

OUR READERS WRITE, AND OTHER OPINIONS

Is the enemy us?

Mr. Poultryman: Where does your real "enemy" lie?

If we can believe the steady drumbeat of the news media over the last 4 months, your almost unbeatable foe is the particular "hot strain" virus alleged to be causing the avian flu epidemic. In view of the drastic, and for many disastrous measure of depopulation now being advocated, the writer feels compelled to express the thinking of a growing, contrary minded group. For reasons that follow we believe the answer lies in

the proper management of the basic dynamics of life; air, water, feed, light and environment. Since it is generally acknowledged that some or all of these factors are causative in some diseases, who can really say that is not true in all diseases.

Good air is the primary requirement for all forms of life excepting certain bacteria, Herb Jordan, Penn State extension, told the writer at least 30% of the states poultry houses are under-ventilated. It probably goes a lot higher in the winter.

To Train and Prune Trees

General pruning of apple trees should be in full swing at this time of year, especially if you have a lot of pruning to do. I'd like to remind growers and homeowners not to over-prune young trees or those which haven't yet started to bear fruit. There is a tendency to either prune the small trees too heavily, or simply to leave them alone. A middle-of-the-road course is best.

The training of young trees should involve just enough cutting to maintain a healthy central leader and to develop the desired number of well-spaced scaffold branches. Branches that are either poorly spaced, or ones making narrow-angled crotches should be removed.

Keep in mind, when you start pruning early — start with your hardier trees, the apple and pear, with plums and sour cherries next, and leave your peach till near the end; they're quite tender.

Now is the Time

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production, but more slowly available. In the year of application, about one-half of the nitrogen in manure is available. Studies show that corn fertilized with fresh manure applied and worked into the soil in the spring produced the most corn silage. Yields were lowest when the manure was applied in the fall, left exposed on the soil surface all winter and plowed down in the spring. It's important to manage manure application just as you manage other areas of your operation. Another important factor, by incorporating the manure into the soil immediately, you reduce the possibility of water contamination and odors.

Infections agents merely take advantage of poor environment to produce disease. This is backed up by the fact that agents capable of causing disease can be found in virtually all flocks, the majority of which are clinically normal. Poor environmental conditions often bring on respiratory infections by these organisms. Ammonia above certain levels an effect weight gains, feed conversion for adversely as well as increase bird mortality.

"Quoted from Poultry Digest, July 83. In same issue is excellent article detailing Dr. Siccardi's environmental optimizer for producing better quality broilers at 60% savings on energy. The oxidation/reduction cycle is critical in ALL disease conditions. Is this being studied? Air ionization equipment has been developed for chicken houses that is making a big improvement in air quality and dust reduction.

"Poor Feed & Water Can Wipe You Out", states Charles Fisher, Clemson University in the same P.D. Magazine. "When folks start talking about preventing disease, the conversation immediately gets around to sanitation, vaccinations and depopulation...And that's as it should be. But one thing that's often overlooked is feed and water. "Water is two-thirds the bird's diet. Mineral content, bacteria, pH, pollutants such as nitrates all affect health. A high PH water intake over a period of time will adversely affect warm blooded animals. Nitrates, fairly common in Lancaster Co. water will affect the friendly bacteria ratio in the gut, a key health promoting factor. The intestinal flora of any animal or human is the area of dynamic life energy interchange where the "rubber meets the road." Is this

being checked? There are several simple ways of dealing with nitrates in water costing as little as 25 cents per day per thousand chickens. Have you checked your water for nitrates?

Feed opens up a Pandora's box of possible problems and questions. Is high temperature corn drying and long storage causing rancidity of the oil due to cracked kernals? Molds? High nitrates? Does the routine addition of waste scraps from the processed food industry, candy, cookies, noodles, etc detract from feed quality? What about the effect of drugs on the friendly bacteria? The strong ammonia odor in many

houses says something unfavorable in happening in the gut. The addition of bacteria inducing cultures can greatly improve intestinal bio chemistry for 2 to 3 dollars a ton. Is this being considered?

There is much research to show that full spectrum lighting ranks next to good water and air in disease resistance. Incandescent and regular fluorescent lights do not provide this due to lack of U.V. and certain colors in balance as found in sunlight. One 200,000 flock owner in Lancaster County states that installing full spectrum lighting was the best thing he did.

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Farm Calendar

(Continued from Page A10)

Pest Control short course, University of Delaware, continues tomorrow.

Thursday, Feb. 16

Pa. Draft Horse and Mule Sale, Farm Show Complex

Manor Young Farmers, 7.30 p.m., Penn Manor High School ag classroom, Tobacco Production" by John Yocum of the Southeast Research Farm.

Home Vegetable Gardening, 1.30 - 7 p.m., Pleasant Acres, York.

Drug residue workshop, 9 a.m. - noon, Sheraton Inn, State College.

Keystone Park Congress, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m., Penn Harris Motor Inn, Harrisburg.

Farm Business Workshop, 9 a.m. - 3.15 p.m., Berks Ag Center, Leesport, continues tomorrow.

Atlantic Breeders Workshop,

North Lancaster #2, 7 p.m., Blue Ball Fire Hall
Wayne Dairy Day, 9.30 a.m. - 3.15 p.m., Armory, Honesdale, Dairy Herd Management Conference, Penn State, continues tomorrow

Fruit Production and marketing meeting, 9 a.m., Biglerville Fire Hall

Friday, Feb. 17

Beef conference, Penn State, Cattlemen's Banquet, Boalsburg Fire Hall, conference continues tomorrow

Adams County Dairy Day, 10 a.m., York Springs Fire Hall.

Delaware swine meeting, 9 a.m., Georgetown Substation.

Saturday, Feb. 18

Adams County Fruitgrowers dinner meeting, 6:30 p.m., Biglerville Fire Hall.

Cumberland County Holstein Club, annual meeting, 10:45 a.m., Penn Township Fire Hall, Hantsdale.

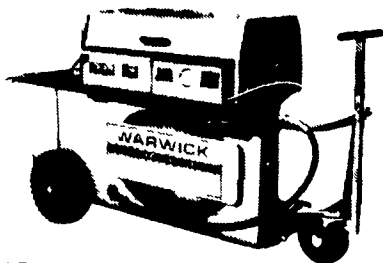
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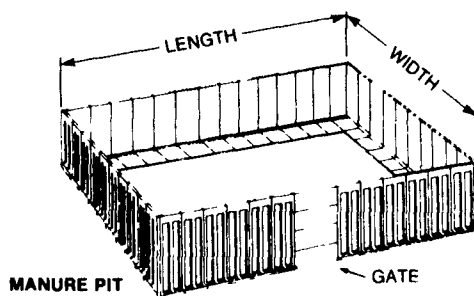
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70'	251	376	504	630
80'	287	431	576	720
90'	323	485	648	808
100'	359	539	720	900
110'	395	593	792	989
120'	431	648	864	1080
130'	467	688	936	1170
140'	503	755	1008	1260
150'	539	808	1080	1350

*Based on level fill with 45 lbs / Cu Ft

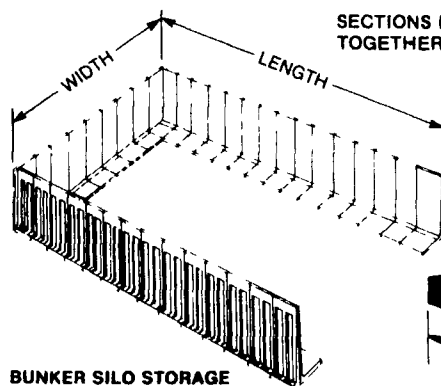


MANURE PIT

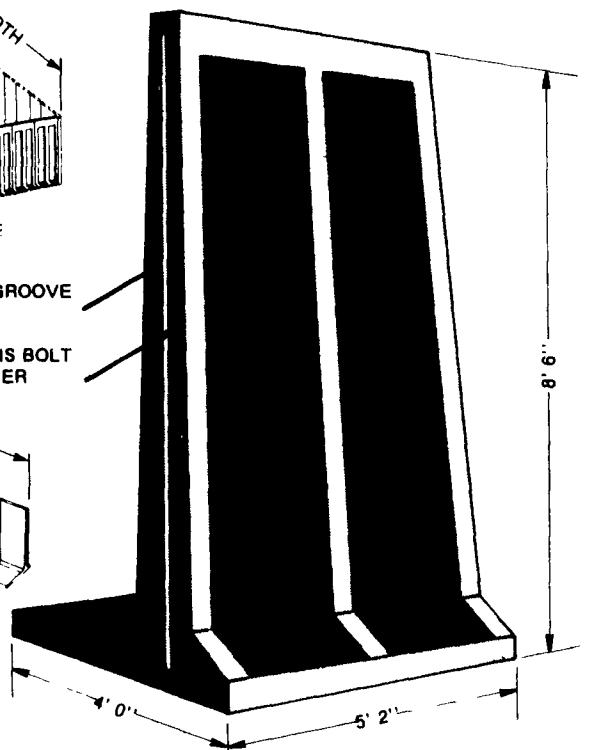
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