

# Penn State Poultry Pointers



Herbert Siegel Donald Singletary Morris Mast

## HARD TO SOLVE ECONOMIC LOSSES

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Several Pennsylvania broiler producers have experienced economic losses due to poor health, poor feed efficiency, and miscellaneous leg problems in their flocks. Mortality is frequently a problem about the time the flock is ready for processing.

The problem has many names — among them are stunting/runting syndrome, pale bird syndrome, helicopter disease, viral arthritis, brittle bone disease, and femoral head necrosis.

The symptoms and lesions in the flocks are quite varied. The classical symptom is lameness with ruptured hock tendons as the classical lesion; however, most of the birds appear only pale, stunted, with an unthrifty appearance and abnormal wing feathers. Usually, the birds have pasted vents and an orange

mucus is often found in the intestine. Leg problems are also quite common in affected flocks.

Over the years, researchers have attempted to determine the cause. They have found that a reovirus is a major contributor to the problem and that the virus is egg transmitted. The infected chick then sheds the virus in its droppings, contaminating the poultry house environment (the litter, air, water, and feed), thereby infecting the other birds in the poultry house. Other factors such as genetics, nutritional deficiencies, and bacterial infection are also thought to be involved in the problem.

Breeder flocks can be vaccinated several times with both live and killed bivalent reovirus vaccines; however, these vaccines and vaccination programs have met with various degrees of success in preventing the economic losses in the broiler flock.

Newer reovirus vaccines have been developed recently that can be given to the broiler chick in the

Thus, the complete solution to this problem is not yet known. At present, there are no satisfactory treatments; however, supportive treatment that includes antibiotics and nutritional tonics (vitamins, electrolytes, and molasses) can be given.

## FFA Raises \$4.1 Million

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Once again, the National FFA Foundation has achieved a record level of support for FFA and agricultural education programs. At the 63rd National FFA Convention, Thomas Hennesy announced a total of \$4,104,000 to nearly 23,000 enthusiastic FFA members and guests in an overflowing Municipal Auditorium.

Hennesy serves as the 1990 FFA Foundation Sponsors' Board chairman, and is president and chairman of TSC Stores. Hennesy believes the relationship between the 1,234 Foundation sponsors

and the FFA is a very special one. "I think it is a very optimistic view of youth on behalf of the business community. They see a group of young men and women with potential they are willing to support extensively," he said.

He introduced the 1991 FFA Foundation chairman, Robert Reynolds, vice president and general manager, crop protection products division, Monsanto Agricultural Company, who introduced the 1991 Foundation theme, "Bold Leadership for a Bright Future."

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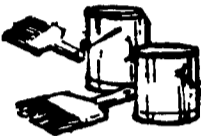
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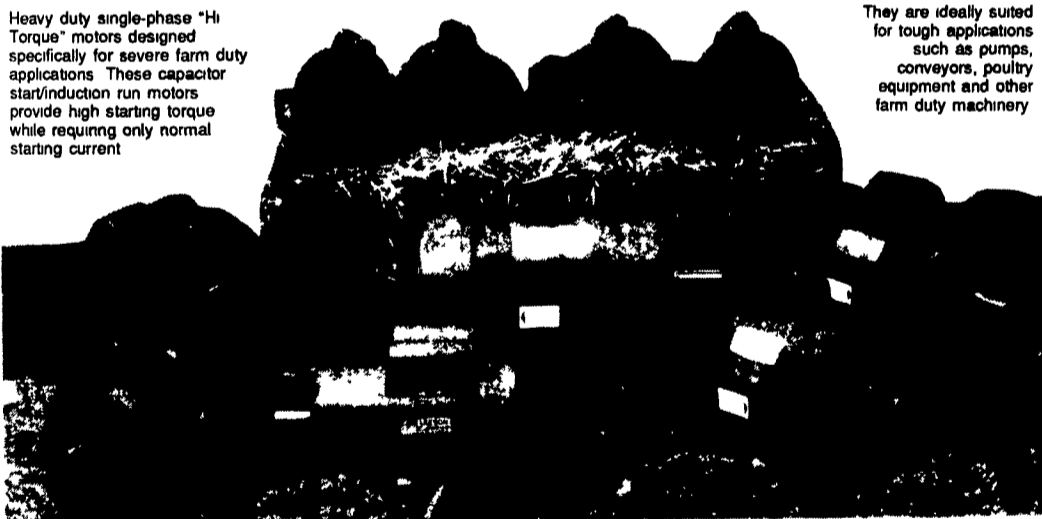
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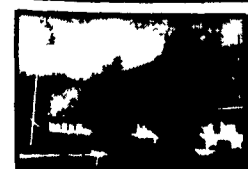


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