

PENNSYLVANIA'S PSEUDORABIES CONTROL PROGRAM

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Pennsylvania has been under pressure by the National Pseudorabies Advisory Committee and neighboring states to increase efforts to eliminate pseudorabies (PR) from its swine herds.

To respond to this pressure, we have attempted to meet with the owners of all quarantined herds. Our objective has been to work with each herd owner to develop a plan to eliminate PR from his herd.

The mechanics of herd plan development was discussed in this column in the February 20 issue of *Lancaster Farming*. To date, we have been successful in implementing herd plans in more than 90 percent of the herds quarantined for PR in Pennsylvania.

In general, owners of quarantined herds have been cooperative. They recognize that, to make cleanup efforts successful, everyone needs to work together so that entire neighborhoods can progress

toward eliminating PR.

Sometimes herd owners are reluctant to cooperate because of perceptions that their neighbors are not doing anything to control the disease. This charge is usually inaccurate. Virtually all of the quarantined breeding herds are regularly vaccinating for PR and monitoring their progress toward cleanup by blood testing. Many of the feeder pigs are vaccinated prior to placement on finish floors.

Feed mills which contract individual producers to produce feeder pigs or to feed out fat hogs are supportive of the program and are doing what they can to control the spread of PR.

Some producers believe that efforts to eliminate PR are futile. These prophecies tend to be self-fulfilling. Ohio progressed from having more than 150 infected herds a few years ago to about 30 today. In Pennsylvania, several of our top managers have been very successful in controlling PR and rapidly eliminating it from their herds by intensive vaccination and segregation of animals. We find that, if the herd manager is determined to eliminate the disease and committed to principles of high health, rapid progress is possible.

As a result of herd plan activity, Pennsylvania advanced to Stage II of the National Pseudorabies Eradication Program in November 1992. Stage II is the Control stage, where the effort is to identify all herds infected with PR and begin cleanup activity in those herds.

It is only fair that the efforts of owners of quarantined herds are rewarded with greater assurance that they will not be reinfected from a neighboring herd that is unaware of its PR status. We have identified more than 200 herds which have at least one quarantined herd within 2 miles and have not been tested for PR. All of these herds will need to be tested in the near future. This testing can be conducted at state expense and will initially qualify the herd to obtain PR vaccine or to be classified as Feeder Pig Monitored. Only Feeder Pig Monitored herds are allowed to sell feeder pigs at commercial markets.

If you have questions regarding the Pennsylvania Pseudorabies Control Program or the requirements of Stage II, please call us at the USDA office, (717) 782-3442. We will serve as your advocate to the Pennsylvania PR Advisory Board, which meets every two months and has primary responsibility for formulating policy.

Our foremost goal is to make the program work for all producers, so let us know what you need. We cannot respond to your needs unless we hear from you.

Please try to promptly complete



the required testing when you are requested to do so by the Pennsylvania Bureau of Animal Industry. Uniform cooperation will ensure

that Pennsylvania producers are relieved of the burden of production losses caused by PR.

**Career Opportunities
Around**

UNIVERSITY PARK (Centre Co.) — The recent increase in public concern about dietary fat and cholesterol has helped fuel a growth in the consumption of poultry meat. As the poultry industry has grown, so has its need for qualified college graduates to fill a wide range of jobs.

"A continuous supply of properly trained young people is required to fill many production, supervisory, management and technical positions," said Dr. William Weaver, professor and head of poultry science in Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences. "Unfortunately, the needs of the industry have far outstripped the availability of graduates trained in poultry science."

Poultry meat is the number one meat consumed in the U.S., with per capita consumption topping 90 pounds annually. Several of the large broiler companies produce more than \$1 billion per year in sales.

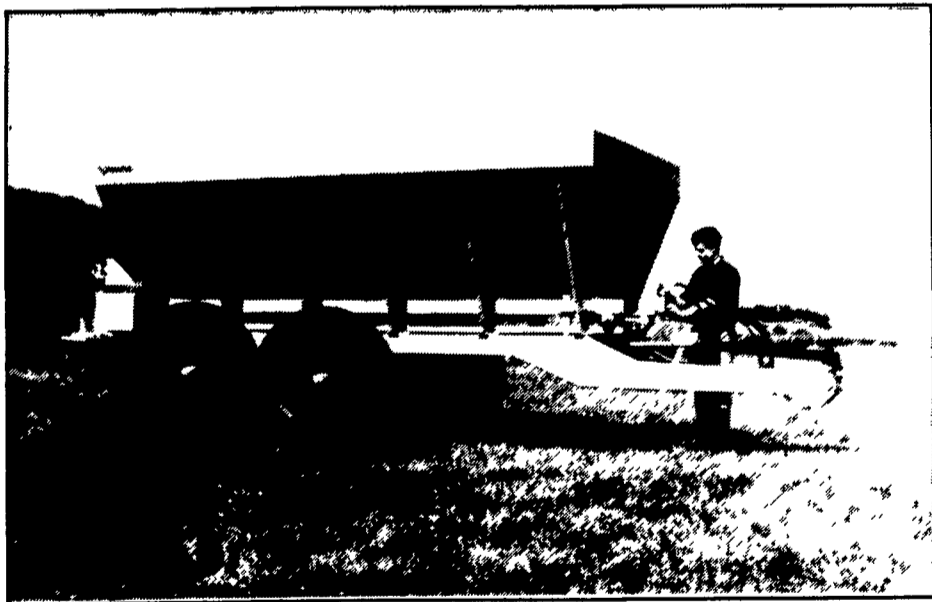
Segments of the egg industry also have grown rapidly. Although per capita consumption of whole eggs has fallen, the sale of processed egg products has risen as much as 18 percent annually.

"Eggs are likely to be marketed very differently in the future," said Weaver. "Some industry observers estimate that 35 to 60 percent of eggs produced by the year 2000 will be sold as processed items and not as shell eggs."

Weaver said these industry trends create a demand for a workforce with a variety of skills. "Students entering the poultry industry today must understand and be trained in disciplines such as business management, finance, business and agricultural law and international trade," he said. "They must have good interpersonal and communication skills. And they still need a good working knowledge of poultry science and the different aspects of the poultry industry."

The undergraduate curriculum in Penn State's poultry science department is undergoing major changes to ensure that appropriate courses are being offered. "Several poultry courses in our department are being updated," Weaver said, "and others taught outside the department are being added to give students the tools they need to become industry leaders in the next century."

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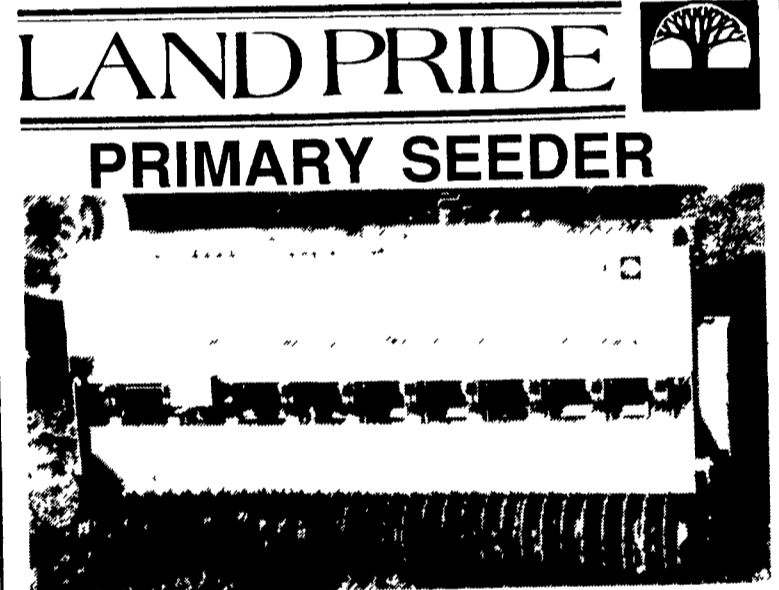
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