

## Exotic newcastle task force to be dismissed

HARRISBURG — A state-federal task force has recently helped control the possibility of another outbreak of Exotic Newcastle disease in Pennsylvania.

State Agriculture Secretary Penrose Hallowell said, "For all practical purposes, the investigation in Pennsylvania is complete. Unless new sources of exposed birds are uncovered, the task force will likely be dismissed."

Hallowell said the disease was confirmed in exotic birds at a dealer's facility in Miami, Florida. Several dealers in Pennsylvania

received birds which were exposed to those in the Florida dealership.

Exotic Newcastle is a virus disease which affects poultry and other birds, causing losses of up to 100 percent in commercial poultry flocks. The disease is among the most contagious foreign animal diseases that periodically threaten the nation's farm animals. A major outbreak of exotic Newcastle in California in 1971-72 cost taxpayers \$56 million and caused the death of nearly 12 million birds.

Hallowell said the task force had traced 391 birds which were exposed to those

with exotic Newcastle. The disease has been found in pet birds at eight other aviaries and petshops in four states since March, including Pennsylvania. More than 3,000 birds were destroyed in these outbreaks to keep the disease from spreading.

Sources in at least 39 states have recently received birds from dealers in Florida with infected birds.

The Agriculture Secretary complimented the Avian Health Division of the Bureau of Animal Industry for its quick and effective

reaction to this latest threat. He noted that no serious outbreak is expected in Pennsylvania at this time.

"The cooperation of bird dealers, bird owners, federal and state regulatory personnel has been an important factor in this control effort," he said.

Hallowell added the Department had contacted the U.S. Department of Agriculture suggesting that action should be taken on a national level to better control movement of birds until the situation is under control.

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### Egg output up 4%

HARRISBURG — August 1980 egg production in Pennsylvania totaled 341 million, according to the Pennsylvania Crop Reporting Service.

The August production was four percent above the 329 million eggs produced in August 1979. The August average of 16.1 million layers was five percent higher than a year ago.

Egg production per 100 layers was 2120 compared with 2148 in August 1979.

The nation's laying flocks produced 5.75 billion eggs during August, one percent fewer than the 5.80 billion produced a year ago. The number of layers for August averaged 284 million, compared with 286 million a year earlier.

Egg production per 100 layers during the month was 2020 compared with 2031 a year ago.

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