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IT'S NOW OR NEVER FOR POULTRY PRODUCERS

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Producing broilers or eggs is a highly competitive business. All successful poultry farmers are, by definition, successful business managers of highly competitive, complex enterprises.

Today's poultry producer needs to keep abreast of many day-to-day concerns such as feed efficiencies, costs of various feed ingredients, disease prevention and control, environmental issues, maintenance of facilities, labor, workmen's compensation, insurance, taxes, etc., etc., etc.

It is understandable how a poultry producer could get buried in all of the numerous details that need to be addressed. As poultry producers become engulfed in the many details, they may believe that they don't have the luxury to "dream about the future."

It is like the engineer who waded into a swamp with the long-range objective of draining the swamp. But he completely forgot about his long-range plans for draining the swamp when he realized his immediate problem was that he was up to his hips in alligators.

Poultry producers need to seriously address the issues of flies and odors, even if there are no immediate concerns being expressed by neighbors today. If you have any interests or desires for your poultry enterprise to be in business five to 10 years from now, then it is essential that you begin planning now for both fly control and odor control.

I certainly am not in a position to specify which best management practices (BMPs) need to be implemented to address these two critical issues. However, it is important that you begin developing strategies for control of flies and odors.

You are probably thinking, "It's those darn city slickers" who are fussing about a few flies and a little bit of smell. First of all, it is not just city slickers and their suburban

OGDEN, Utah — antelope Island just outside here is the home to more than 400 American buffalo (properly called "bison") and this summer it was also host to more than 150 American Bison Association (ABA) members and their families.

The ABA has more than 1,400 members in all 50 United States,

cousins who are complaining about odors and flies. In fact, in some cases, farmers are complaining and threatening lawsuits about the flies and odors of their neighboring farmers. You certainly cannot use the argument "I was here first" as though that gives you a grandfather's clause for producing odors and flies.

The best strategy a poultry producer can adopt is to begin recognizing that flies and odors represent serious problems. Then begin addressing these problems through the adoption of appropriate management strategies. It is also essential that you establish and maintain communications with your neighbors to let them know that you are sincerely concerned about the potential problems of flies and odors. Also, keep them informed of what you are doing to address these potential problems.

It may seem somewhat silly that your future in the poultry business may depend on something as trivial as flies and odors. However, you need to address these critical issues now if you are interested in long-term survival in the poultry business.

Canada and 14 foreign countries. The membership has almost doubled in the past two years, "and we expect to grow by several hundred members in the next two years," said newly elected President, J. Robert Collins of Greenwood, Del. "One of the reasons we will grow so quickly will be because we are asking our members if they want to consolidate with the National Buffalo Association of Pierre, SD. They have about 400 members that are not members of our association.

"In addition, bison ranching is appealing to a great many people from the dairy, cattle, and sheep industries. This animal requires less care than traditional herds, and because the bison is native to the U.S. and Canada, it is easy on the land. The best part of all is the taste of the meat—it's great!"

Collins said the demand for the meat and by-products continues to grow faster than the supply.

The following is a list of the ABA board of directors. Those with an asterisk were elected at the summer conference:

• J. Robert Collins, president, Colvine Bison Farm, Greenwood, Del.;

• Paul Jonjak, vice president, Blue Mountain Bison, Lyons, Colo.;

• Rusty Seedig, secretary/treasurer, Denver Buffalo Co., Denver, Colo.;

Skip Sayers, past president, Sayersbrook Bison Ranch, Potosi,

Mo.;

• Hilda Thomas, Rocky Mountain regional director, Bar X Ranch, Powell, Wyo.;

Marland Ray, Western regional director, Wild West Ranch, Spokane, Wash.;

• Art Stewart, Midwestern regional director, Needmore Buffalo Farm, Elizabeth, Ind.

• Norman P. Straub, Eastern regional director, Bison Have Ranch, Grove City, Pa.;

• Dale Rengstorf, Northern regional director, Rolling R Ranch, Pelican Rapids, Minn.;

• Mitch Larsson, director at large, Antelope Island State Park, Ogden, Utah;

Jim Sample, South Central regional director, JES Bison Farm, Salem, Mo.;

Dixie Byrd, director at large, Trails End River Bison, Presho, SD.; and

• Len Ross, international director, Prairie Buffalo, Taber, Alberta, Canada.

Bison herds in the U.S. and Canada combined now number 200,000 and the ABA predicts there will be a half a million animals roaming the North American continent by the year 2000. Individual herd sizes are growing, and the number of new herds being formed is escalating rapidly. For more information on any aspect of the bison industry, call the ABA at (303) 292-2833, or write to ABA, 4701 Marion St., #301, Denver, CO 80216.

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