

# Broiler Industry Should Market Value-Added Products

GEORGETOWN, DE — "To survive as a major economic influence (on Delmarva), the broiler industry must take advantage of the market for value added products." That was the challenge issued to Delmarva's poultry industry by Dr. James L. Heath, Professor and Poultry Products Specialist in the University of Maryland Department of Poultry Science. Speaking to the annual meeting of the Delmarva Poultry Industry, Inc. (DPI) Heath said changing lifestyles and demographics create a big opportunity for Delmarva's poultry industry.

A growing number of small households, more working women, an aging population and

other factors have created a need for value added products. Many consumers, Heath said, want food items that have no mess, no preparation, are quickly cooked, have no residue, require no washup, are nutritionally balanced and are rated high in terms of quality and satisfaction. Chicken meets those requirements. He said the poultry industry can take advantage of the "snacking and grazing while on the go" method of eating of many Americans. The broiler industry cannot depend upon the fast food industry to develop food items that consist wholly or partially of chicken. The industry must be innovators in new product development and promotion. Heath

cautioned his DPI audience not to depend on making a profit on a product somebody else has developed. The poultry industry must listen to the consumer and in this election year Heath said consumers vote every day on what products they will and will not consume.

Diet and health considerations play a role in food choices, Dr. Heath observed, and the broiler industry is in an excellent position to take advantage of diet and health concerns. He said fundamental thinking by the broiler industry should be reconsidered and company policies revised to recognize that consumers' health and well being are driving forces for agriculture and agribusiness industries. To fuel this revolution in the food industry, continuous innovations and improvement in food processing technology are necessary. Heath said the broiler industry has an excellent record in

inventing and using new technology and this will lead to the development of value added products. Many of the tools needed by the broiler industry on Delmarva to enter the value added market are available and tested. He asked the DPI Directors whether Delmarva is going to sell chickens to other companies and let them take advantage of the new technology or will Delmarva move ahead and recapture the leadership role for the broiler industry. The agriculture production industry is valued at \$100 billion. The industry that is generating value added products is worth \$400 billion dollars and Heath said Delmarva's poultry industry must get a larger share of the \$400 billion food industry.

How can the move into value added products be accomplished? Heath pointed out that Delmarva is served by three major universities, state departments of agriculture, a substantial USDA research

and service establishment and DPI, which he said provides leadership, organization, educational and promotional activities, and abilities that are the best in the industry. These are huge assets that no other major poultry producing area can match and when the broiler industry on Delmarva commits to a move into value added products, this complex of education, research and service must be employed.

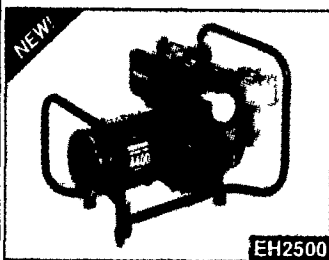
Heath said to provide what consumers want, the industry and the research institutions have developed methods to extend shelf life of fresh foods using controlled atmospheres and irradiation. Research in plastics and other packaging materials has led to the development of containers that discourage microbial contamination. He said many challenges of this type lie ahead and he encouraged Delmarva's poultry industry to meet those challenges.

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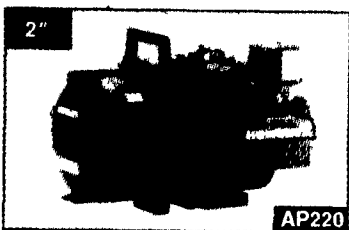
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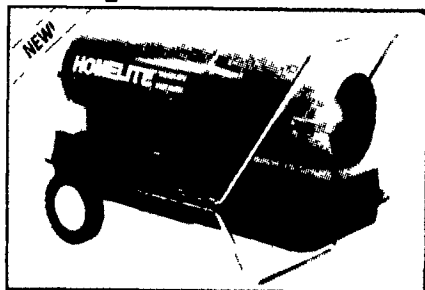
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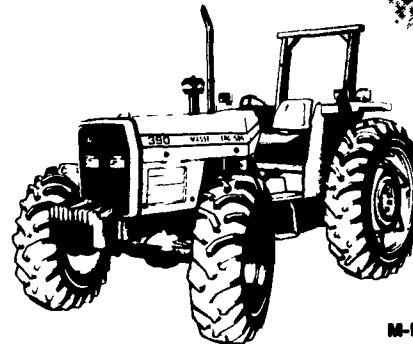
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