

In 22 Years—

NPIP Has Helped Spark Dramatic Rise in Poultry Production

Enormous strides have been made the last 20 years in improving the efficiency of poultry production. Combined results of better feeding, breeding and management since 1935 have brought a spectacular rise in broiler raising as well as more efficient egg and

meat production. In 1956 alone, we produced 1 billion 345 million broilers compared to only 34 million in 1934. Egg production per hen has increased by 45 per cent during that period. And we can now grow 40 to 45 pounds of broiler meat on 100 pounds of feed.

Such improvements didn't just happen. Many branches of the industry contributed—including the National Poultry Improvement Plan. NPIP is a joint Federal-state effort to (1) build up economical production of eggs and meat per bird, and (2) increase chick livability by getting rid of pullorum and typhoid.

The plan had its start in the mid-thirties. At that time, expansion of the poultry industry was being checked by contagious diseases, especially pullorum disease and lack of standards to measure the quality of hatching eggs and chicks sold under many different labels. Producers wanted specific dependable, nationwide quality standards in breeding and disease control. To meet these needs, the Congress in 1935 passed legislation setting up the NPIP. There is also a similar National Turkey Improvement Plan (NTIP).

One important method of measurement is the record of performance (ROP). This has been used to identify high-producing birds and families through trapnesting since NPIP began. Dissemination of stock by ROP breeders has contributed much to increased rate of egg production.

A newer way to measure performance test. Samples of a breeder's commercial product—chicks or eggs of a designated grade or quality—are selected in a random (unbiased) way. All samples are raised under feeding and management conditions designed to reveal genetic differences. Performance data thus collected are used



THESE ARE THE new officers of the Lancaster Poultry Assn. They are, left to right, Daniel K. Good, R1 Columbia, secretary; Noah Kreider, R3 Manheim, vice president; Jay R. Greider, R1 Mt. Joy, president, and Eugene S. Cassel, Landisville, treasurer. Kreider also heads the committee which will supervise operation of the Poultry Exchange. (LF Photo)

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ful in measuring differences in stocks. Results are being used as a basis for classifying flocks for the breeder, and chicks for his customers, under NPIP.

Improvements in efficiency can also be traced to another important fact: State inspectors are in constant touch with NPIP participants and quickly pass on to them new research information and recommendations.

Participation in the plan is voluntary both for States and for Poultry establishments within States. USDA, through Agricultural Research Service, acts as the national coordinating agency. An official State agency handles local administration.

Participation is open to all breeders, flock owners, and hatcherymen whose facilities and practices meet requirements of the national Plan and the official State agency.

What are the responsibilities of these breeders, flock owners, and hatcherymen? Each type of enterprise has several important concerns.

Hatcherymen must keep accurate records to assure inspectors of their compliance with the Plan's provisions and to assure chick purchasers that the chicks are as represented. Their records must include, for instance, the name and address of each flockowner, number of eggs received from him, name and address of each purchaser, and number, breed, variety, and date of shipment of all chicks sold. Breeders and flockowners must also keep accurate records to assure the official State agency—as well as their customers—that they have met at least the minimum requirements for disease control. The participants' flocks are regularly tested and are qualified only when no typhoid or pullorum reactors are found.

Breeding flocks are selected and tested under the supervision of State inspectors. Flocks and hatcheries are regularly inspected to insure compliance. Advertising is checked to prevent misleading statements.

Fees for participation vary from State to State—depending on the State agency, size of flock or hatchery, number of birds tested, and so on. Participants gain much from membership. Their products have the confidence of purchasers, who know that the chicks, hatching eggs, or stock were produced in accordance with strict NPIP requirements. Only participants may use the official labels, designs and terminology of the plan.

Membership in NPIP now includes 60 per cent of the country's hatcheries with about 73 per cent of the egg capacity. The Plan covers 39 million birds in 67,000 flocks.



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