

Marek's disease control a success with eggshell vaccine

EAST LANSING, Mich. — Scientists have now vaccinated chicks against Marek's disease through the eggshell, demonstrating for the first time that resistance to disease can be established by that method, says Jagdev M. Sharma, Agricultural Research Service veterinary medical officer.

Sharma, stationed at the ARS Regional Poultry Research Laboratory adjoining the Michigan State University campus, collaborated with Ben R. Burmester in developing the technique.

"We were surprised by the results," Sharma says. "Chicks were protected from Marek's

disease by the time they hatched so they overcame early exposure to the disease much better than chicks vaccinated at hatching, now the common practice in commercial production. The vaccination had no adverse effect on percent of hatch or rate of gain."

To vaccinate the embryos, a small hole was drilled in the shell and the needle inserted into the egg. The holes were then filled with paraffin, although later tests showed no ill effects from leaving the holes unfilled. After hatching, the chicks were exposed to Marek's disease by injection or by air treatment.

"This pre-hatch vaccination procedure may help overcome

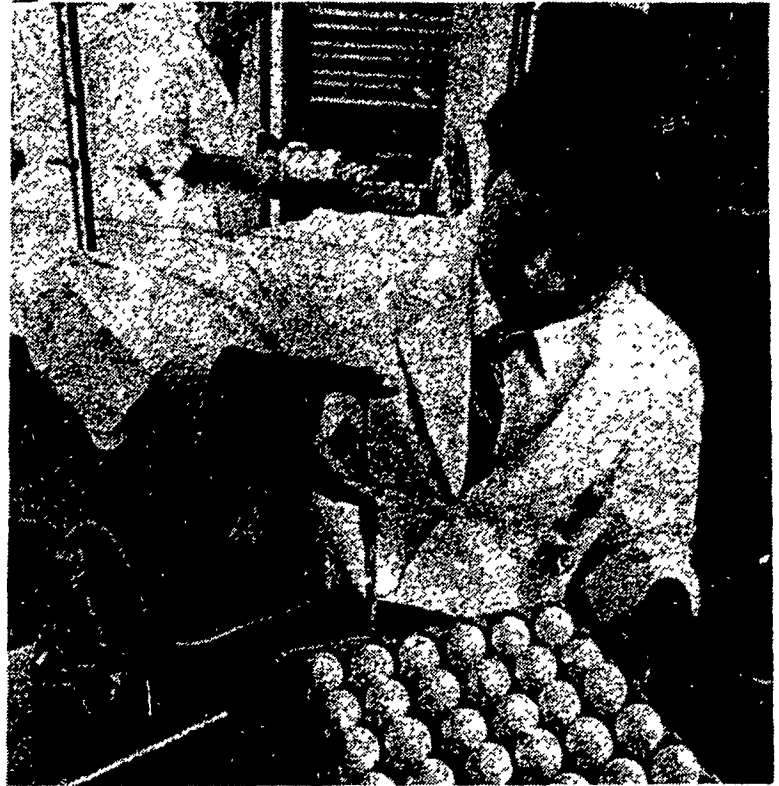
vaccination failures that are an increasing problem in commercial poultry production," Sharma says. In most commercial flocks, vaccine is injected shortly after hatching. Within a few hours, the chicks are placed in brooder houses, where exposure to Marek's disease virus is likely. The time between vaccination and exposure is sometimes so short that chickens do not develop adequate immunity, and some chicks get the disease.

To confirm this theory, Sharma put off exposing some chicks to Marek's disease until 8 days after hatching and vaccination. They were fully resistant to the virus, indicating that the vaccine and vaccination procedure were effective; the problem apparently was due to lack of time for immunity to develop after vaccination.

When birds vaccinated 3 days before hatching were exposed to Marek's disease by injection 3 days after hatching, they suffered 14-percent losses. Birds vaccinated the day of hatching and exposed 3 days later suffered 72-percent losses.

"We found optimum protection was achieved if vaccination was done at about the 18th day of embryonation," Sharma says, "the same time that embryonated eggs are routinely transferred to hatching trays in commercial operations. It may be possible for producers to vaccinate and transfer eggs at the same time. Whether our methods, under laboratory conditions, would be practical under commercial conditions remains to be determined. It also remains to be seen if this method of vaccination is feasible for other diseases."

Eggs used in the tests came from chickens reared in isolation, free from exposure to Marek's disease and other tumor-causing viruses as well as other bacterial and viral poultry pathogens.



Jaddev M. Sharma, veterinary medical officer, inoculates a flat of chicken eggs with HVT vaccine from the flask while laboratory technician Barry Coulson removes the next flat from the incubator for inoculation.



In the USDA study, chicks that were vaccinated when embryos proved that inoculation did not reduce hatchability.

Wool Growers honor nat'l members

SALT LAKE CITY, Utah — Awards were presented to two livestock agriculture leaders and the family of the third at the recently completed convention of the National Wool Growers Association in Portland, Oregon. Abner Rice of Dillard, Oregon was presented a Special Service Award in recognition of his "unique and dedicated service" to the American sheep industry and the NWGA. Rice, who is a prominent Oregon sheep rancher, spearheaded the drive to defeat the 1980 Oregon referendum that would have banned the use of steel

traps for predator control in that state.

In presenting the award to Rice, Bob Geaney, also of Oregon and treasurer of the national association, said that the action of Rice and his committee "served notice that capricious and punitive actions directed against production of agriculture would be met with strong and capable resistance." The referendum was ultimately defeated by a two to one margin.

Jim Bowns of Utah State University, was honored as the recipient of the Camp Tenders Award, dedicated to persons who aren't involved directly in the production of wool and lamb. Bowns was cited for his contribution in the field of range management and animal damage control. His citation noted that "no industry can survive without the support and the assistance of people like Bowns whose primary concern is the adaption of professional techniques to management problems." Bowns is from Cedar City, Utah.

Elwood Rich and Roscoe J. Rich were presented the McClure Award in memory of their deceased father, R.C. Rich. Rich was a prominent Idaho rancher who served as president of the National Wool Growers Association in 1936. Rich was instrumental in the organization of promotional programs for wool products, among numerous other activities. The McClure Award is the highest honor the industry can bestow upon a lamb and wool grower. It is named for a former association official, S.J. McClure, whose innovative programs comprise many of the traditional activities of the NWGA today.

In honoring the Rich family, Don Meike, of Kaycee, Wyoming who serves as chairman of the Board of the association, explained that R.C. Rich "epitomized the leadership and determination that have been the hallmark of the industry and association over its 117th year span." The National Wool Growers Association is the oldest national livestock organization in the United States.

Sale of '79 hunting licenses ends

HARRISBURG — Sale of outdated 1979-80 hunting licenses has been discontinued by the Pennsylvania Game Commission.

Outdated hunting licenses have become popular items for souvenir hunters, collectors, history buffs,

etc. The Game Commission first made outdated hunting licenses from the 1976-77 bi-centennial year available, and sold nearly 5,000 of them when an instant demand developed.

Interest in outdated licenses has continued, although popularity has dropped somewhat from the initial offering. During the past year, about 1,200 of the 1979-80 outdated licenses were sold to collectors.

Although the 1979-80 licenses are no longer available, the Game Commission is now offering for sale outdated hunting licenses from the 1980-81 year. Licenses available at a fee of 25 cents each include the archery stamp, the muzzleloader stamp, nonresident hunting license, senior resident license, junior resident license and adult resident license.

The Game Commission is also offering for sale outdated 1981 resident and nonresident bear licenses, at a fee of 50 cents each.

There is a \$2 handling charge for each order. Orders should be sent to Pennsylvania Game Commission, 8000 Derry St., P.O. Box 1567, Harrisburg, PA 17120.

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