

Hysterical fowl

(Continued from Page A15)

plays a role in hysteria from the point of view that it determines the size of the bird, but no one breed has been isolated as the carrier of the hysteria tendency.

He cited diet as a factor that could lead to stress and hence hysteria. Implicated were: proteins; vitamins, niacin and thiamine especially because they are directly involved in nervous system disorders; and minerals, calcium, phosphorus, potassium and magnesium.

"The one thing about citing diet as a cause of hysteria...it can be corrected quickly, through supplements," Graves added.

Another factor that he cited for possible hysteria-producing qualities was pain, where birds were debeaked severely or which had toenail wounds.

When there is a hysterical flock of birds to control, a farmer will try just about anything to calm them down. Graves suggested playing a tape-recording of happy hens clucking as a pacifier. He warned against playing loud rock music, which he said has been demonstrated to increase the birds' activity.

And, he said, the birds can be forced to molt to snap them out of hysteria. This type of cure means a heavier economic investment than a record player or tape recorder.

What a forced molt is telling the birds is they are not expected to keep on producing, which takes the pressure off and reduces the stress they were under.

Graves pointed out the molting cycle can be related to the wild birds migration south, where they bask in the sun on the tropical tree tops and molt.

Adding a male to a flock of females tends to quiet them, Graves said, and the males break up any fights among the hens.

The unfortunate fact about hysteria, he said, is that flocks tend to approach the hysterical stage about the time the layers reach peak output.

"If a farmer has a case of hysteria or extreme nervousness and calls on me, 'I'll wring my hands, I'd love to get a history of the flock, I'll recommend a number of things, but I ain't gonna cure it. It's not likely...not if it's full bloom. Catch it early by paying attention to management, especially in high producing flocks," Graves said.

He concluded by asking any farmers who were experiencing the hysteria phenomenon to get in touch with the university through the Extension service. Graves said he would like to visit these farms, see the birds, and possibly take a few birds along back to the university to study.

Local poultrymen view outlook on industry as optimistic

LANCASTER — Close to eighty-five poultrymen gathered at the Farm and Home Center last Thursday to hear predictions about the future of the broiler and layer industry.

Fred D. Pontz III, predicted the future of the broiler industry while William Patterson spoke to the group about the potential of the processed egg.

Both of these men were well qualified to discuss these topics. Pontz is the vice-president of marketing for Pennfield Farms Chicken, Fredericksburg. And, Patterson is the general manager, egg division, for Weaver's Quality Eggs, Inc., Lancaster.

Pontz told the group the losses experienced by poultry producers from July to November of 1979 were the most severe in the history of the industry.

He explained that this was part of a cycle that started when lower numbers of birds were marketed which led to higher prices.

Responding to the profit incentive, producers increased the number of birds marketed, eventually

saturating the market, with a resulting drop in price.

As this adds up to a dollar loss for the producer, the loss risk will be reduced by decreasing the number of birds, and the cycle begins again.

Pontz predicted by 1990 the per capita consumption of poultry will be 100 pounds because of the nation's economics. The present per capita figures are 52.1 pounds for chicken; 10 pounds for turkey; and 49.2 pounds for broilers, he said.

With the U.S. leading in broiler and egg production, Pontz said it will be an optimistic decade for the poultry producer.

Patterson spoke to the group about the merits of the further processed egg.

He pointed out this type of egg is what bakeries, airlines, hospitals, schools, institutions, vending companies, and fast food restaurants are looking for. They are labor-saving, provide a consistent end-product, and are easy to store, he added.

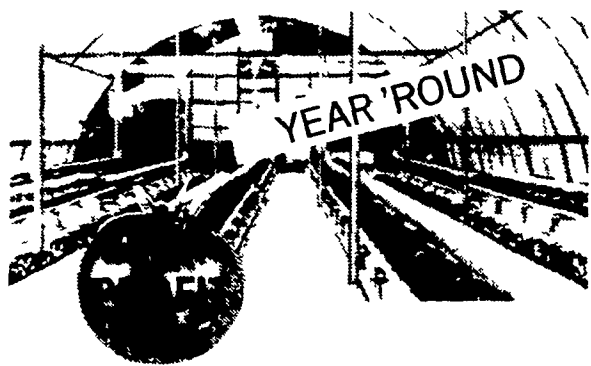
Patterson predicted egg product demand will in-

(Turn to Page A18)



The close to 85 poultrymen who attended the seminar on their industry's future snacked on their "favorite" food, pickled eggs.

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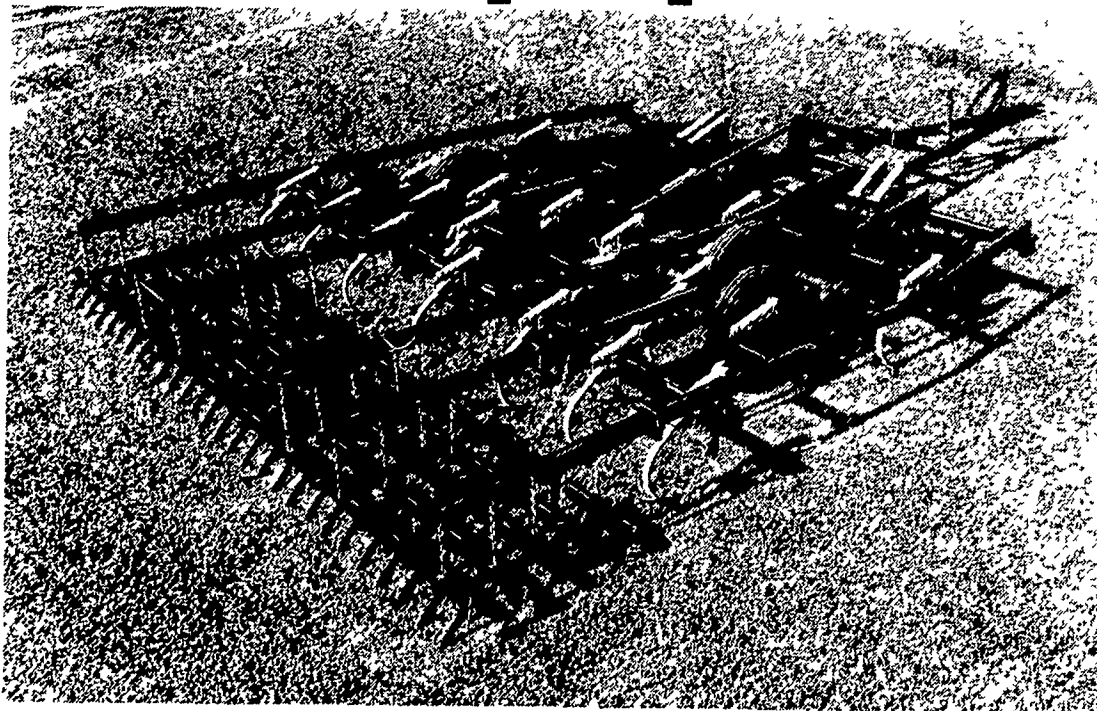
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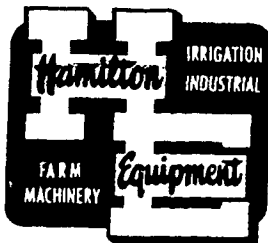
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