

November Meeting

There were two misprints in the last newsletter. First, it incorrectly stated that the Wrights had won several trophies at the club's annual in-house poultry show. These trophies were actually won by their grandson, Wade Taylor. Congratulations Wade. Second, the APA doesn't have any sanctioned poultry judges, only licensed judges. Neither the poultry show at the South Florida Fair nor the club's in-house poultry show are APA sanctioned.

At the meeting, we discussed several important items and voted on them. It was decided that when another group comes to us asking for a monetary donation, the club will delay voting on its approval until the next meeting. This gives the club time to discuss its options instead of demanding an instant vote. This vote delay does not apply to normal club expenditures or purchases.

The club also decided to explore the possibility of purchasing a new trap. The kind of trap that the club needs is one that is 24" x 24" x 48" long with an additional 12" long live bait compartment. Mr. Greggs and Mr. Wright will be looking into this. The new trap is not intended to replace the old club trap, but rather to supplement it and help keep up with demand.

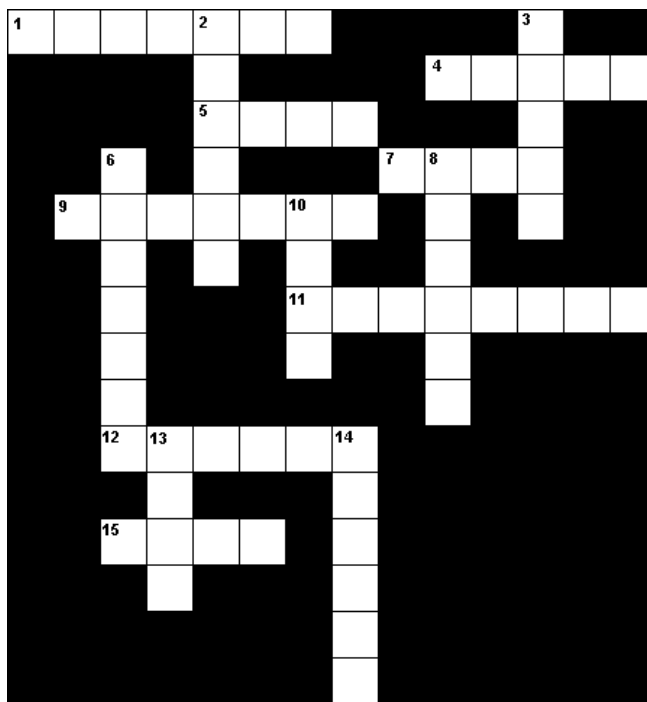
Also, the club decided to look into investing in a copy machine or computer printer for the newsletter. The current copier is owned by the editor and is old, cantankerous, and mean. The bulb that heats up the fuser rollers burned out so they must be heated up with a blowtorch in order for the copies to come out correctly. A decision will be delayed until after the fair.

Thanks to a lot of hard work by MaryAnn VanHeusen and a few others who also sold ads, the club's first annual "Chicken Handbook" was given a green light. It won't be as big and flashy as we had originally planned, but at least we will have the opportunity to prove that we can do it. We have learned from our mistakes on this first edition which means that next years edition will be that much better.

The highlight of the meeting was our guest speaker Mr. Pol Isena of Pol Isena Photography, 4337 Okeechobee Blvd., WPB, FL 33409. Mr. Isena is a professional wildlife photographer and was kind enough to explain to us how to take better photographs for our upcoming photography contest. This definitely gives those that came to the meeting a clear advantage over those that didn't. Mr. Isena explained that lighting, background, and composure are very important. He then went on to show us exactly what he meant by taking several photographs of live chickens using various lighting and background techniques. He showed us some of the many expensive professional tools that he uses, but said that he has known national photography contests to have been won by someone using a \$15 disposable camera. Mr. Isena will be judging our photographs in this year's contest as well. The winning photographs will be displayed at the fair.

The refreshments were brought in by several people. These include Rose Greggs, MaryAnn VanHeusen, and Wakeeta Schwartz. It was all very delicious and included several pies, chips, dip, sandwiches, and even some goat cheese for people to try. We all signed up for side dishes for the Christmas party. Linda Wright agreed to bring her prize winning mashed potatoes (after some prodding). The club will be purchasing a large turkey dinner and a large ham dinner for the party. If you haven't signed up yet, please call Lee and let her know what you will be bringing.

Chicken Parts



ACROSS

1. An epidermal outgrowth
4. Polish chickens have this kind of hat
5. The thing on top of their head
7. The dangerous part of a rooster
9. Fleshy patch of skin below the ears
11. Common in mean roosters, rare in friendly hens
12. Covers the legs and feet
15. The bird's knee

DOWN

2. The rear and side neck plumage
3. Ameraucanas have on head, araucanas don't
6. They hang under most chicken's chins
8. The outer segment of the bird's wing
10. Chicken lips
13. The thing in front that swells when a hen eats
14. The kind of feather in a rooster's tail

Keeping Birds Laying In Winter

by Keith Bramwell, Extension Poultry Scientist
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At this time of year, many people begin to wonder why their birds quit laying eggs. Most people just accept the idea that their birds will not give them any eggs until next spring. However, the winter break from laying doesn't necessarily have to occur.

There are several factors which can help to stimulate birds to begin laying, and these same factors can keep birds laying for a longer period during the year. One of these factors includes providing your birds with the proper nutrition from the time they hatch through their laying season. When chickens are fed a well-balanced starter and grower ration, they easily attain the necessary body weight to allow for proper development of their reproductive organs. Proper nutrition must then be carried into the laying season by feeding birds a layer or breeder ration which is specifically formulated to provide the essential ingredients for egg production.

In addition to good nutrition, birds must be provided a suitable shelter which will protect them from winter winds and rain. Cold birds have a much lower egg production; however, most chickens will not have a problem handling Georgia winters if they are kept dry and out of excessive drafts. Birds which have been over stressed by the elements will be in no mood to reproduce and will switch themselves into 'survival mode'.

Finally, if birds have attained the appropriate body weight for their breed, are being fed the correct diet, are properly housed, and are old enough (18-26 weeks of age depending upon the breed), you can either stimulate them into reproduction, or maintain their reproduction through the winter by providing artificially long days. Most birds' reproductive systems respond positively to increased day lengths because at least 14 hours of light daily is required to be reproductively active. As winter approaches, the daylight hours become shorter. This generally acts as a stimulus to the birds to switch out of the reproductive mode. The shortened day lengths cause hormonal changes in hens. These changes cause regression of the ovaries and oviduct as well as causing other changes. These changes result in birds ceasing to reproduce, but this can be avoided with proper management.

Commercially, hens are kept laying throughout the winter by providing the previously mentioned conditions. In backyard birds, artificial lights can also be used to supplement the daylight hours. This will help keep your birds in production much longer. Because most backyard flocks are used to perching in the evenings, many people wish to add the additional hours of light in the early

morning. By adding the extra hours in the morning rather than the evening, the birds can still find the perches as the sun begins to set without being exposed to immediate darkness. Adding an hour or two of light in the morning prior to sunrise and adding an hour or two in the evening after the sunsets will work equally well for improving egg laying.

To increase the day light hours, a small timer can be purchased from most local hardware stores that can be attached to the power source which feeds your lights to automatically turn the lights on and off at the appropriate times. It is important to use these timers to control the lights so that the birds are exposed to a set duration of light that doesn't vary from day to day. Lights should be set to provide a consistent light schedule from day to day of between 14-16 hours. Lights should be set to come on each morning before sunrise, and they may be set to turn off at least ½ hour after sunrise. If you wish to use lights in the evenings also, they can be set to come on at least ½ hour before sunset, then to turn back off at the proper time to obtain the desired total amount of light for each day. The minimum light intensity needed is not great. A small Christmas tree size white light bulb inside a chicken pen has been shown to be sufficient to stimulate the birds' reproductive system.

To keep birds in production through the winter months, follow these basic management steps, and you should be getting eggs from your birds through winter and on into spring.

Answer to Last Month's I.Q. Question

Question: Approximately what percentage of people in a standard U.S. population have an I.Q. that is below average?

Answer: 50%

In math, the midpoint of a sorted population (list of numbers) is called the *median*. An *average* is the mathematical midpoint and is not precisely the same as the median, however, in a large enough population, such as the population of the United States, the average closely approximates the median. In this question, the numbers are I.Q. scores, but you can have averages of any group of numbers that you can collect. This includes things like average height, average speed, average temperature, and just about anything else. Because the average in this example approximates the median (the midpoint in a list of numbers), we know that half of the group of numbers will be below it, and the other half will be above it. Therefore, the approximate number of people who have an I.Q. that is below average (the middle) is 50%.

Christmas Party

We will be having our annual Christmas Party at our next meeting. If you haven't already signed up for a side dish, please contact Lee Salmon and let her know what you plan on bringing. The club will be supplying the main course which will be both a complete turkey dinner and a complete ham dinner. The club will also be providing the plates, utensils, drinks, and condiments.

“VitaMetaVegamin”

Every year the club gets asked by poultry exhibitors if it will be all right to bring medicines into the poultry show at the fair and give it to their birds. The answer is 'No'. The reason is that certain medicines can cause biological hazards not only to other chickens, but also to the humans that take care of them. For example, the use of antibiotics can cause the chickens to expel antibiotic resistant strains of bacteria. While some medicines are not dangerous, most of the people who take care of the birds are not veterinarians and cannot be expected to know the difference.

Birds that are treasured pets or birds that are sickly should not be entered into the exhibit. Birds that get sickly during the course of the fair are eligible for medical leave. If you notice a bird that appears sickly at the fair, contact Lee Salmon. She will evaluate it and determine if it should be sent home.

At the present time, the club classifies vitamins and electrolytes as being a 'medication' and hence, is not allowed to be given to the birds at the fair. However, the Food and Drug Administration has classified these as being Food Supplements and not drugs, so several club members are asking that the club do the same. In response to this, Lee Salmon, our club president, has agreed to allow this decision to be put to a vote. The vote will take place when we vote on the changes to the fair premium book around April or May of 1998. The rules for this upcoming fair were decided back in May of this year and cannot be changed. Vitamins and electrolyte supplements typically contain healthy amounts of Vitamins A, B-12, C, and D as well as Calcium and Potassium.

If this issue passes, individual owners will still not be permitted to supplement their birds themselves at the fair. It will be done by qualified club personnel. Individual owners may elect at check-in time to have supplements withheld from their birds. The cages of such birds will be marked. The club will do its best to handle this matter correctly, but there is no guarantee that the vitamin and electrolyte supplements will help the birds or prevent them from getting sick. The concentration of these supplements will be intentionally diluted so that they will not discolor the water.

Mini Membership Application

Send your name, address, telephone number, and check (no currency please) for the dues to:

PBCPFA c/o Rose Greggs, Treasurer
8643 El Paso Dr.
Lake Worth, FL 33467-1109

Include the names and ages of your children (if any). The dues for the PBCPFA club are \$12 for families and \$8 for individuals and run from January 1 to December 31. New members joining after June 30 are eligible for an initial half price rate. For existing members, all renewals are due December 31 and are for one year. Non-US members, please add \$8 for postage. Sorry, we can only accept checks payable in U.S. funds.

Refreshments served and a raffle at every meeting!

Poultry Registrations

Poultry Registrations for the fair are due NOW!!! Please get these to Lee immediately. Space is available on a first come, first serve basis. All registrations are dated when they arrive. The deadline is December 24th, but Lee needs these sooner if possible.

Classified

Rate: \$1 per line. Members get first three lines free. Send check payable to PBCPFA to Rose Greggs, 8643 El Paso Dr., Lake Worth, FL 33467-1109.

FOR SALE:

PBCPFAT-Shirts, excellent quality, beautiful logo. Small, Medium, Large, and X-Large sizes are available for \$10.00 (members), \$12.00 (non-members). Contact Richard Greggs (561) 433-8157. Don't be chicken, get yours today.

FOR LOAN OR RENT:

Don't let your flock fall victim to predators! The poultry club owns a trap that members may use free of charge. Your neighbors may rent the trap for a small fee. To reserve your time to use the trap, contact Richard Greggs (561) 433-8157.

WANTED:

Newsletter articles for the PBCPFA newsletter. The deadline is the fourth Friday of the previous month. Submit articles to the editor by mail, email, or in person at the meeting.