

# It Must Be Winter, Because Poultry Respiratory Concerns Abound

**ANDY ANDREWS**  
Lancaster Farming Staff  
MANHEIM (Lancaster Co.) — Wintertime is often synonymous with respiratory concerns in flocks. Poultry producers should examine viable vaccination programs as a result, according to a poultry expert from the New Bolton Center.

Dr. Andre F. Ziegler, D.V.M. and resident in avian medicine and pathology at the University of Pennsylvania's School of Veterinary Medicine, spoke to about 36 producers and agri-industry representatives on Monday at the Penn State-sponsored Poultry Management and Health Seminar at Kreider's Restaurant.

Through the diagnostic period November 1995 to February 1996, working with the New Bolton Center, Penn State, and Summerdale laboratories, Ziegler and other veterinarians have noticed a predictable spike in the mortality pattern

of birds that are challenged by an array of respiratory and other diseases during the winter season.

However, "most companies are having minimal respiratory problems, which is good news," said Ziegler.

Ziegler reviewed several distinct poultry respiratory challenges. One of them, laryngotracheitis (commonly called LT), matches the numbers of confirmed and suspected cases seen in the previous year. "It's about the same as it was last year for this period of time," said Ziegler.

But sorting the confirmed from the suspected cases proves difficult for a variety of reasons.

In confirmed cases, the laboratories have been able to isolate the virus or see the associated lesions in the birds' tracheas. In suspected cases, the labs cannot isolate the virus and make their diagnosis based on clinical signs, mortality, and so forth.

There have been three confirmed cases of LT in layers, two in broilers, and one in pullets. There have been three suspected cases in broilers and one suspected in pullets. Many of the confirmed and suspected cases are located in various regions, but mostly north and west of the city of Lancaster.

Symptoms of LT include a noticeable "gasp for air" (also called "drawback") in the birds. There's a sound similar to a moist cough and gagging. In severe cases, according to Ziegler, "you can actually see (the birds) flinging blood from the trachea."

When exposed, there are fibrinous "plugs" of material in the trachea, with bleeding throughout.

Vaccination has been used. In one case, there was a question of the efficacy of a vaccine. When the diluent was replaced with simple distilled water, the efficacy was boosted from 90 minutes to the recommended two hours.



Dr. Andre F. Ziegler, D.V.M. and resident in avian medicine and pathology at the University of Pennsylvania's School of Veterinary Medicine, left, spoke to about 36 producers and agri-industry representatives on Monday at the Penn State-sponsored Poultry Management and Health Seminar at Kreider's Restaurant. At right is Dr. Barrett S. Cowen, associate professor of veterinary science, Penn State Wiley Laboratory.

Another disease challenge has been infectious bronchitis (IB). "Infectious bronchitis is one (dis-

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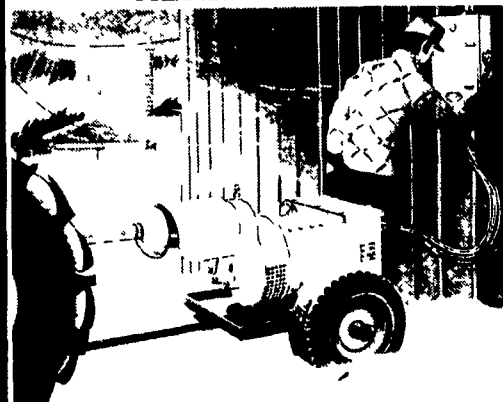
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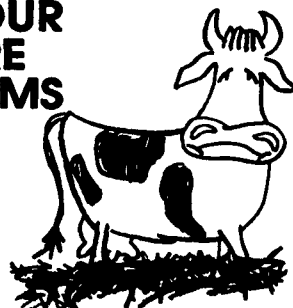
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