

Scope Of Poultry Research

(Continued from Page 10)

The incubators have 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 Leach, the trays can be divided in order to keep pedigrees of genetic strains of birds.

The facility contains a small mixing room for small batches of experimental feeds, said Leach.

One experiment being conducted includes research on trying to reduce the nitrogen and phosphorous in chicken manure using different feed additives, such as enzymes, to improve utilization of the phosphorous in feed.

Large battery rooms, one measuring 19-foot by 29-foot, and small rooms measuring 13-foot by 16-foot, are used to measure growth rate of the birds, according to Leach. Also included is a special surgical suite with a separate air hand-

ling system from the rest of the building.

Meat Bird Building

The meat bird building, measuring 5,700 square feet, is shaped like the letter "H." Each wing has its own storage and change room. The building, equipped with a laboratory, has the capacity for four bulk bins if different diets are used.

Ongoing in this facility is a research effort with a major broiler suppliers to look at "the optimum cross of different strains" by certain producers, according to Leach. "As you know, there is a market for fresh-dressed poultry . . . and a big market for breast filets."

The breeding companies are trying to design a bird to sell to the major processors, and processing companies are looking at specific bird genetics "to find out what is optimum for their operation," said Leach.

The building contains four quadrants with 24 research pens each and a laboratory.



A corner of the meat bird building, at left. The building measures 5,700 square feet. Each wing has its own storage and change room. The building, equipped with a laboratory, has the capacity for four bulk bins if different diets are used. At right is the breeder house, measuring about 10,200 square feet, with a capacity of 2,200 birds. Included are large insemination cage rooms for breeders, 48 floor pens, an egg cooler, and a laboratory. Here, visitors at Ag Progress Days tour the site.

Pullet Building

The pullet rearing building, measuring 9,000 square feet with a capacity of about 3,600 birds, contains six small floor/cage rooms measuring about 13-foot by 20-foot each. The building contains a laboratory, four large floor/cage rooms (measuring 20- by 20-feet each) equipped with light control and temperature control above ambient. Pullet cages include two decks with a capacity of about 2,000 pullets. Included is a large feed mixing capability with a one-ton capacity horizontal mixer.

The leghorn laying hen, now 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 and still maintain egg size."

Cage Layer And Turkey Growout

This building, measuring 12,000 square feet with a capacity of about 4,500 birds, will soon contain fully

automated egg processing equipment, ready to use.

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.

Layers include a 15-foot by 22-foot storage cooler, egg quality lab, and a 2,655 square foot caged layer room. There are four rows of two deck cages, with 40 cages/deck, at two decks and four rows for a total of 640 cages. Each cage holds 4-5 birds. Included is a pit cleaner and cross elevator for manure removal.

In addition, there

are six 12-foot by 17-foot floor/cage rooms for experiments with layers. Capacity is about 600 birds.

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

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

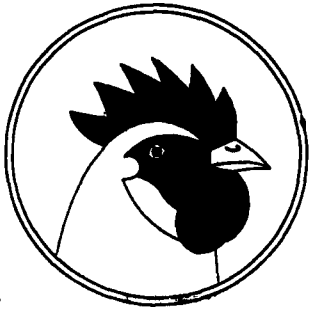
The processing building and shops, measuring 2,800 square feet, include a slaughter room with an overhead door to allow truck backup, a shackle chain, and a picker.

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.

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