



Large roosters show off in the new poultry facilities.



The incubator has customized trays which can turn the eggs until hatching. Total capacity of birds at time of incubation is about 1,800 per case, for a total of about 3,400 birds. According to Dr. Roland Leach, right, the trays can be divided to look at separate individual matings for genetic studies.

Scope Of Poultry Research

(Continued from Page 1)

With the research being conducted at the site by Dr. Carol V. Gay, professor of molecular and cell biology and poultry science, millions of chicken bone cells can be studied — many more than by other researchers, who don't have the chicken bones at hand.

Leach said that there are two types of cells involved in the disease. One type of cell builds the bone and another tears it down. Osteoporosis is what occurs when cells tear the bone down faster than it can be built back up.

"It's a progressive disease. It doesn't happen overnight," said Leach. "Once we're 35 years old, we're on the downhill side as far as our bones are concerned. And when women reach menopause, the slide starts faster, because the estrogen holds back the cells that tear down bones and enhances the cells that build bones."

One day, with the help of this type of Penn State research, a pill may be invented to intercede and allow the bones to stay strong and healthy, according to Leach.

The facility, finished in the spring this year, measures about 50,000 square feet and is equipped with six separate buildings, housing space and equipment for about 15,000 turkeys, broilers, and laying hens. In addition, studies into cholesterol metabolism are under way using quail.

In the fundamental research building, Leach is conducting his own studies into cartilage and its effect on longitudinal bone growth.

Leach said he is doing a study similar to the osteoporosis research.

"I want to be able to intercede," he said. "Certain cells are responsible for much of the crooked legs and the skeletal problems you see out in the broiler pen. We're trying

(Turn to Page 10)

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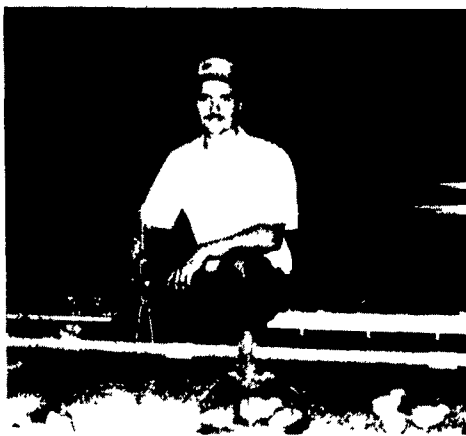
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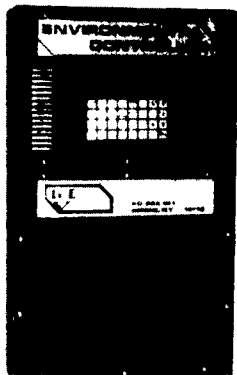
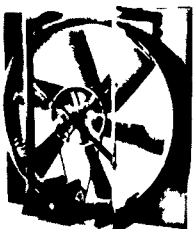
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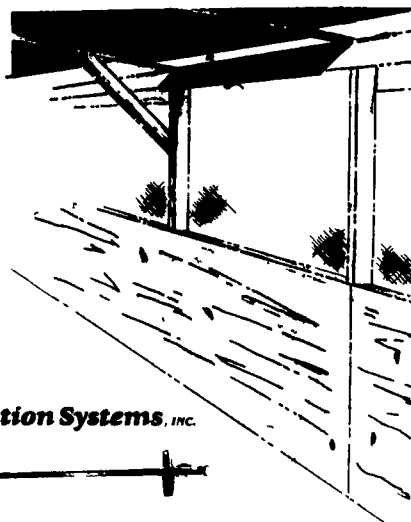
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