

August Meeting

The last meeting was extremely productive. Nearly everybody was there on-time or early. Special thanks go to everyone who cooperated in this manner.

The club decided to move our annual picnic to the month of April. The exact day of the month was left open for a later decision. Many people complained about the rainy weather and heat during the month of June. Numerous families were also on vacation during that month and were never able to attend. Since April is usually cooler and dryer, it should prove to be a better month for the picnic. However, because April is a better month for picnics in general, there may be competition with other clubs and groups for our picnic spot. Lee will be checking into getting a reservation for the club so that we will be assured of our usual spot.

Lee announced that she needs to know who wants to get their chickens pre-tested for the fair. The service is performed free of charge by Marie Saenz - a poultry veterinarian with the state. Dr. Saenz will come to your house and test all of your birds for Pullorum and other diseases. The testing, if negative, will allow you to skip the pullorum testing requirement for the fair. This may shave several hours off your wait time. If you are interested, you must contact Lee at or before the next meeting.

Peter Brynes came up with the idea of producing a special edition PBCPFA Poultry Raising Handbook to be sold or given away at the fair. Peter will be selling advertising space for that publication and it will cover the basics of poultry raising. The specifics have yet to be ironed out, but at press time it looks like we will be giving copies away to everyone who buys a chick or duckling and selling copies to everyone else for \$1 each. The size of the handbook will depend on the amount of advertising sold. If you would be interested in advertising your business in the PBCPFA Poultry Raising Handbook, please contact Peter Brynes.

Peter has also been very busy starting a new 4-H group in our area. The club voted to add his new 4-H group to our list of officially sponsored 4-H groups. The club is so new that Peter hasn't come up with a name for it yet. He has decided to allow his 4-H'ers to

make that decision.

Kim Belvin told of a man he knows who was flogged by a Sebright bantam rooster. The man ended up with medical bills in excess of \$1,000 to treat the injury. Kim warned the club members present to take rooster flogging seriously and to either remove or file down their rooster's spurs to prevent serious injury. Contrary to old myths, a rooster's spur does not contain poison. Some old myths even said that the spurs were similar to the fangs of a rattlesnake, but this is not true. However, it is very true that E. Coli and other bacteria that are present on the spurs from the environment can cause a flogged person to develop a bad case of blood poisoning. This is in addition to the physical damage done by the sharp spurs themselves.

The club accepted nominations for its officers at the last meeting. The members unanimously nominated Lee Salmon for club President, Richard Okerson for Vice-President, Arvis Okerson for Secretary, and Rose Greggs for Treasurer. At the September meeting, we will be accepting further nominations and voting on our club officers.

Lee read a card from the Heritage Farms 4-H club. The card thanked us for our support and told of the many good things that they have accomplished during the year. The card was handmade and had a decorative chicken image pasted to the front of it.

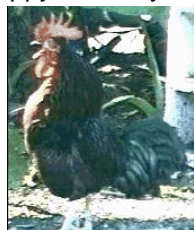
The club also agreed to sponsor a new chicken barbecue contest at the fair next year. The contestants will be 4-H'ers and will be barbecuing a chicken over charcoal BBQ pits. Our club will be buying the chickens used in this competition from a store. The exhibition chickens in the poultry tent will not be used.

Rose Greggs did a really good job with the refreshments at the last meeting. She brought in several different kinds of meats, cheeses, salads, cakes, and snacks. There was also a really neat kind of dip that she made out of cream cheese and secret blend of herbs and spices. All of it was very delicious. We had a pretty good sized crowd present so there wasn't much of anything left over. These refreshments are always free to club members who come to the meeting. With a deal like that, why would you want to do anything else on a Friday night?

Welcome New Members!

Welcome to our new members who have joined us for the second half of 1997. We are so happy to have you!

G.Soward, AU
L. Bailey, FL
L. Balog, FL
Turner Family, FL
L. Vehovec, FL
Zalman family, FL



Nipple Drinkers

Dr. Paul Burke at the University of Georgia did a study on the effect of nipple drinkers on the weight gain of chickens. Their was some evidence of a slight loss of gain but is insignificant against the reduced bacterial load of a closed system. Most modern poultry farms use nipple drinkers.

The brass nipples are fed with a low pressure supply of purified water. They are located in various places around the perimeter of the hen house.

Kicking the Egg Eating Habit

If you raise chickens, you know it can be a problem. You go out to collect the eggs, reach into the nests, and pull out the gooey remains of an egg that somebody cracked and ate. Here is a news flash: It wasn't your kids, your spouse, or your little brother, and probably not even your dog or some other predator. It was more than likely somebody living right there in the same coop. Sometimes the chickens break eggs by accident and would never consider actually breaking them on purpose, but once they find out how good they taste, you can bet they will be back for more. Once that happens, the habit is often hard to break.

There have been several drastic suggestions that will work. Eating the hen that is doing the dirty deed will work for sure, but you can't be sure she hasn't written down instructions for the other birds to follow in the event of her untimely death. Another way is to use blindfolds on your chickens. These really do exist but are a pain to get on right and also hinder your chickens vision. The last alternative is to debeak the offending hen. You can plan on a lot of blood if you choose that option.

One thing that many people have suggested is to get an Easter egg and fill it with the hottest hot sauce you can find. This is **not** a good idea. It turns out that chickens *love* hot sauce. Once they find out that some eggs have hot sauce in them, they will break even more eggs than usual just looking for them.

Ironically, the tainted Easter egg trick turned out not to be such a bad idea after all. When an egg is filled with another equally disgusting substance - chicken manure - the results are much better. When the bad girls find *that stuff* inside the eggs, they will decide that breaking them isn't such a good idea. With this modification, the Easter egg trick will work quite well.

In addition to the easter egg trick, there is another trick that seems to work very well - an ordinary golf ball. It turns out that the bad girls have a hard time telling golf balls from eggs. They peck and peck at those hard, dimpled eggs only to finally jump off the nest in frustration.

Using both golf balls and tainted easter eggs produces exceptional results. The golf balls teach the birds that "eggs" are really hard to crack. The Easter eggs teach them that if they somehow manage to get one open, it isn't worth it.

It takes about a week to break your flock of egg eating using this method. It is far less drastic than debeaking or culling and just as certain.

VOTE

at the next meeting.

Encouraging Broodiness

by John Proudman, USDA, Agricultural Research

A hen is most likely to go broody if she has a secluded place to nest and is left undisturbed. She will be more likely to stay on the nest if she has eggs in the nest, and hens are more likely to go broody during hot weather. Finally, certain breeds have a greater tendency to show broodiness than others. In a backyard operation, this means that you should have plenty of nests for the number of hens, so that a hen will not be forced out of the nest by another hen that wants to use it. The nests should be located in a darkened area of the coop (i.e., away from bright lights or sunlight).

Leave several "nest eggs" in the nest, since it is the tactile stimulation of the nest and eggs on the "brood patch" of the hen that stimulates broodiness. Presuming that you want the broody hen to hatch fertile eggs for you, then you should replace the "nest eggs" with fertile eggs once the hen is firmly broody. Then all the chicks will hatch at about the same time (otherwise, the hen is likely to abandon the nest with the first few chicks that hatch).

A nest egg can be: 1) the plastic eggs that are found in some stores and catalogs for this purpose; 2) an infertile egg that you don't want (not the best choice, since it can break, and it must be replaced before it gets too "old"); 3) plaster of paris eggs (drain the contents of an egg shell through a small hole in the end, and refill with plaster of paris).

Egg-type chicken breeds (like the leghorn) will seldom show broodiness. The meat-type breeds are more likely to go broody. Some breeds, like the Japanese White Silky bantam and Silver Penciled Plymouth Rocks, are very prone to becoming broody.

Light may also be a factor, depending upon your facilities. You need 12 or more hours of light per day to keep hens laying, and the day length should never decline. In the spring, this occurs naturally, and hens under natural light will go broody after laying for a while under increasing day length. However, the day length is now declining and hens will go out of production without becoming broody unless you maintain a constant day length by supplementing with artificial light.

One Year Anniversary

It is hard to believe, but it has been one year since we changed the format of the newsletter. Everyone who has commented about the new format has said that they liked it.

The newsletter has been so well received that the club may soon be branching out to a special fair edition containing as many as 40 pages including full color photographs.

Living Longer

A man goes to the Doctor and asks: "I want to know how to live longer."

Doc: "Do you smoke?"

Man: "No"

Doc: "Do you drink?"

Man: "No"

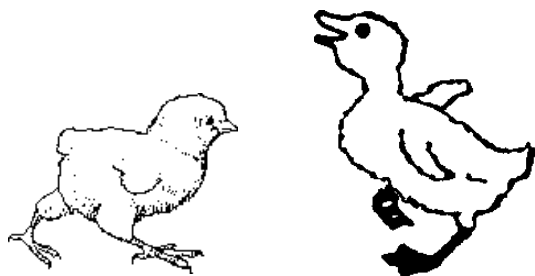
Doc: "Do you chase wild women?"

Man: "No"

Doc: "Well do you at least raise chickens?"

Man: "Certainly Not."

Doc: "No chickens! Well why in the world would you want to live longer?"



The Codfish and the Hen

The codfish lays ten thousand eggs -

The homely hen lays one.

The codfish never cackles -

To tell you what she's done.

And so we scorn the codfish -

While the humble hen we prize,

Which only goes to show you -

That it pays to advertise.

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!

Why did the Hen Cross the Road?

"National Security was at stake." - Oliver North.

"Because the external influences which had pervaded its sensorium from birth had caused it to develop in such a fashion that it would tend to cross roads, even while believing these actions to be of its own free will." - B. F. Skinner.

"Whether the chicken crossed the road or the road crossed the chicken depends upon your frame of reference." - Albert Einstein.

"The news of its crossing has been greatly exaggerated." - Mark Twain.

"To actualize its potential." - Aristotle.

"It may very well have been one of the most astonishing events to grace the annals of history. An historic, unprecedented avian biped with the temerity to attempt such an herculean achievement formerly relegated to Homo sapien pedestrians is truly a remarkable occurrence." - Howard Cosell.

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:

PBCPFA T-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.

Baseball caps with our PBCPFA logo on them. They look fantastic and sell for a low \$5.00! Contact Richard Greggs (561) 433-8157.

Rhode Island Red Chicks. Available in ages from one day to several months old. Contact Richard Greggs at (561) 433-8157.

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.