

ARS Says Exposure to Marek's Does Not Work

Natural exposure as a strategy to protect young chickens against Marek's disease (MD) just does not work.

In some poultry-growing areas it has become a common practice to put old litter with baby chicks under each brooder stove or to place a few old hens in with the

chicks. It is usually hoped that this "controlled" exposure will reduce later outbreaks of MD, a tumorous disease of chickens.

The practice was tested by ARS poultry scientists H. Graham Purchase, William Okazaki, and Ben R. Burmester at the Regional Poultry Research

Laboratory, East Lansing, Mich., and Marius Ianculescu, formerly with ARS.

In two experiments litter was used for the exposure and, in one, a number of adult birds.

Chicks were raised either on the farm or in isolation. Resistance acquired from exposure

was challenged with injections of Marek's disease virus or contact exposure from chickens with Marek's disease. The natural exposure should cause antibodies to be produced. The chicks would thus develop resistance and be protected from subsequent infection.

Results indicated that farm-reared (exposed) birds were as prone to MD effects as chickens raised in isolation.

"The presence of actively acquired antibody does not confer any significant degree of protection against MD," the scientists concluded.

Since birds raised in isolation showed the same age effect, reduced susceptibility could not be attributed to natural exposure.

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Words and Music by Steve Karmen
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Hap-py To Help You Com-mon-wealth Na - tion-al - Bank
 is here and — Hap-py To Help You
 Com-mon-wealth Na - tion-al Bank is here and — Happy To Help You —
 Four — lit-tle words that say ev-'ry-thing that we have to say —
 We can help you to-day — in our own — spe-cial way —
 Four — lit-tle words a - bout bank - ing the Com - mon-wealth Na -
 tion-al way — 'Cause it's nic-er to - day —
 We planned it that way — And we're
 Hap-py To Help You 'Cause peo-ple who smile a lit -
 tle more are — Hap-py To Help You
 Com - mon-wealth Na - tion - al Bank is here and —

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