

What's behind the poultry market news story?

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Poultry market news reports don't have exciting titles, but they're full of information — and they are vital in establishing the market and prices for the poultry and egg products.

For a poultry market news reporter, terms like "price trends," "market activity," and "supply/offering" are commonplace, according to Chuck Godfrey, supervisory market reporter of the Des Moines, Iowa, office. This information is important to poultry buyers and sellers in their daily transactions of a multi-million-dollar business.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has 17 federal or state poultry market news offices nationwide. Within these offices

are 22 federal reporters and 18 state reporters who collect and report information on the trading of poultry and egg products. The information goes to farmers, processors and others who use this data as an aid in marketing and planning.

For Godfrey, obtaining reliable information on a voluntary basis is the most important element of a market news reporter's job.

"Twenty-five years ago I started out as a trainee in Des Moines and have since worked in St. Paul and San Francisco before returning here," he says. "It takes considerable time to build up confidence between our office and our contacts, and the best way of building up this confidence is

providing accurate, up-to-date reports.

"We talk to traders, dealers, growers and processors several times a week on anything that possible affects the market price. If we can't get the best and most accurate information possible from them, then our information is worthless."

Ray Wruck, chief poultry market news official with USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, in Washington, D.C., says that after collecting this information, the facts are then analyzed, evaluated and checked before it is released from the various market news offices.

"Reporters are responsible for

getting information on actual selling prices at all levels of trading — on the farm, processing, distributors, wholesalers and buyers," he said. "Our market reports cover 47 poultry and egg commodities, including broilers, turkeys, shell eggs and dried, liquid and frozen egg products."

In Des Moines, Godfrey's office originates about a dozen reports, including the "Iowa Farm Eggs Report," the "Central-States Egg Breaking Report," and the "Central-States Turkeys Report." Godfrey says these market news reports are extremely vital to those in the poultry and egg business. "Our office is a service organization, and it's our job to get the best information possible out to whoever needs it."

The market news offices are connected by a high-speed leased wire service. The instantaneous reports allow quick comparisons to be made between markets on prices and trading conditions. Market news information is distributed in a number of ways, including telephone and the various news media. Some market news offices provide information 24-hours a day with recorded messages frequently updated so callers receive the most current information.

"We like to have as much personal contact as possible and we make every effort to be accessible at all times," Godfrey says. "You'd be surprised at the amount of information that can be exchanged in a matter of minutes."

Until recently, the printed market reports were sent free on request from market news offices

throughout the country. However, as part of efforts to reduce the cost of government, USDA now charges a subscription fee for the reports that are mailed.

Wruck says the cost of the service is worth it to producers and marketers who need accurate and unbiased information.

Now is the Time

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damaged by sunscald in the winter. That's why it's a good idea to wrap the trunks of such trees as sugar maple, tulip tree, American linden, flowering dogwood and plum. You can wrap them now but be sure to take the wrapping off late next spring. You can use commercial tree wrapping, starting at the ground level and working up the tree, overlapping about every half-inch. Tie the wrap with twine or use a waterproof tape several places along the stem.

Smaller ornamentals should be mulched; this will not keep the soil from freezing but it helps keep the soil frozen to prevent road injury caused by alternate freezing and thawing of the soil.

The mulch should be loose, but it should stay where you put it. Do not use grass clippings because they pack too tightly. Instead, use clean wheat straw, shredded bark or peat moss.

Merry Christmas to all!

Md. sets hearing on 'cost share' program

ANNAPOLIS, Md. — A public hearing has been set for Jan. 14 in the conference room of the Maryland Department of Agriculture building in Annapolis, on regulations proposed to implement a \$5 million cost share program aimed at agricultural water pollution control.

The program is the product of 1982 legislation passed by the Maryland General Assembly putting the state's departments of agriculture and health into the business of helping farmers implement practices to lessen water

pollution caused by erosion, animal wastes, nutrients and agricultural chemicals.

In addition to setting out the specific outlines of the program, the proposed regulations also list the areas for which much of the funds will be targeted.


Those wishing to examine a copy of the proposed regulations should contact their local Soil Conservation District Office, or consult the Dec. 10 issue of the "Maryland Register," pages 2518-2521, which can be found in many public libraries.

The hearing will begin at 10 a.m. and will last as long as needed in the day to allow those present to give testimony.

In the event of a person wishing to submit written testimony, but unable to turn it in at the January 14 hearing, the record will remain open until January 24 and such testimony should be sent to: Ernest C. Shea, Maryland Department of Agriculture, 50 Harry S. Truman Parkway, Annapolis, Maryland 21401.

The Maryland Department of Agriculture's new headquarters building is located in Anne Arundel County's "Government Park" complex which is off Riva Road, West of Annapolis in the Parole section.

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