poultry.

Since its inception, the program has highlighted young professionals from across Tennessee's poultry industry and provided an opportunity for their employers and TPA to publicly recognize their accomplishments.

This year's honorees include:

Brandon Carter – Fayetteville, TN; Nominated by Tyson Foods Shelbyville

Jacob Chastain – Pikeville, TN; Nominated by Aviagen NA

Keena Flaten – Cookeville, TN; Nominated by Aviagen Inc.

Ashley Goines – Crossville, TN; Nominated by Pilgrim's Pride Chattanooga

Reagan Griffin – Union City, TN; Nominated by Tyson Foods Obion County

Nathan Sparks – Alamo, TN; Nominated by Tyson Foods Humboldt



TRANSMISSION, CLINICAL SIGNS AND DIAGNOSIS

June 24, 2026 at [AgrilInsightPublications.com](https://agrilinsightpublications.com)

Avian metapneumovirus (aMPV) spreads rapidly within and between flocks, often appearing suddenly despite routine biosecurity. Its short incubation period and high contagion rate make it one of the most challenging respiratory pathogens to contain once introduced. Understanding how it moves and presents in the field remains key to effective prevention and differential diagnosis. [Click here for full article](#)

IMMUNE 'REPROGRAMMING' COULD PROTECT POULTRY FROM DEADLY DISEASES WITHOUT ANTIBIOTICS, STUDY FINDS

August 17, 2026 at [PoultryProducer.com](https://poultryproducer.com) by Sophi Fairman

A naturally occurring gut molecule that could strengthen chickens' immune response against a wide range of bacterial infections, has been identified by University of Bristol-led research. This new breakthrough, published in The Journal of Immunology today [12 August], offers a major step forward in sustainable farming and the global fight against antibiotic resistance. [Click here for full article](#)

RESEARCH

OPTICAL SPECTROSCOPY COULD END MALE CHICK CULLS

June 30, 2026 at [WattAgNet.com](https://wattagnet.com) by Elizabeth Doughman

A previously unobserved optical effect in chicken eggshells could provide hatcheries with a noninvasive method for determining embryo sex prior to hatch, offering a possible alternative to culling male layer chicks. [Click here for full article](#)



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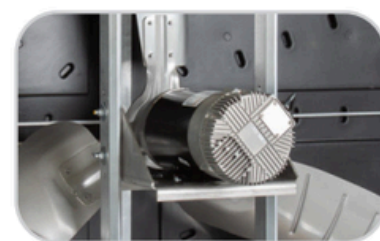
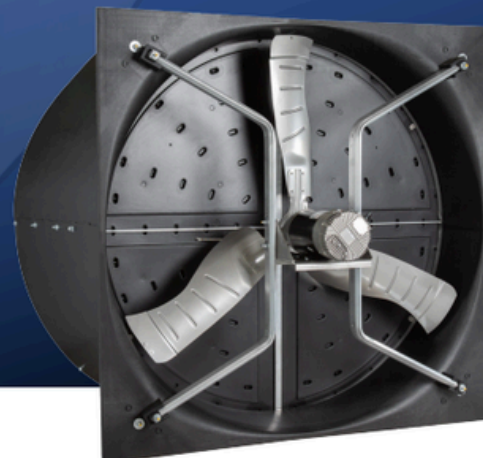
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BROILER BREEDER STUDY CHALLENGES ASSUMPTIONS ON FERTILITY

August 6, 2026 at WattAgnest.com by Elizabeth Doughman

A new Auburn University study found that broiler breeder fertility depends more on group mating behavior and dynamics than on individual male performance, with multiple-rooster groups producing higher fertility rates than single-rooster groups despite lower sperm penetration rates.

“We really didn’t see what we expected to see quite honestly,” said principal investigator Charlene Hanlon, Ph.D., assistant professor of poultry physiology in the university's Department of Poultry Science. [Click here for full article](#)

BROILER BREEDER BEHAVIOR IMPACTS MATING AND FERTILITY

August 10, 2026 at ModernPoultry.Media

Is it dominance or experience that wins the day? When it comes to mating success and fertility in chickens, the answer might be surprising. [Click here for full article](#)

TENNESSEE POULTRY ASSOCIATION LAUNCHES NEW EMERGING LEADERS PROGRAM

New initiative designed to develop the next generation of Tennessee poultry industry leaders

The Tennessee Poultry Association (TPA) is launching a new leadership development initiative designed to identify, engage, and prepare the next generation of leaders in Tennessee's poultry industry.

The **TPA Emerging Leaders Program** will provide early-career poultry professionals with opportunities to gain a broader understanding of the industry, build relationships with fellow professionals and develop the leadership skills needed to advance their careers and contribute to the future of Tennessee poultry.

The program will be coordinated by **Chynette Todd** and is designed for professionals who have demonstrated leadership potential and have fewer than ten years of experience in the poultry industry.

The inaugural class will consist of **six participants**, with the potential to expand the program in future years. Participants will represent various segments of the poultry industry, providing the group with a diverse perspective on the many interconnected facets of poultry production and processing.

The program will provide participants with hands-on educational and networking opportunities throughout the year. Participants will be required to attend at least one of TPA's educational workshops, as well as a two-day facility tour planned for Fall 2026.

"Exposure is a key part of developing a strong leader," Todd said. "We want participants to understand not only what happens within their own area of the industry, but how all of these different areas work together. Just as importantly, we want them to develop relationships with other emerging leaders who they can learn from and work alongside throughout their careers."

A Broad Cross-Section of the Industry

The inaugural program will include participants representing a broad range of poultry industry roles, including live production team members, growers, processing plant employees, and allied industry representatives.

TPA-member poultry complexes and allied members were invited to submit nominations, with each complex permitted to nominate one individual in each applicable category. TPA allied member companies will be permitted one nomination.

Candidates were evaluated by a five-member panel of non-biased judges. The top candidate in each category was selected for the program.

Investing in the Future

The Emerging Leaders Program builds on TPA's long-standing commitment to recognizing and encouraging young professionals in the poultry industry. Since 2018, TPA has recognized young leaders under the age of 30 through its NextGen Young Leaders Under 30 recognition program.

The new leadership program takes that commitment a step further by providing participants with an intentional, hands-on development experience designed to prepare them for greater involvement and leadership within the industry and TPA.

"Our goal is not simply to recognize young professionals," said TPA Executive Director Tracy Rafferty. "We want to invest in them. We want them to understand the opportunities within this industry, become more engaged with TPA and develop the confidence and knowledge to become tomorrow's leaders."

The program is intended to create a strong pipeline of informed, connected and engaged professionals who can contribute to the continued success of Tennessee's poultry industry and, ultimately, serve as future leaders of TPA.

Please join us in congratulating the inaugural class of the TPA Emerging Leaders Program. 

Congratulations to our 2026 Emerging Leaders

PATRICK BRITTON

GGP Production Poultry Specialist
Aviagen Elkmont

Nominated by Kelly Davis



DONAVYN BUTLER

Service Tech II
Cobb Lafayette

Nominated by Matthew Butler



LORA CLAYBORN

Supervisor Production
Tyson Foods Albany

Nominated by Angela McIver



DYLAN CRAIN

Regional Account Manager
Zoetis

Nominated by Daniel Pugh



WILSON KELLY

Pullet Service Tech
Tyson Foods Albany

Nominated by Robert Bowen



WILLIAM STEPHENS

Debone Manager
Tyson Foods Albany

Nominated by Frankie Smith



GLOBAL MEAT SUPPLY QUADRUPLED IN 60 YEARS

June 5, 2026 at FeedsStuff.com

The global supply of terrestrial animal-source food (TASF), driven mainly by egg, poultry and pig meat, has experienced a significant increase over the past six decades. This expansion has made livestock one of the fastest-growing components of the agricultural sector, according to a new study by the U.N. Food & Agriculture Organization (FAO).

The report, Drivers of Supply and Demand of Terrestrial Animal Source Food – An Evidence and Policy Overview on the State Of Knowledge and Gaps, provides a comprehensive, science-based global assessment of the livestock sector's contribution to food security, sustainable agrifood systems, nutrition and healthy diets and identifies key knowledge gaps.

It covers production systems of all scales, ranging

from integrated crop-livestock systems to specialized livestock operations, grazing systems and pastoralism, as well as wildlife farming and hunting.

The study examines global supply and demand for TASF, which includes products derived from mammals, birds and insects.

It finds that the global supply of TASF has risen rapidly between 1961 and 2022. Poultry meat showed the most pronounced growth, approximately five-fold, followed by eggs and pig meat, both of which nearly doubled, while bovine meat remained stable or declined in many regions.

By 2022, global production of TASF reached:

- 361 million metric tons (MT) of meat, up from around 71 million MT in 1961
- 930 million MT of milk, up from approximately

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The 2026 TAEP application process will be online only.
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342 million MT

- 94 million MT of eggs, up from about 15 million MT

Data on insect consumption remain limited, with most evidence coming from Africa, Asia and Latin America. Available estimates suggest that around 1,900 species are consumed as food.

Regional disparities

Asia is now the largest producer of TASF, followed by Europe. However, production trends do not always translate into availability.

Per capita supply remains highest in Northern America, while Asia, despite being the leading producer, has relatively low availability per person. In sub-Saharan Africa, per capita supply has remained largely stagnant, with only limited gains in certain countries, such as milk in Kenya and poultry in South Africa.

Food loss and waste further exacerbate these disparities and present a growing sustainability challenge. An estimated one-third of all food produced globally is lost or wasted, including roughly 14 percent of TASF. Losses are often linked to the perishable nature of these products, inadequate cold chain infrastructure and poor temperature control. These challenges are particularly acute in low- and middle-income countries, where consumption of animal-source food remains comparatively low.

International trade continues to play a relatively limited role in global TASF supply, especially for developing economies. Although trade volumes have increased, they still account for only about 10 percent of global consumption.

The role of food environments

The report highlights that evidence on the food

environments of TASF, encompassing the broader contexts in which individuals make dietary choices, remains limited and uneven across regions. Available data suggest that higher-fat meat and dairy products appear to be frequently more accessible and affordable than leaner alternatives.

It also highlights the differences in national legislative and policy documents: High- and upper-middle-income countries focus on ensuring food safety, quality and regulating marketing, while low- and lower-middle-income countries prioritize boosting production, improving availability and lowering prices to enhance affordability and self-sufficiency.

Emerging challenges

"The many breeds and species of livestock on our planet can thrive in a wide range of environments, particularly in areas less suited or unsuitable for crop production, and contribute to a wide variety of healthy diets," FAO Deputy Director-General Godfrey Magwenzi and FAO Chief Economist Máximo Torero wrote in the report's foreword. "However, to optimize this contribution to human and planetary health, the livestock sector must address a range of challenges."

These challenges span environmental pressures – such as deforestation, land-use change, greenhouse gas emissions, unsustainable use of land and water, pollution and competition between food and feed – as well as herd management issues, including low productivity, overgrazing and poor animal welfare.

They also encompass animal health and welfare concerns, alongside broader social challenges, such as inequity, and risks linked to human-livestock interactions, including zoonotic and foodborne diseases and antimicrobial resistance. 🐔

TECHNOLOGY

SMART CAMERAS REVEAL HOW BROILERS RESPOND TO HEAT STRESS AND AGEING

August 9, 2026 at [PoultryWorld.net](https://poultryworld.net) by Tony McDougal

A new study using advanced computer vision technology has shed fresh light on how broiler behavior changes throughout the production cycle, offering poultry producers new tools to monitor welfare, detect problems early and manage heat stress more effectively. [Click here for full article](#)

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NEW RESEARCH SUGGESTS CLEANING BEFORE DISINFECTING INCREASES BIOSECURITY

June 10, 2026 at ThePoultrySite.com

New research from a Texas A&M College of Agriculture and Life Sciences doctoral graduate could help producers better protect poultry flocks from disease outbreaks while reducing costs. [Click here for full article](#)

GLP-1 MEDICATIONS AND AI RESHAPE HOW CONSUMERS BUY, PREPARE AND EAT CHICKEN

July 28, 2026 at NCC.com by Tom Super

GLP-1 medications and artificial intelligence (AI) are rapidly impacting the way Americans plan meals, shop for groceries and consume fresh chicken, according to new consumer research presented today at the 2026 Chicken Marketing Summit. [Click here for full article](#)

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RAINWATER HARVESTING SYSTEMS

June 23, 2026 at ThePoultrySite.com by Chris Wright

Broiler producers must have access to sufficient water supplies to maintain the health and well-being of broilers. For some producers who rely on municipal water sources, increased water rates have begun to affect their bottom line. This has been the experience for broiler producers in Cullman County, Alabama, USA, where the county water department announced customers would see increased water rates beginning in 2015. Water rates have since increased by 69% in 10 years: \$2.51 per 1,000 liters in 2015 to \$4.25 per 1,000 liters in 2025.

In anticipation of these water rate increases, a pilot study was initiated in 2015 to evaluate the performance of a rainwater harvesting system (with a storage capacity of 378,541 liters) in offsetting rising water costs for a four-house broiler farm in Cullman, Alabama. While the producer has observed a reduction in their monthly water bill, the system did not include an effective way of measuring rainwater use and municipal water use.

This study quantified farm rainwater use, and municipal water use to better understand the overall performance of the rainwater harvesting system. Two wireless ultrasonic meters were installed and monitored rainwater use and municipal water use over six flocks reared from January 13, 2024 to January 3, 2025. Average flock age during the test period was 45 days with an average flock placement of 27,517 birds. A simple economic analysis of water bill savings based on water use, water rate, taxes, and fees during the study period was also performed.

Total water use for the farm during the 12-month study period was 7,267,625 liters with a mean flock total water use of 1,211,271 liters, ranging from 1,005,634 to 1,593,661 liters. Municipal water use represented 45% of total water use and rainwater use represented 55% of total water use over the entire study period for the farm.

The producer paid \$14,307 for water with an estimated water bill savings of \$17,017 had the producer not been able to utilize rainwater. While results from this study suggest water bill savings can be achieved using rainwater harvesting, continuous monitoring of this system should occur to understand the long-term use of rainwater harvesting on this commercial broiler farm. 🐔

MANAGING HEAT STRESS IN COMMERCIAL POULTRY OPERATIONS: PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICAL STRATEGIES

July 8, 2026 at ModernPoultry.Media by Zac Williams

Heat stress is one of the most persistent and economically significant challenges facing commercial poultry production, particularly in locations characterized by high temperatures and humidity. Heat-stressed birds will have a poorer feed conversion ratio, decreased body weight gains and higher mortality, resulting in less income for the farmer. [Click here for full article](#)



2026 Annual Meeting GOLF SCRAMBLE



1st Place, 1st Flight

Aubrey Hill
Lucas Hill, *Pilgrim's*
Ben Cassidy, *Aviagen*
Brad Nance, *Pilgrim's*



MUSINGS FROM TOM – BIOSECURITY, LIVESTOCK FARMING, PAUL HARVEY, AND FLATLAND CAVALRY

July 8, 2026 by Tom Tabler

In my job as the University of Tennessee's Extension Poultry Specialist, I deal with a variety of folks including commercial poultry growers, integrators, county agents, and backyard chicken keepers. I also work with a lot of 4-H youth with backyard poultry/Chick Chain projects. Often, these 4-Hers and their folks are homesteader-type families that may not have an agricultural background. I try to deliver presentations not only on my past experiences, but also on guidance from Dr. Samantha Beaty, Tennessee State Veterinarian, and provide information that Dr. Beaty wants these folks to become familiar with and understand. Biosecurity is something that I always discuss. Not only regarding avian influenza, but also Salmonella, Mycoplasma, Marek's and other common backyard poultry diseases. While most commercial poultry growers understand biosecurity principles quite well, most backyard poultry folks do not.

Commercial growers understand that isolation, traffic control, and sanitation help keep their chickens safe. I get lots of sick chicken calls from county agents and backyard flock keepers. The first question I ask is "Have you gotten any new birds recently?" Nine times out of 10 the answer is "yes". The second question is "Did you isolate the new birds away from your current flock?" Nine times out of 10 the answer is "No, we just brought them home and put them with our other birds." Even though this is dangerous, it happens all the time in the backyard poultry world. And in most cases, the new birds have something the others don't and when the new birds are put in with the others, the others get sick.

We don't operate that way in the commercial poultry world because we understand biosecurity. We do not have 2-week-old and 6-week-old birds on the same farm at the same time. Once we get a house of chickens, we do not add birds to that house somewhere down the line. We keep what we started with until they go to market. We understand



Tom Tabler

UTIA INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURE
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the dangers of mixing different ages together. We know to isolate our birds as best we can. We recognize it's best to keep traffic flow to a minimum to prevent disease from entering our farms. There's a reason we keep footbaths at entrance doors...sanitation is critical to disease prevention. And disease prevention is critical to any form of livestock farming.

Livestock farming has never been easy. I don't care if you have a dozen backyard chickens or a dozen commercial poultry houses, livestock farming is not for the faint of heart. It's more automated today than it was in the past, but it has not become easier. I try to be a glass-is-half-full type person. I'm not very good at that sometimes. There are days when my faith is weak that I ask, "Why does anyone want to be a farmer...livestock or otherwise?" The hours are long, the work is hard, the pay is low, there are days when it's painful...mentally, physically, and emotionally.

Thankfully however, on most days, I see life from Paul Harvey's "So God Made a Farmer" perspective. If you are oblivious as to what I'm talking about, you should rectify that situation at your earliest convenience. Preferably tonight, after supper, once chores are done. Paul Harvey was a radio broadcaster who, sadly, passed away in 2009. For years, I listened to "The Rest of the Story" every day at noon. Harvey gave a speech at the 1978 Future Farmers of America convention entitled "So God Made a Farmer." The speech was also used, in part, in a Ram Trucks commercial during the fourth quarter of Super Bowl XLVII in 2013. The ad featured photographs of rural America set to narration of a portion of Harvey's speech. If you've never read/heard the speech or seen the ad, again, I recommend that you remedy that tonight, after supper.

I sometimes judge e-portfolios (what we used to call "record books" when my kids were in 4-H) for the state 4-H office. I also occasionally judge scholarship applications for Tracy and Jocelynn at TPA. There are multiple areas to consider in these portfolios and applications.... transcripts, resumes, work experience, letters of recommendation, etc. What I consider to be one of the most valuable pieces of information is the essay associated with these portfolios and applications. The essay provides an opportunity to better understand the individual. Some folks are pretty reserved and play their cards close to the vest. Others wear their heart on their sleeves and can make you live in their world with only their words. It's always fascinating to see the plethora of ways that life plays out and the effect it has on different individuals.

At 4-H Jr. High Academic Conference at UT-Knoxville each year, I do a presentation for the poultry group called "Where Can a Poultry Career Take You?" It's basically my life in a 1-hour program. I try to explain that the poultry industry

has multiple career options to choose from...live production, hatchery, feed mill, processing, transportation, sales and marketing, equipment manufacturing, grain buying, nutritionist, sustainability manager, animal welfare manager, poultry veterinarian, etc. . I try to impress upon students that just about anything is possible if you want it bad enough and are willing to pay the price. However, nothing is free and there will be a price to pay; sometimes that price is high. Neither of my parents finished high school. There were (maybe) 72 students in my high school graduating class. I come from a small town in Arkansas. I was #36 out of 72, nowhere near the brightest kid in class (in high school or college). There are things I would do differently. However, I've had a good career, and I've worked with fantastic people.

I provide these 4-H students with a couple of lists. One is "Things Someone Should Have Told Me" that includes:

- Learn to type (I peck all these stories out for y'all by looking at the keys because no one told me to take a typing class in high school).
- Math is important (no one hates math worse than I do but take an accounting class or two because managing numbers is useful).
- Take a human relations class (the chicken business has very little to do with chickens. The chicken business is the people business, so know how to play well with others, during good times and bad).
- Be yourself.
- Volunteer for stuff no one else wants to do.... that gets you noticed.
- Do extra-curricula stuff in high school and college.... that also gets you noticed.
- There is no such thing as a stupid question...so ask lots of questions.
- Be willing to initially re-locate for a job.
- Do an internship (or two) in college.

The second list is "Things I Figured Out on My Own" that includes:

- To thine own self be true (live within the morals and principles you set for yourself and recognize that, when each day ends, you must live with yourself).
- Money isn't everything and it won't buy happiness.
- Do the best you can each day and then don't be too hard on yourself (I struggle with this one

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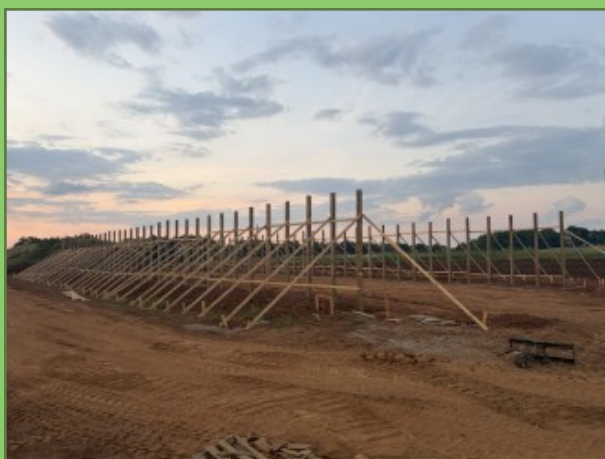
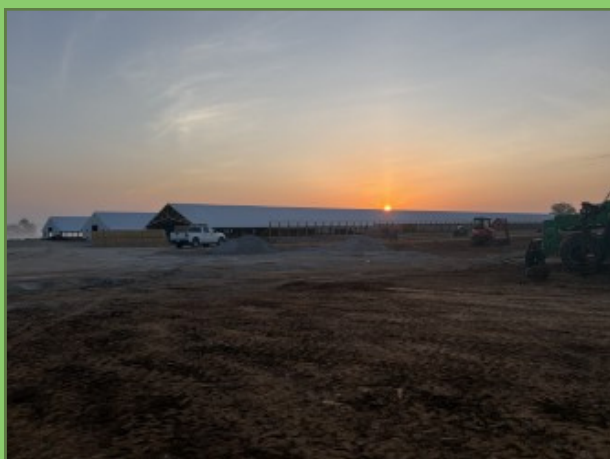
- because I'm pretty hard on myself).
- Be kind to others (even when no one is watching).
- No matter how bad things seem here, there are folks in Africa who have it much worse (I've seen things in Africa that will haunt me from now on).
- Stop and smell the roses (life goes by fast; learn to enjoy the little things along the way).
- Tell Mom and Dad that you love 'em (Mom and Dad know this, but it will make them feel good and you will feel good too).

The poultry industry has changed drastically since I graduated from college in 1978. Back then, a huge broiler house was 32' x 375'. Today, the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture is building the BIRD (Broiler Innovation, Research and Demonstration) facility at the Middle Tennessee AgResearch and Education Center at Spring Hill that will have four broiler houses that are each 54' x 600'. With cattle numbers at a historic 75-year

low and beef prices reflecting the tight supply, this creates opportunity for the poultry and pork industries to capture additional market share. Despite challenges like disease (avian influenza and metapneumovirus in poultry and pseudorabies in swine), finding affordable financing, and high construction costs, opportunities exist to fill the protein void left by a limited beef supply.

I'm a fan of the country music group, Flatland Cavalry. Their song, Forgotten, has a couple of lines that go "Where will you go, my dear, when home stops callin'? Won't you feel lonely when the last note fades and stars start fallin'?" Those lines become more poignant for me each week because the last note is fading and stars are fallin'. As more old-timers like me retire, poultry industry opportunities will be managed by a new generation, so cinch up your saddles and adjust your stirrups because more change is coming. 🐔

UTIA BIRD RESEARCH FACILITY UPDATES



2026 ANNUAL MEETING SPORTING CLAYS TOURNAMENT



1st Place: Colt Carpenter, *Koch Foods*

2nd Place: Weston Dennis, *Boehringer Ingelheim*

3rd Place: David Corvin, *Koch Foods*

Lady Shooter: Alea Gigliotti, *Ralco Nutrition*

Youth Shooter: Daniel Pitts, *Scholarship Recipient*

USDA TO RESCIND 3 KEY BIDEN-ERA MEAT REGULATIONS

July 7, 2026 at MeatingPlace.com by Peter Thomas Ricci

The Trump administration's USDA intends to rescind three of the most significant Biden-era regulations of meat processing in the U.S. [Click here for full article](#)

THE USDA STILL SET ON FASTER PROCESSING LINE SPEEDS

July 8, 2026 at MeatingPlace.com by Peter Voskamp

The Trump administration will pursue faster processing speeds for both poultry and pork, it announced this week in its statement of regulatory priorities for 2026. [Click here for full article](#)



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FDA'S PROPOSED MANDATORY GRAS RULE: WHAT FOOD SAFETY PROFESSIONALS NEED TO KNOW

August 20, 2026 at Food-SafetyMagazine.com by Thomas Smith J.D., Todd A. Harrison J.D.

For companies managing ingredient compliance, the proposal raises questions about statutory authority, agency capacity, and whether its design matches its stated objectives. Any person introducing a substance into interstate commerce under the GRAS provision would be required to notify FDA. This is not premarket approval; companies could market before and during review. Filing—not FDA agreement—satisfies the obligation. Non-notification would not automatically make a substance non-GRAS or a food adulterant; FDA characterizes noncompliance as merely "a factor in FDA's prioritization of food substances for post-market review." The real battleground is section 701(a)—authority to issue regulations for "efficient enforcement" of the statute. The proposal creates no current duty to file. The opportunity to shape the final rule is time-limited. The legal-authority question is genuinely open; FDA advances a substantial section 701(a) argument, but remains contestable under the statutory text, structure, and the agency's 2016 acknowledgment. Operational questions—such as who files, what constitutes equivalence, what happens after an adverse letter—will determine whether this produces a workable registry or an expensive exercise that rewards inaction. [Click here for full article](#)

MODERN ON-FARM MORTALITY PROCESSING



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SALMONELLA

UConn RESEARCHERS TEST POSTBIOTICS TO CUT SALMONELLA IN POULTRY

June 25, 2026 at ThePoultrySite.com

Salmonella is a common source of food poisoning that leads to potentially life-threatening illnesses, widespread food recalls, and remains a consistent challenge for poultry producers. UConn Department of Animal Science associate professor Mary Anne Amalaradjou and her research team study ways to improve processing strategies to prevent foodborne illnesses by using probiotic bacteria. In a new study published in Poultry Science, they describe a method to use postbiotic compounds produced by probiotics species of *Lacticaseibacillus* to take the benefits one step further, according to a new report from UConn.

[Click here for full article](#)



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 a free, voluntary Wildlife Biosecurity Assessment for operations not affected by HPAI. 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.

Scan to learn more



Biosecurity assessments are available to all commercial poultry producers with 500+ birds not impacted by HPAI.

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 or call 844-820-2234 to request a wildlife biosecurity assessment.

THE PEOPLE FACTOR: WHY BETTER HATCHERY MANAGEMENT STILL DRIVES FLOCK PERFORMANCE

May 4, 2026 at [ModernPoultryMedia](https://www.modernpoultrymedia.com)

Improving hatchery management can deliver measurable gains across broiler production systems, from stronger early chick health to better flock performance and more predictable production outcomes, according to a hatchery expert.

Rodney Johnson, hatchery specialist with Boehringer Ingelheim, says managers who prioritize strong communication, well-defined processes and consistent monitoring of key indicators often see improvements not just in hatchability and early livability, but also in team morale and operational efficiency.

At a time when many hatcheries are working with older equipment, limited labor pools and increasing management demands, Johnson says focusing on the fundamentals of hatchery management — from incubation to sanitation, vaccination and management style — is vital.

"The hatchery is where it all begins. It's where flock performance starts," he says. "If birds have issues during incubation that affect chick quality or embryonic development, if they're dehydrated or they don't go to feed and water immediately when they get to the house, they're not going to live and perform well."

Bird performance in the first week after placement is especially important in terms of growth rates, as performance lost during this early stage can be difficult to recover later in the production cycle, Johnson explains. A well-run hatchery, therefore, reduces pressure on the rest of the production chain.

"If the hatchery does its job and does a really good job, it makes it easier on everyone in live production — from the farmer out in the field to the live production management team trying to manage that flock."

Defining chick quality

In practical terms, Johnson says chick quality is the



**Boehringer
Ingelheim**

"To me, a high-quality chick will be one that isn't dehydrated, doesn't have red hocks and doesn't have any navel issues or bacterial infection," he says. "It's basically a very healthy chick without major issues caused by sanitation problems or poor incubation in the hatchery."

Egg management during incubation plays a major role in achieving that outcome, with careful control of the incubation environment and consistent adherence to quality assurance (QA) programs being key to protecting embryo development.

"The incubation process is vital," he says. "You need good QA programs, sanitation programs and maintenance in the hatchery."

Embryos can be particularly sensitive to environmental stress, and Johnson says that problems during incubation may not become visible until well after chicks have been placed on the farm.

"You can stress an embryo at 14 days and then see the effects once it gets on the farm a week and a half later," he explains.

Several factors can trigger those stressors, including high heat in the incubator, improper turning, lack of humidity or incorrect humidity levels. However, Johnson says it's important not to assume that one standard set of conditions will work for every hatchery, or to assume that the same conditions will suit a hatchery year-round.



Scan here for full article

The Mont Belvieu Propane Spot Price on September 1, 2026, was at \$0.736/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/er_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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Foreign Ownership State Legislation - Tennessee

During the 2026 legislative session, the Tennessee state legislature enacted [Senate Bill 2233](#) ("SB 2233") and [Senate Bill 2424](#) ("SB 2424"), both of which amend the state's existing foreign ownership law ([Tenn. Code Ann. §§ 66-2-301 through 66-2-309](#)). Collectively, these measures expand the categories of foreign investors subject to the restriction by incorporating countries designated as "foreign adversaries" under federal law, lowering ownership thresholds for business entities tied to prohibited foreign parties ("PFP"), and broadening the types of property interests subject to the law. Specifically, SB 2233 extends the restriction to certain mineral and water rights, and SB 2424 restricts PFPs from acquiring interest in public and private non-agricultural real property located within the state. SB 2233 went into effect on April 21, 2026, and SB 2424 goes into effect on July 1, 2026. A recent NALC article discussing these amendments is available [here](#).

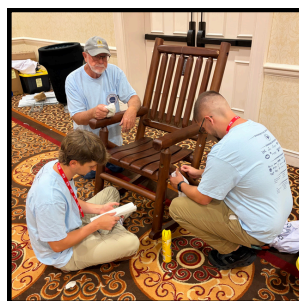
July 8, 2026

Supreme Court Issues Pesticide Preemption Decision

After years of litigation and conflicting court decisions, the Supreme Court held in [Monsanto Co. v. Durnell](#) that the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) preempts state law failure-to-warn claims when the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has approved a pesticide label and has not required the warning at issue. The Court concluded that FIFRA prohibits states from imposing labeling requirements that differ from or add to those required under federal law and noted that EPA has repeatedly determined that glyphosate is not likely to cause cancer. The decision resolves a longstanding split among federal appellate courts over the scope of FIFRA preemption. The ruling is expected to significantly affect pending and future pesticide labeling litigation and provides important guidance on the relationship between federally approved pesticide labels and state tort law. For a full explanation of the Court's decision, click [here](#) to view NALC article "Supreme Court Rules FIFRA Preempts Failure to Warn."

SNAP Waivers Updates

On July 1, Arkansas' waiver restricting the purchase of soda, energy drinks, and candy with Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program ("SNAP") benefits [went into effect](#). Though a recent federal court ruling invalidated USDA's approval of similar waivers for five other states - Colorado, Iowa, Nebraska, Tennessee, and West Virginia - the ruling does not affect Arkansas or the other 17 states with similarly-approved waivers. Meanwhile, before the ruling came down, Missouri [delayed implementation](#) of its SNAP purchase restrictions until February 15, 2027. Missouri's Department of Social Services announced this extension to allow additional time to finalize program guidance, update retailer point-of-sale systems, and prepare affected stakeholders. For more information about the 23 approved SNAP waivers, click [here](#). To learn more about the decision that invalidated five state waivers, click [here](#) to read NALC article "Court Rules SNAP Waivers Violate APA."





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Court Narrows Prop 12 Challenge

A [federal district court](#) allowed a pork processor to proceed with a narrow portion of its challenge to California's Proposition 12, though the court dismissed the company's remaining claims. Proposition 12 regulates living conditions for certain farm animals within the state and prohibits the sale in California of pork, eggs, and veal produced under conditions that do not meet those requirements. The processor, Triumph Foods, alleged that Proposition 12 violates the Commerce Clause of the U.S. Constitution because the law's slaughterhouse exemption favors California processors over out-of-state competitors. This case comes after the U.S. Supreme Court issued [National Pork Producers Council v. Ross](#) in 2023 which upheld Proposition 12 against a similar constitutional challenge. Triumph Foods will now continue its lawsuit on the remaining claim. To learn more about the Supreme Court's ruling, click [here](#) to view NALC article "What's Cooking with Prop 12?: SCOTUS Decision."

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When Will Congress Rein in California?

First, California imposed costly regulations on farmers across the country via Prop 12. Now, California is attempting to foist consumer goods packaging regulations on the country. When will Congress say state laws should stay within state borders? [Read Jack Hubbard's latest op-ed in The Hill.](#)

Polling: Americans Widely Support a Prop 12 Fix

The Senate Farm Bill got held up this week due to political jockeying over SNAP benefits. But when the bill comes back next month, we'll keep reminding Senators that the vast majority of their constituents support a Prop 12 fix. That's according to state polling done by the Center for the Environment and Welfare, as [covered by Politico.](#)

FAA Rule Could Allow Drone Bans Over Farms

The Federal Aviation Administration has [proposed a rule](#) that will allow businesses involved in "critical infrastructure," including "food and agriculture," to request drone flight restrictions over their properties. The public comment period closed August 6. Drones have been a common tool of Direct Action Everywhere.

August 12, 2026

FDA Updates: GRAS & UPFs

On August 10, 2026, Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Kennedy made [two announcements](#) related to the agency's "Make America Healthy Again" priorities. First, he announced [proposed reforms](#) to the "Generally Recognized as Safe," or "GRAS" pathway. Established in 1958, GRAS is a pathway that food manufacturers can utilize to introduce a new food substance into the market or create a new intended use for a substance currently on the market without either receiving approval from the FDA or being required to notify the agency. A substance will be GRAS if it is determined that the substance is "generally recognized, among experts qualified by scientific training and experience to evaluate its safety, as having been adequately shown to be safe under the conditions of its intended use." Under the proposed rules, food manufacturers will now be required to notify the agency of their conclusions that food ingredients are generally recognized as safe for their intended uses. Further, food manufacturers with GRAS substances already on the market must follow a "time-limited streamlined submission pathway" to provide the agency with information about its uses. Public comments on the proposal are open until December 9, 2026, and can be made [here](#). Second, Secretary Kennedy announced that HHS and the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) have submitted a white paper outlining their proposed definition of Ultra-Processed Foods (UPF) to the White House Office of Management and Budget for final review. To learn more about how GRAS substances are distinguished from other types of food ingredients, click [here](#) to read NALC article "Food Foundations: Categories of Food Ingredients." For more information on UPFs, click [here](#) to read NALC article "MAHA Movement: Defining Ultra-Processed Foods."



DATA CENTERS AND POULTRY GROWERS

July 14, 2026 at SouthernAgToday.org by Dennis Brothers

Of all the factors that might influence the cost of producing poultry for U.S. contract growers, data centers likely would not come to mind. Yet their impact may be broader than expected, bringing both benefits and challenges.

First, we might consider what a data center does. They are physical buildings that house large numbers of computer servers. These computers provide 3 basic roles: data storage, computer processing, and sending out digital information. Artificial intelligence (AI) systems use these massive computer systems to perform the calculations, searches, and generate answers. Because a data center is a massive number of computer networks linked together, they require a massive amount of electricity and water to keep them running and cool.



On the positive side, modern poultry farms are increasingly connected through internet-based, integrated control systems. AI based decision systems hold the potential to further transform management decision making leading to economic gains. Internet based control systems allow growers to monitor and adjust housing conditions around the clock from virtually anywhere using smart devices. The continued expansion of data networks enhances the speed, reliability, and responsiveness of these systems. This benefits growers by helping them better maintain bird welfare and respond quickly to changing conditions, while integrators gain from

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improved efficiency and lower grow-out costs.

However, the downside is more complex. Data centers are massive consumers of electricity. Estimates suggest their power demand could rise significantly by the end of the decade, potentially accounting for a sizable share of total U.S. electricity use. Increased demand from data centers is widely expected to contribute to higher electricity costs. This matters greatly for poultry operations, which already rely heavily on electricity for ventilation, cooling, and environmental control. A typical broiler farm in the Southeast may use around 1.65 kWh per square foot annually, totaling roughly 132 megawatt-hours for a standard four-house operation.

Water use presents another important area of overlap. Both poultry farms and data centers require substantial amounts of water to manage heat. A large data center may consume over a million gallons of water per day, many times what an entire broiler farm uses in a full year. Although the scale and timing differ, both experience peak demand during hot weather. Additionally, both are often located in rural areas where supply systems may be less robust and water resources more limited. Increased competition for water can strain local utilities, drive up water costs, and potentially deplete aquifers that supply farm wells. This is particularly concerning in regions already facing tight water supplies.

The effects may extend even further into heating costs. To meet growing electricity demand, much of it driven by data centers, utility companies are investing in new natural gas-fired power plants as a relatively fast way to expand generation capacity. In parts of the Southeast, planned additions of natural gas capacity are substantial (Figure 1). Some data center operators are even considering on-site natural gas generation to power their facilities independently.

For poultry growers, this increased demand for natural gas could lead to higher fuel prices if supply does not expand sufficiently. Since heating is a major cost, especially in broiler production, this could significantly affect profitability. The situation is further complicated by the link between natural gas and propane (LP), as a large share of U.S. propane is derived from natural gas production. Increased natural gas output could potentially

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boost propane supply and moderate LP prices, meaning growers using propane might see different cost impacts than those relying on natural gas.

In short, while data centers provide the internet infrastructure to improve efficiency for modern poultry production, they also intensify competition for electricity, water, and fuel. This creates a mixed and evolving cost landscape for growers. 🐔

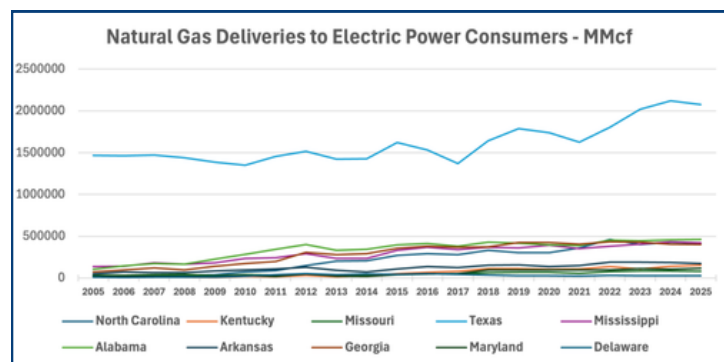


Figure 1: Looking at the top 10 broiler producing states, increased natural gas usage by power plants is seen across the board. However, the broiler heavy states of Texas, Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia, and North Carolina are leading the way in increased NG usage for electricity production (U.S. Energy Information Administration, 2026)



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52 YEARS IN POULTRY: ONE LESSON EVERY GROWER SHOULD REMEMBER

July 30, 2026 at SouthlandOrganics.com by Allen Reynolds

Technology has transformed poultry production over the past five decades. From manual feeding and watering systems to today's highly automated houses, growers have more tools than ever to improve efficiency. But after speaking with someone who has spent 52 years working in the poultry industry, we walked away with one lesson that still applies today: no amount of automation can replace spending time with your birds.

But after speaking with someone who has spent 52 years working in the poultry industry, we walked away with one lesson that still applies today: no amount of automation can replace spending time with your birds.

A Look Back at How the Industry Has Changed

During a recent conversation with a poultry industry veteran, we expected to hear about the latest technologies shaping modern production. Instead, we received something even more valuable—a firsthand perspective on how dramatically the industry has evolved over the past 52 years.

Automation Has Improved Efficiency

There's no question automation has benefited poultry producers.

Modern equipment helps growers manage larger operations, improve consistency, and reduce labor requirements. Today's farms can accomplish far more than they could decades ago.

As poultry houses have grown larger and farms have expanded, automation has become essential.

The Downside of Automation

While technology has made many tasks easier, it has also created an unintended consequence. According to this industry veteran, automation has gradually taken growers out of the poultry house.

Years ago, growers spent much more of their day walking through houses and observing birds firsthand. Today, with automated systems handling many daily tasks, it's easier to rely on controllers



and monitors instead of direct observation.

Nothing Replaces Walking the House

One piece of advice we've shared before came to mind during the conversation:

Technology can monitor temperatures, ventilation, and equipment, but it can't replace a grower's ability to notice subtle changes in bird behavior, activity, or flock condition. The more time spent with the birds, the more likely small issues are caught before they become larger problems.

Finding the Right Balance

Today's growers also face a different reality than previous generations. Many operations now manage multiple farms and significantly more poultry houses than in the past. Walking every house takes far more time than it once did.

That's why the goal isn't to avoid automation—it's to use it wisely.

Automation should improve efficiency while still allowing growers to stay engaged with their flocks through regular walkthroughs and careful observation.

A Timeless Lesson for Every Grower

Technology will continue to advance, and poultry production will keep evolving.

But one lesson has remained constant through more than five decades of industry experience:

successful growers never lose touch with their birds. The best operations combine the efficiency of modern automation with the hands-on attention that has always been at the heart of good poultry management. 🐔



Scan here to watch video

FROM COMPLIANCE TO CULTURE: EVOLVING ANIMAL WELFARE MANAGEMENT

August 24, 2026 at [ModernPoultry.Media](https://modernpoultrymedia.com) by Ken Opengart

As a veterinarian with experience leading live operations and animal welfare programs, I have spent my career focused on improving animal welfare. I have worked globally across farms, facilities and leadership settings, emphasizing the importance of education, training and risk mitigation. I have also built systems designed to promote accountability and ownership and empowered those on the front lines to act in ways that mitigate welfare compromise for the birds and risk to the business.

Over time, one truth has become unmistakably clear to me: Animal welfare programs succeed or fail not because of audits, policies or even good intentions but because of the cultivation — or lack thereof — of a robust culture. And culture is something that we must build deliberately.

Role of audits

When I first entered the industry, welfare programs were primarily audit-based. We focused on compliance: meeting industry standards, passing annual third-party audits and responding when gaps were identified.

Audits were, and still are, an important tool. They provide structure, accountability and a common language around expectations. Routine point-in-time audits, however, are poorly suited to actively manage dynamic fields like animal welfare performance because they capture only a moment in time, fail to reflect normal variability or emerging trends and often incentivize short-term compliance rather than sustained performance.

Historically, audits have emphasized documentation and program management over true outcome-based performance, although audits today are much more focused on animal outcomes. Prior auditing programs were unlikely to detect rare but consequential failures and provided little insight into learning or continuous improvement. Most importantly, their episodic nature shifted accountability away from daily ownership, reinforcing the misconception that

performance is something to be demonstrated occasionally rather than managed continuously.

As customer expectations, societal scrutiny and our own understanding of animal welfare evolved, so did the opportunity to fundamentally improve our approach to welfare management.

Cultural shift

Organizations faced a choice. Would they continue to treat animal welfare as a regulatory- and customer-compliance exercise, or would it be treated as a core expression of its values? Ultimately, the answer to this question would define an organization's welfare approach and culture.

When an organization relies on a compliance-driven approach, it tends to be reactive, focused on risk avoidance, minimum standards and correcting problems after they occur. Engagement and transparency are limited, and success is defined almost exclusively by audit results rather than by sustained performance or outcomes.

In contrast, a culture-driven approach is proactive. It treats animal welfare not only as a moral obligation but as a strategic priority — investing in people, processes and systems to prevent problems before they occur. Data are used to drive learning and improvement rather than defensiveness, and welfare objectives are intentionally aligned with enterprise goals, incentives and long-term planning.

Culture is built, or undermined, through communication and action. Employees quickly discern whether animal welfare messaging is authentic or merely performative. Clearly articulated, welfare-specific mission and vision statements can serve as powerful strategic and cultural anchors, but they carry weight only when reinforced through consistent messaging, predictable action and visible leadership commitment.



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