

# Egg Quality Assurance Program

(Continued from Page A1)

(SE).

Based on experiences with the USDA SE Pilot Project, review of SE research results, and consumer and public health expectations for a safe food supply, a committee of poultry farmers, poultry industry representatives, university faculty, and government officials developed the PEQAP.

The PEQAP is a voluntary industry program intended to minimize SE contamination of chicken eggs. Although the program cannot guarantee shell eggs to be free of SE contamination, the program does assure commitment of the producer to implement those management practices most likely to prevent SE contamination.

Thus, PEQAP participants are assuring the public that they are

taking every reasonable precaution to assure the safety of shell eggs.

The program calls for:

1. Producers to purchase chicks from only U.S. Sanitation Monitored SE-negative breeder flocks.
2. Sample chick dropping papers.
3. Environmentally sample and culture samples from pullet house between 10 and 15 weeks.
4. Pullets not monitored for SE during the growing period or were SE positive will have the the laying house environmentally sampled 7 to 14 days after placement.
5. Laying houses will be environmentally sampled when birds are 29 to 31 weeks of age and again when they are 44 to 46 weeks of age.
6. Pullet or laying houses with positive samples for SE must be

thoroughly cleaned and disinfected between flocks.

7. Houses with negative environmental samples will not be required to test eggs.
8. Houses with positive environmental samples will be required to test 480 eggs every 2 weeks for 4 test periods. If all the eggs test negative for the 4 test periods, then 480 eggs must be tested each



9. If any egg test is positive, then all eggs must be diverted for pasteurization or hard cooking.
10. To resume sale of eggs as table eggs, 1,000 eggs must be tested every 2 weeks for 4 test periods and test negative. Then 480 eggs must be sampled each month for the life of the flock.
11. Molted flocks will need to

- be environmentally sampled 5 to 7 weeks after return to full feed.
12. An acceptable rodent control and monitoring program must be maintained at all times.
13. All participants must maintain an acceptable biosecurity program.
14. Eggs must be kept under refrigeration.

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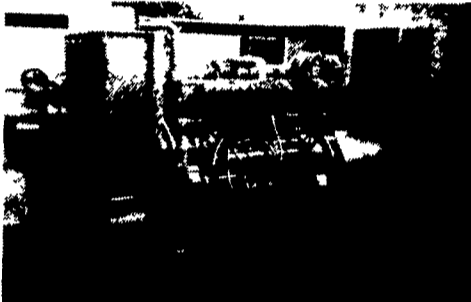
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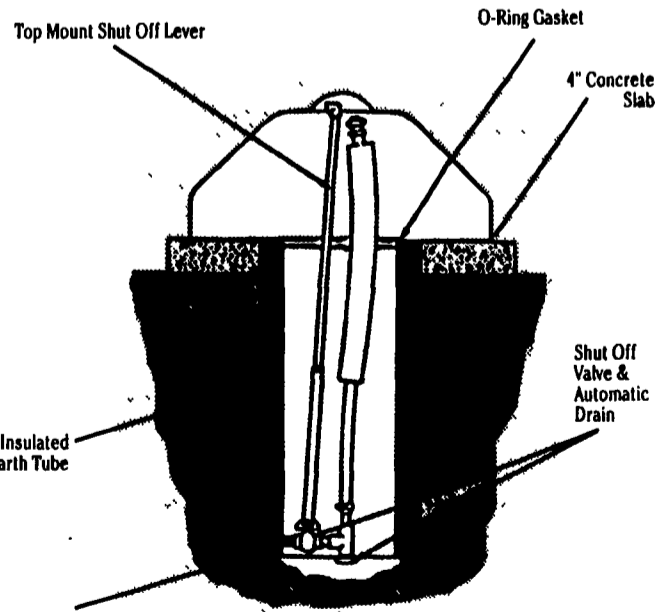
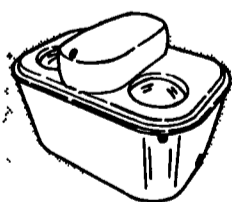
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