

Airsacculitis decreases egg production

UNIVERSITY PARK - Pennsylvania poultrymen can eliminate sudden and costly drops in egg production by inoculating laying hens against air-

sacculitis, an infection causing moderate to severe reduction in eggs.

"The stress of high egg production opens the way for airsacculitis to take its toll,"

explained Dr. Robert F. Gentry, veterinary scientist at Penn State University.

The inoculation prevents infection only when it is impractical for poultrymen to clean and sanitize buildings thoroughly, Dr. Gentry said. Complete sanitation and isolation is still the best practice for controlling the infection, he added.

He reported that one poultryman with 30,000 hens received \$20,000 more in 24 weeks with inoculated hens than from a previous flock that was not inoculated. He said Pennsylvania is the fourth leading state in income from egg production.

"Egg producers with many large poultry houses close together find it physically impossible to clean and sanitize all the houses simultaneously or to raise several hundred thousand pullets simultaneously," he stated.

The inoculation exposes laying hens to a culture of the so-called F-strain of

airsacculitis. This produces a mild reaction but gives a strong immunity, Dr. Gentry claimed. He said the inoculum is being used extensively to control the infection on poultry farms with multiple-aged hens.

A Commonwealth program for inoculating hens has been developed in co-operation with the Pennsylvania Bureau of Animal Industry. The proper amount of inoculum - 100 milliliters of F-strain culture per 1000 hens - is dispensed to the flock with a portable sprayer. The spraying is done by servicemen from feed companies and similar businesses.

"Slight respiratory reaction may be observed but it lasts only a few days

and the hens are then resistant or immune to further infections. The immunity is confirmed by blood tests," he stated.


Such immunization has increased egg production by as much as 10 per cent for the entire laying period when no other infections were encountered. The average increase has been near five per cent, even where other problems were found in some flocks.

Inoculation of hens for airsacculitis is among the features in the Spring issue of "Science in Agriculture," the quarterly magazine of the Agricultural Experiment Station at Penn State. Interested persons can get on the mailing list free by writing to Director, Agricultural Experiment

Station, 229 Agricultural Administration Building, University Park, Pa. 16802.

"Science in Agriculture" will be available in late May at county offices of the Cooperative Extension Service or from the Agricultural Mailing Room, 112 Agricultural Administration Building, University Park, Pa. 16802.

The Penn State scientist reported that pullets are usually free of airsacculitis until they are moved to laying houses. Then they become infected by equipment, wild birds, or by the causal organism in the air. Although the infection is not transmitted to humans, people can carry the organism on their clothing and shoes. The infection spreads slowly and is usually not detected until the hens reach peak production.



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Surface applied nitrogen may increase soil acidity

FAIRFAX, Va. - Proper soil management to control soil acidity, which results from surface-applied nitrogen fertilizer, is an important production factor in continuous no-tillage corn. "The importance of lime with reduced tillage should not be overlooked" says Iowa State crop fertilizer specialist, Regis Voss. Most lime recommendations and related research information for effective row-crop production suggest plow-down application. Therefore, with the growing popularity of no-tillage systems, the effectiveness of surface-applied and unincorporated lime has become a question of concern to many. Much research has shown that soil surfaces become quite acid after several years and no-tillage production.

Recently, studies have been conducted by Agronomists at the University of Kentucky concerning this question of

this effectiveness of surface lime applications against the acid-producing effect of nitrogen fertilizers. They discovered that, because the greatest portion of the acid-producing effect is concentrated in the soil's surface under the no-tillage system, neutralization of the acid condition is made easier. They concluded that surface liming is indeed an efficient way to reduce soil acidity caused by the continued build up of N-fertilizer in no-tillage programs. However, it was also reported that, if the soil is at a critically low pH level from the beginning, good incorporation of lime with the soil is necessary. Researchers agree that the acid-producing characteristic of the no-till system is probably the most serious soil problem encountered in the program. However, the current research in Kentucky demonstrates that surface liming can correct this acid condition.

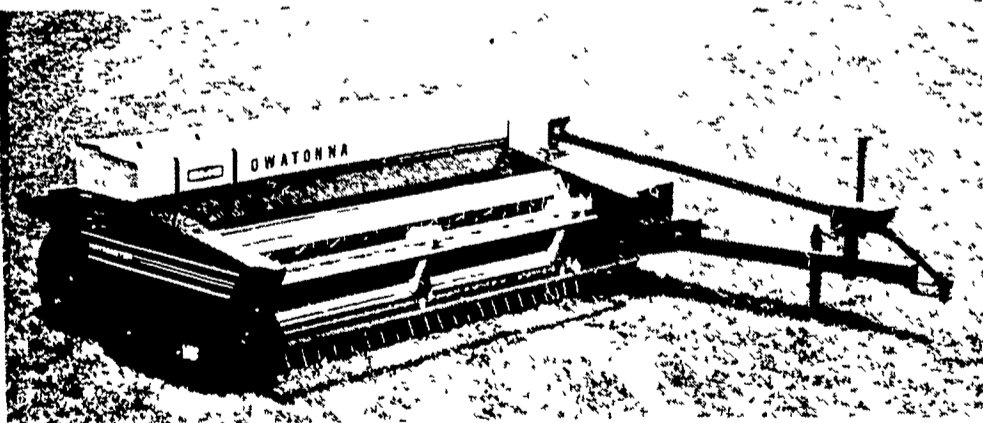
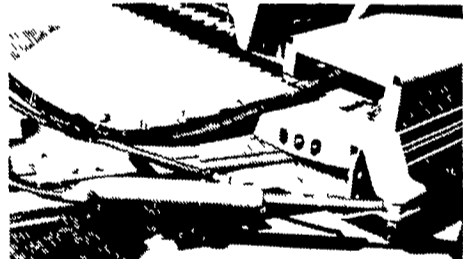
Farm Women's Calendar

- Today, May 27
Lancaster Co. Society 4 meeting, at the Barley home, Washington Boro, at 1:30 p.m.
- Monday, May 29
Memorial Day observed.
- Tuesday, May 30
Traditional Memorial Day.
- Wednesday, May 31
Lancaster Co. Society 24 meeting, 7:30 p.m. Program will be on antique dolls.
- Thursday, June 1
Lancaster Co. Society 17 meeting, hostess Gladys Sprout. Program will be an auction of food and crafts.
- Lancaster Co. Society 20 meeting, 1 p.m.
- Saturday, June 3
Lancaster Co. Society 1 meeting, program sleep and their uses.
- Lancaster Co. Society 6 meeting, at noon. The group plans to eat out in Hershey.
- Lancaster Co. Society 10 will entertain Society 30.

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