

Conference Focuses On Managing Agricultural Workers

UNIVERSITY PARK (Centre Co.) — Hiring, teaching, and retaining top employees is elemental to the success of any business, whether the company is a multinational conglomerate or a family-owned farm.

A conference, "Workforce Management for Farms and Horticultural Businesses: Finding, Training and Keeping Good Employees," will help agriculture-related businesses find ways to create a work environment that motivates employees and helps supervisors become better managers. The conference is Jan. 13-15 at the Radisson Penn Harris Hotel and Convention Center in Camp Hill.

"The conference will help not only managers of agricultural businesses, but also companies not large enough to have a human resources department, consultants, and educators," said Lisa Holden, assistant professor of dairy and animal science in Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences.

The conference opens Wed., Jan. 13, with registration from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. At 1 p.m., the presentation "How Much Are Your Employees Worth?" will feature Bernie Erven, professor of agricultural, environmental, and development economics at Ohio State University, and Robert Milligan, J. Thomas Clark Professor of Entrepreneurship and Personal Enterprise at Cornell University. At 3:30 p.m., Norman Greig,

owner of Greig Farms in Red Hook, N.Y., will speak on "Enhancing Your Reputation as an Employer." Penn State's Holden follows that segment with a talk on "Communicating the Mission to All Personnel" at 3:55 p.m.

The day's final presentation, "Managing the Multicultural Workforce," will be given by Walter Montross, golf course superintendent for Westwood Country Club in Vienna, Va.

The entire day's schedule for Thur., Jan. 14, will be devoted to four concurrent workshops on the following topics:

- "Performance Feedback: How Am I Doing Boss?"
- "Recruiting and Hiring Outstanding Staff"
- "Getting the Most From Your Employees"
- "Leadership: Coaching to Develop People."

The workshops will be taught by Don Rogers, vice president, consulting, at First Pioneer Farm Credit in Enfield, Conn.; James Beirelein, Penn State professor of agricultural economics; and Erven and Milligan.

The final day, Jan. 15, starts at 8 a.m. with "Hiring With or Without a Contract," taught by Jennifer LaPorta Baker, an attorney with McNeese, Wallace and Nurick in Harrisburg. At 8:20 a.m., "Elements of an Employee Contract" will be taught by John Becker, professor of agricultural economics at Penn State.

At 8:40 a.m., "Guest Workers in Agriculture" will be taught by Al French, coordinator of agricultural labor affairs in the Office of the Chief Economist in the U.S. Department of Agriculture. At 9 a.m., Douglas Schaufler, senior project associate from Penn State's Department of Agricultural and Extension Education, will speak on "Hiring Persons with Disabilities."

Mike Pipa, an attorney for Mette, Evans and Woodside in Harrisburg, will speak on "Discrimination in the Workplace" at 10:10 a.m., followed at 10:30 a.m. by "Farm Employment Rules and Regulations: What you Need to Know," moderated by USDA's French.

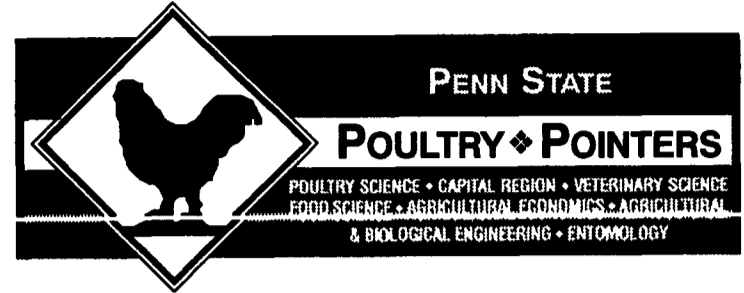
At 10:50 a.m., a workshop will be held on "U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Requirements for Training." The final program of the conference will be "Developing a Safety Training Program," taught by Eric Hallman, safety specialist at Cornell University.

Registration fee for the conference is \$270. The fee includes one lunch and refreshments, a copy of the conference proceedings, and a workbook. Checks should be made payable to Natural Resource, Agriculture and Engineering Service (NRAES). To pay by credit card, register via the Internet at the NRAES web site,

<http://nraes.org>

To reserve rooms at the special conference rate of \$65, call the

Radisson Penn Harris Hotel and Convention Center at (717) 763-7117 or (800) 333-3333.



EGGSHELL QUALITY, BONE STRENGTH, AND PARTICULATE MATERIAL AS A DIETARY SOURCE OF CALCIUM

Carol V. Gay

Professor of Poultry Science and Cell Biology

At the onset of egg laying, a unique bone called the medullary bone appears in the marrow cavities of the leg bones of hens to serve as a calcium reservoir for eggshell formation.

When medullary bone forms, it does so quite rapidly (over a period of a few days) and the process pulls calcium from other bones in the body, more so if dietary calcium is in short supply. This scenario results in the early onset of osteoporosis, that is weakened bones, a common problem in laying hens.

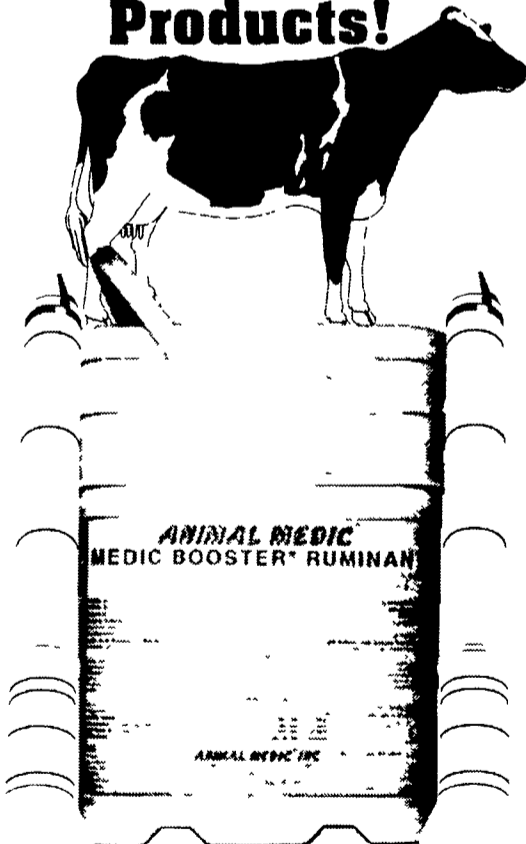
One end result is cage layer fatigue, wherein vertebrae collapse, causing spinal cord injury. Other particularly susceptible bones are keel and wing bones.

Dietary calcium supplementation is well established to enhance eggshell quality. Recent evidence clearly shows that supplementation will delay the onset of osteoporosis and reduce its severity.

These benefits are achieved by providing a diet that contains 4 percent calcium carbonate. The physical form of the supplement is important. It should be particulate, approximately 2.5 to 4 mm (1/8 to 1/4 inch) in diameter. Both limestone and oyster shell serve well.

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