

State Lifts Avian Quarantine

(Continued from Page A1)

Hayes, who spoke at a press conference at the agriculture building in Harrisburg, said, "I want to take an action which I believe is appropriate and prudent."

The notice, effective immediately, allows the Lancaster County poultry industry to resume normal activity in the 75-square-mile zone. No permits are required for the movement of poultry and poultry products through the area.

The quarantine has effected about 1.84 million layers, of which a total number of approximately 1.024 million birds have been destroyed. Sixteen premises have been affected, including two in Lebanon and 14 in Lancaster.

However, noted Hayes, three premises containing 660,000 birds remain under special quarantine. Nothing can move from the premise without permit. Two are expected to come off the quarantine on approximately Dec. 1. The third is expected to come off approximately Dec. 15.

"Surveillance will continue," said Hayes. "The lift of the general quarantine does not mean, nor should it be interpreted, that biosecurity measures are no longer necessary."

In fact, Hayes urged producers to continue strict biosecurity on

their farms.

"The poultry industry has shown tremendous courage and they have shown progressive leadership with regard to biosecurity measures.

"Biosecurity," Hayes said, "should continue. The general quarantine is lifted. But that does not mean that we should not continue to be vigilant, that does not mean that we shouldn't continue to use biosecurity measures."

However, the ban on poultry exhibits at the Farm Show remains in effect.

There have been no new cases of A.I. since July this year.

Hayes indicated that on June 18 this year, Gov. Tom Ridge signed legislation appropriating \$5 million for the war on A.I. The amount of money paid out as of the end of October is \$796,902.60. Of that, \$475,000 went to indemnity payments for producers affected. Of the total, \$59,000 went to eggs, \$121,000 went to depopulation, \$12,000 to evacuation, \$92,000 to cleaning and disinfecting, \$16,000 to flats destroyed, and \$60,000 to new equipment.

Last summer, the state department of agriculture petitioned USDA to provide A.I. vaccine. Four million doses were procured at a cost of \$120,000. The state was informed that the manufacturer

assures a shelf life for the vaccine of at least two years.

The poultry industry is valued at \$646.6 million. In 1983, Hayes recalled that avian influenza "wreaked havoc" on the industry, which today is ranked fourth in the country for all chicken inventory and in egg production.

"Its return in 1997 of course carried a great consternation for all of us — those of us in public life and certainly those who are in the private life, specifically in the poultry industry," he said.

During this "very stressful time" in the poultry industry, Hayes noted, there is still the threat from A.I.

"While we are winning the battle," Hayes said, "I am not prepared to declare victory. We must continue to protect our poultry industry in whatever way necessary."



A new chief for the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Animal Health and Diagnostic Services Division of Veterinary Laboratories began work on Monday this week. Dr. H. Graham Purchase, far right, will provide new administrative responsibilities for the lab for all animal species, it was announced at a press conference in Harrisburg Monday. From left, Dr. Max Van Buskirk, director, Pa. Bureau of Animal Health; Sen. Noah Wenger, R-36th; Sam Hayes, Pennsylvania secretary of agriculture; and Purchase.

PDA Announces New Lab Chief

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — A new chief for the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Animal Health and Diagnostic Services Division of Veterinary Laboratories began work on Monday this week.

Dr. H. Graham Purchase will provide new administrative responsibilities for the lab for all animal species, it was announced at a press conference in Harrisburg Monday.

Purchase, who received his veterinary degree at Onderstepoort, the veterinary school of the University of Pretoria in Pretoria,

South Africa, worked in Michigan for the USDA. He received a doctorate in microbiology from Michigan State University in 1970.

Purchase was one of the primary discoverers of the first Marek's Disease vaccine, the most effective vaccine against any kind of cancer in any animal. The vaccine is made and sold by a variety of companies in the U.S. and worldwide.

Purchase's primary goal is to validate accreditation of the lab, to make sure the accreditation continues. Purchase oversees about 40

people on staff.

According to Purchase, there are almost nine billion chickens in the U.S., and almost every one gets the Marek's Disease vaccine. Vaccines are an essential ingredient in providing healthy birds for a rapidly expanding industry.

Now, many vaccines are injected right into the embryo in the egg — before it is hatched. It is those kinds of technologies which make the industry so exciting, Purchase noted.



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