

New Penn State Facility 'Customized' For Poultry Research

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According to Penn State, the new facilities will greatly enhance the abilities of the faculty to conduct both basic and applied studies. The customized units will allow scientists to control or vary environmental conditions in ways that were not possible in the past. Visitors tour, on right, the fundamental research building and, at left, the breeder building.

measuring less than four pounds, is the primary bird in the industry, which can produce nearly 300 eggs per year. Studies are looking into feed utilization, since most of the feed that a hen eats is used to maintain the body, which takes the biggest chunk out of feed costs.

"The amount of feed that actually goes into the egg is a small proportion" of the total bird intake, according to Leach. "So they keep trying to breed these hens smaller and smaller."

Research to minimize phosphorous excretions in layer manure is under way.

"In spite of what you hear in the popular press or some advertisements in the supermarket, nobody has truly come up with a low-cholesterol egg," said Leach. "All you hear about is the bad part of cholesterol — it clogs up your arte-

ries. But cholesterol is a vital part of your body. It's in every cell of your body."

Trying to remove the cholesterol from the egg yolk poses fundamental problems because to make the embryo, cholesterol is vital. Without it, "we'd never be able to perpetuate (the birds)," said Leach. "There is some kind of a happy medium there."

Cage Layer And Turkey Growout

This building, measuring 12,000 square feet with a capacity of about 4,500 birds, will soon be customized with an egg processing room, fully automated.

The building includes six floor pens, a cage layer room for 3,000 hens, laboratory, egg cooler, processing, and storage. Twenty-four turkey growout pens measure 10 square feet each.

Visitors were able to view polts in specially heated conditions to prepare them for growout.

Also, in this building, quail eggs are used to study the difference in cholesterol metabolism in birds.

Breeder Building

The breeder house, measuring about 10,200 square feet, has a capacity of 2,200 birds. Included are large insemination cage rooms for breeders, 48 floor pens, an egg cooler, and a laboratory.

Artificial insemination cages measure 16-inches by 18-inches by 20-inches (females) and 16-inches by 18-inches by 24-inches with perches (males). Total capacity with four rows of cages is about 756 females and 252 males.

Included is an egg cooler for fertile eggs, records lab, computers, and record storage.

Floor pens for single male natural matings can be expanded by partition removal. All are free-standing to allow observations of behavior of the birds for study.

Processing Building

The processing building and shops, measuring 2,800 square feet, include a slaughter room with an overhead door to allow truck backup, a shackle chain, and a picker.

For evisceration, available are stainless steel tables, benches, and cabinets.

Included is a processing lab, walk-in cooler and freezer, supply storage, and a shop and garage.

The entire facility is equipped with diesel auxiliary power for backup in the event of electricity failure.

According to Penn State, the new facilities will greatly enhance the abilities of the faculty to conduct both basic and applied studies.

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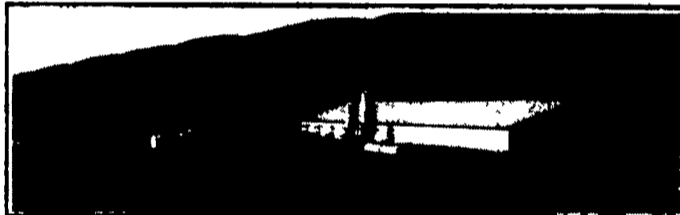
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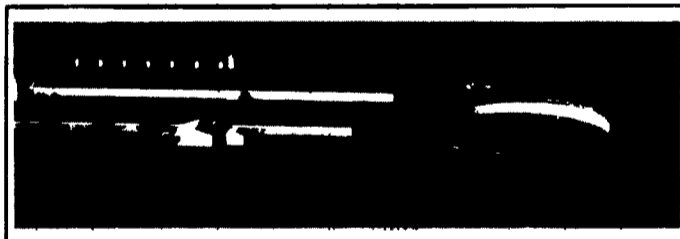


300 Sow Farrow - Feeder Pig Unit

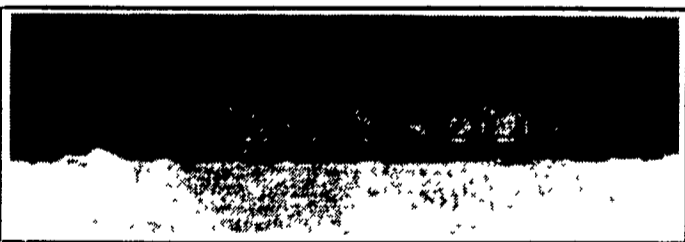


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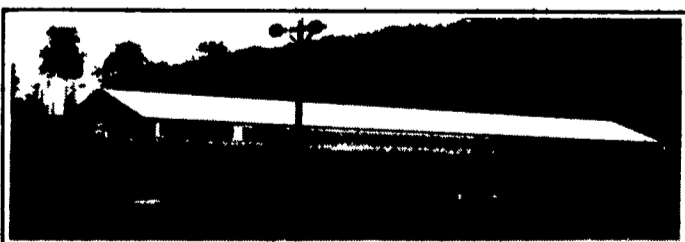
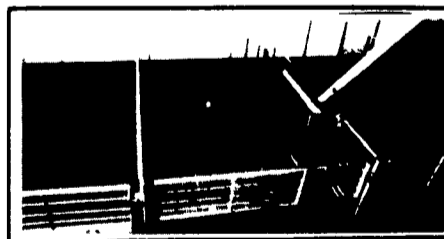
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