

115th ANNIVERSARY Egg Industry WATT

Industry

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Enriched housing gains spotlight

Housing suppliers at the Midwest Poultry Convention showcased enriched/enrichable systems.

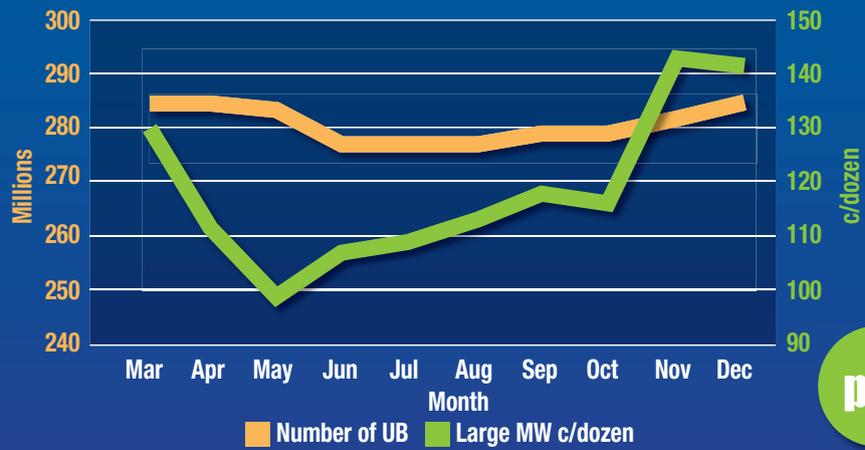
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EU 'mega house' saves money in Georgia, USA



Side wall of house supplied by Techno Impianto showing eave air inlet, side-mounted 2 hp extraction fans mounted in cones. Superstructure, cladding, batteries, ventilation and manure handling were provided as a package.

Forecast of U.S. hen population and UB prices



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Hen numbers are expected to vary by 2% and egg prices by 31% before the end of 2010. Projections prepared by Don Bell.

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• Drinking system



• Feeding system



• Group cage system



• Cage floor



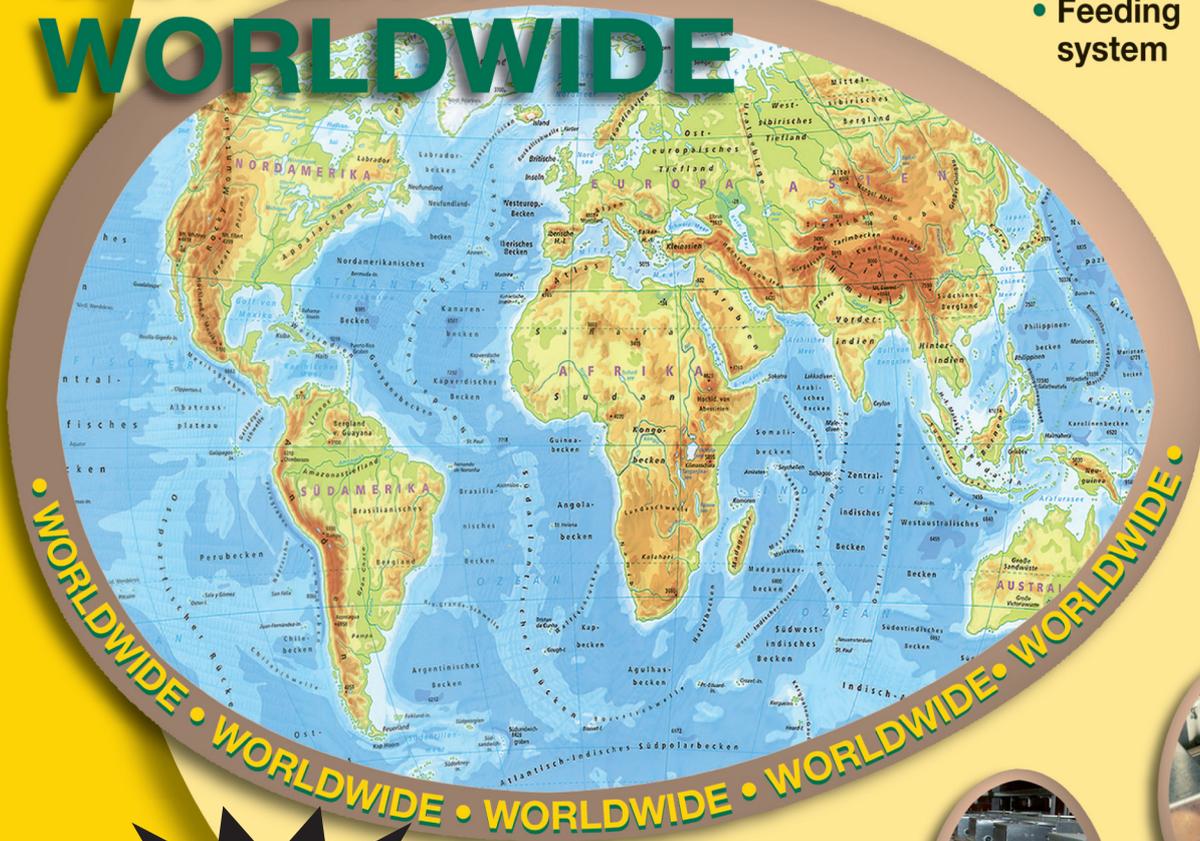
• Egg belt



• Egg collecting system



• Manure drying system



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EDITORIAL

BY DR. SIMON M. SHANE

Will spring's warming trend affect more than the weather?

EU housing and US legislation are changing the industry.

The Midwest Poultry Federation Convention represents the focus of this edition of *Egg Industry*. The technical sessions and the exhibition centered on egg production, compensating for the lack of representation by equipment manufacturers at the recent IPE in Atlanta. Advances in housing, installations, allied products and services are reviewed in relation to productivity and profitability this month and in the upcoming May issue.

Critical statistics relating to the industry are summarized for the guidance of readers. Data on flock size, future prices and trends are considered to assist in developing strategies for marketing and expansion.



Simon M. Shane

A visit to a new house containing 300,000 hens in southern Georgia is a feature in this edition. Selected by a leading producer and industry personality after extensive evaluation, this Tecno installation suggests the direction of future housing of confined hens in the U.S. Suppliers of equipment from Europe are continuing to compete with domestic manufacturers, based on innovation and price, despite the differential in value of the U.S. dollar to the Euro and associated freight costs.

An interview with Howard Magwire of the UEP Congressional Liaison Office in Washington provides an insight into the problems facing egg producers. Current issues include impending legislation and new regulations imposed by an environmentally and consumer-oriented administration which has displayed an emerging bias against intensive livestock production during their first year of operation.

Industry news and new products which have the potential to influence practices in the U.S. are featured at www.WATTAgNet.com.

As we move into spring it is hoped that the increases in both temperature and pre-Easter prices will have a "warming effect" on the bottom line for you all.

Please continue to provide input and suggestions to improve the content and quality of *Egg Industry*.

Simon
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Enriched housing gains spotlight

Profound questions still remain about enriched housing in the US.

By Simon M. Shane, Editor



New options from manufacturers and imported systems offered U.S. producers alternatives at the Midwest Poultry Convention.

Enriched colony housing was the major focus of producers at the 2010 Midwest Poultry Convention in St. Paul in March. Concern over opposition to conventional caged housing has stimulated an interest in this European alternative.

Germany and France with approximately 80 million layers have about 10% of their flocks in enriched colony cages with approximately 35% of 9 million hens in the Nordic countries. The successful passage of Proposition 2 in California in 2008 has increased awareness of European progress in housing.

The justification for the interest in the system is that adoption might possibly placate opponents of confined housing, despite the inherent efficiency and lower capital and operating costs associated with conventional batteries operated in accordance with UEP guidelines.

current year and additional orders for 2010 are pending.

Viable alternatives?

It is reiterated that stalwart opponents of confined housing regard enriched cages as unacceptable, a position paralleling the decision of regulators in Germany. The question arises as to motivation to adopt alternatives to conventional cages.

It is possible that FMI and QSR customers may in fact accept enrichment as a viable alternative without having to mandate floor housing? It is obvious that organizations such as HSUS will continue to be opposed to confined housing based on their published principles and their opposition to intensive livestock production. The American Humane Association is currently evaluating the welfare opportunities presented by enriched cages but have not yet issued an endorsement.

Despite the research conducted in Europe and the U.S. on small

groups of hens in alternative cage systems there is no evidence that production can be enhanced applying enrichment. With optimal management, environmental control and nutrition, the leading commercial strains will attain their genetic potential with little prospect for improvement in livability, egg production or egg mass, given current

stocking density, feeding, manure handling and water supply.

Despite the evident interest in the concept of an enrichable cage system there are profound questions relating to future adoption in the U.S. It is evident that some producers anticipate gaining a competitive advantage by installing these systems. Others consider that this approach will preempt legislation banning conventional cages or satisfy regulators or certifying agencies.

Is enriched enough?

There is obvious justification to consider a small-scale installation for a niche market or for in-company evaluation. The variables including capital and operating cost and production efficiency can be projected with a fair degree of certainty based on EU data.

The return on investment compared to conventional cages will depend on a premium in the marketplace but none of the suppliers of these systems are actually quoting firm figures but offering units on the basis of technical attributes.

Under the best possible scenario welfare advocates and consumers will accept the concept of enrichment and eggs derived from the systems will carry an additional margin. There is however a down side to every situation as evidenced by recent history in Germany where producers who invested in enriched systems have had their product excluded from major supermarket chains.

The reality in the U.S. is that for the intermediate and foreseeable future the vast majority of table eggs will continue to be produced in conventional cages. Facilities may be located in "accommodating" states with Animal Welfare Boards regulating

More on alternative housing systems
Adoption of enriched colony cage systems in four countries www.WATTAgNet.com/9452.html
Recent research and alternative housing systems www.WATTAgNet.com/14876.html

All the major equipment manufacturers displayed versions of enriched and enrichable cages based on either European designs or representing direct imports from Italy and Germany. In some cases the units which were displayed on the show floor represented prototypes. A number of the suppliers indicated that they had successfully installed units during 2009 and the

housing and production practices for confined livestock.

Alternative cage systems

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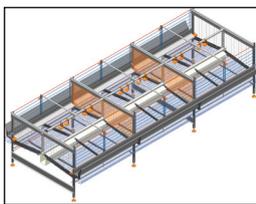
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Enriched housing gains spotlight

with a mat at the other. Parallel perch rails are installed to allow either 5.9 inches or 4.9 inches per hen depending on density within the module. The principle of adaptability by installation of components to achieve full enrichment provides options for subsequent enhancement after purchase of the basic pre-enriched unit. This approach in itself indicates a measure of uncertainty as to the future direction of housing and the level of commitment of producers to the requirements of their food service, QSR and FMI clients, advocates of welfare and regulators.



Chore-Time Egg Production Systems



This U.S. manufacturer unveiled their VERSA colony system. In the basic form the system will house hens in compartments comprising 9 birds at 68 inches² as at present. Partitions can be removed without affecting structural integrity to provide from 116 inches² to 144 inches². Upgrades to conform to enriched standards include perches, a nesting area, scratch panels and an area for dust bathing.

Upgrades to conform to enriched standards include perches, a nesting area, scratch panels and an area for dust bathing.



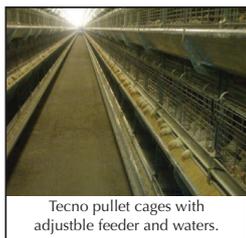
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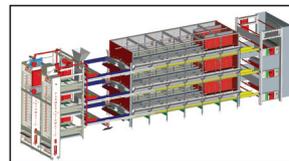
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Facco of Italy

As with all the European systems, design conforms to the European Council directive number 1999/74/CE. The requirements are 116 inches² of floor area per hen, a minimum height of 17.7 inches, 6 inches of perch space and 4.7 inches of trough space per hen. Installations supplied include a simulated litter area, a claw-wear strip and a nesting area with a suitable pad. The Facco convertible system is supplied with on-belt manure drying and ventilation and can be supplied in configurations of up to 6 tiers requiring a height above floor of 13.9 feet.

Farmer Automatic

This company supplies EU-compliant colony cage units with either 3 or 4 tiers. Floors are epoxy coated and the longitudinal square-form perches are constructed of plastic for foot comfort. Solid partitions can be removed to increase colony size and to provide flexibility. The conventional Farmer Automatic feeding chain, stainless steel nipples and the patented Eggsaver features are included.



Salmet Cages



Salmet supplies both pre-enriched and enriched cage systems based on European requirements. Twenty hens can be housed in pre-enriched cages through 2012 and thereafter adaptation kits are supplied to provide a scratch area and nest with from 95 inches² to 120 inches² per hen depending on flock size ranging from 16 to 20 birds. Salmet supplies installations with either a feed chain or a feed cart. An additional option is automatic refilling of the litter area. Both longitudinal and transverse perches are installed in the cage to conform to EU requirements.

Ford Dickison of Canada

The base system of the FDI condo enrichable layer unit can house from 18 to 72 hens per colony depending on the width of the partitions at a density of 67 inches² per bird. Condo installations incorporate belt manure collection, fixed or variable speed egg collection on 4-inch wide polypropylene egg belts and a flat chain feeder. Nest curtains, perches and an auger tube to deliver litter for the scratch area can be retrofitted to provide for full enrichment.



Jansen of Holland

This company markets the VolMaxx Mini Aviary system which can be supplied with up to 4-tier configuration. Each 82-inch wide module is fitted with a feed circuit, scratch area, perches and two nests. Jansen claims that utilization of floor space in their module is superior to other units and that their plastic floor slats contribute to foot comfort.



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No shortage of industry issues for UEP's Magwire

Economy, job creation and health reform have sidetracked the focus on immigration legislation.



Howard Magwire has enjoyed a lifelong involvement with the U.S. egg industry. A native of Wakefield, Neb., he worked in the local packing plant as a teenager. His career with the USDA extended from 1968 to 2003 during which time he was instrumental in devising programs to improve the quality and safety of both shell eggs and derived products.

Egg Industry: Please share with us your experience in the U.S. egg industry.

Howard Magwire: I started working in the M.G. Waldbaum Company (now Michael Foods) "egg" plant in Wakefield,

and eventually in determining policy for the egg products inspection program, egg and poultry grading, market news and procurement for federal supplemental nutrition programs. I retired as AMS deputy administrator for poultry programs in 2004 implementing policy and regulatory activities for shell eggs and then subsequently for egg products. After spending 28 years in our nation's capital, I started looking at where I wanted to go next. That process came to a halt in early 2004 when Al Pope and Gene Gregory offered me a part-time job working with Gene on UEP's animal welfare program. After a few months, they talked me into working full-time and resuming the commute to an office in D.C.

Along with long-time UEP Washington Counsel Mike McCloud and Randy Green, I work to advance the interests of the shell egg and egg products industries and represent producers on the Hill and at the regulatory agencies.

EI: What are some of the major legislative challenges facing the industry?

HM: For many years, egg producers have involved themselves in addressing environmental concerns. The UEP has been proactive in anticipating federal regulations and advising producers. With the advent of the current administration there has been greater emphasis on greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) and release of nutrients from CAFOs. Applying scientific principles and data collected by other UEP

staff and its Environmental Committee and universities, we have made a strong case for realistic controls.

EI: Energy also appears to be an emerging issue?

HM: As the world population grows we must conserve energy and develop new resources. Cap-and-trade, more commonly referred to as cap-and-tax, has not gone on since the House passed its bill last summer. We will continue to see legislation focusing on sustainable energy sources. Many of our producers continue to have concerns over the impact of diverting corn to ethanol production. As you know, two-thirds of our production costs are for feed.

EI: Food safety appears to be a concern of the current legislature

HM: Over the last few years, food safety has been the concern of anyone running for national office. The egg industry, of course, is already strictly regulated, more so than most other sectors of the food industry.

The FDA Final Rule addressing *Salmonella enteritidis* in eggs is the most recent example. Due to this, we do not believe that food safety legislation now under consideration by the Senate will impact egg producers to the same extent that it will affect other, less heavily regulated industries.

Generally the UEP sees some good things coming out of new food safety legislation. These changes will rectify deficiencies in the nation's food safety system without creating undue problems for our industry. For example, we believe there should be a greater emphasis on regulation of the safety of imported foods and food and feed ingredients.

There, of course, are certain things in the legislation passed by the House and being considered in the Senate that we would like to see changed. To name one, we do not think producers should have to

Henry Kuhl discusses his company's success as it celebrates its centennial year

www.WATTAgNet.com/14883.html

Neb. when I was 16. During my junior year in college, I learned that the U.S. Department of Agriculture was looking for a part-time laboratory technician and Dan Gardiner and Dr. Milton Waldbaum urged me to apply.

It was simpler to transition from industry to USDA then. I started working for USDA. After graduation from Wayne State College majoring in chemistry and spending a couple of years in the army, I accepted a full-time position with the USDA. Over more than 30 years with the Department I was involved in many egg and poultry programs, initially as an egg products inspector and shell egg grader

pay user-fees for the pleasure of coming under additional government regulation.

EI: What about a single food agency?

HM: This is a perennial consideration. For now, the odds are low. Congress will likely pass the FDA-related legislation this year to strengthen that agency's authorities. Reportedly, the administration will eventually propose changes to USDA's food safety laws, and that is when advocates of a single agency might see an opening. For now, however, there does not seem to be major support for the idea in Congress, outside of some traditional advocates.

UEP has not taken a position on this issue. Contrary to the picture often painted by some in the media, based on our experience, USDA and FDA are each fully capable of making their regulatory presence known.

We do have concerns about the loss of institutional knowledge whenever a major government reorganization is undertaken. Whenever a profound change in organizational structure occurs, there is a loss of knowledge through retirement and separation and, unfortunately, sometimes just a lack of interest by managers and executives in the new agency.

The Department of Homeland Security has been around for a half dozen years now and still faces organizational issues. It takes time for appropriate formal and informal communication channels between the regulated industry and government to be reestablished.

EI: Are there any other legislative issues of importance to the industry?

HM: Absolutely. We have concerns over regulation, or lack of regulation, of commodities markets, congressional inability to pass comprehensive immigration reform, animal rights, and the move to limit use of antibiotics to name just a few.

UEP and its Washington counsel have been extremely active in all of these areas. But nothing is easy. For example, we thought immigration reform would be taken up before now, but this issue has been sidelined by the more urgent concerns relating to the economy, job creation and health reform. We remain optimistic however and believe that we again see signs that Congress will address the immigration and other issues that are negatively impacting all of American animal agriculture.

EI: Do you anticipate any improvement in funding for research which will benefit the egg industry?

HM: One of the problems we face is that there are fewer representatives and senators with a farming background. We are very fortunate in that Collin Peterson from Minnesota, the chairman of the House Agricultural Committee, ranking member Frank Lucas from Oklahoma and others as

champions of animal agriculture.

Regardless, we are functioning in an era of budgetary restraints. This is evident in allocations to the USDA Agricultural Research Service. Poultry disease and nutrition are also under-funded. To maintain productivity, safety and to supply an emerging population we need to fund both the research and the regulatory activities.

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| No shortage of industry issues for UEP's Magwire |

EI: What is the impact of exports?

HM: Unlike other segments of the U.S. poultry industry, egg and egg product exports are a relatively small part of our industry. However, every time a trading partner applies a new non-tariff trade barrier to stop our exports, there is a disproportionate negative impact.

We continually address trade barriers which are disruptive and impede progress. This year we look for a more level playing field where we can compete fairly.

We expect that shell exports will grow slowly with shipments to NAFTA nations and to the Caribbean. That is, if new environmental requirements, the animal rights activists' agenda, food safety laws and wild commodity speculation don't price us out of these and existing markets.

EI: How can the industry help you?

HM: The most important thing individual members of the industry can do is follow the absolute best practices for animal welfare, food safety and the environment. A single incident can destroy years of trust and accept-

ance by members of Congress, regulators, and consumers. All of us must endeavor to operate our farms and plants according to the highest ethical principles.

Every producer and further processor member of UEP and the American Egg Association should be involved in association committees and meetings. These associations serve as a single voice for the industry. But, it is also important that individual producers are citizen advocates. Our legislators listen to their constituents and we need to continually interact with our representatives and senators, get to know them, let them understand our problems and the contribution we make to the economy and the food supply. We should support UEP's Spring Legislative Meeting which is a wonderful opportunity to interact with decision makers in Congress.

I encourage producers to support Egg-PAC, administered by the United Egg Association, independently of the UEP.

EI: Your message for the industry?

HM: From my long experience and contact with the egg industry I believe that we have a great future if we remain proac-

tive in addressing existing and emerging problems. This industry has addressed and met many challenges over the years.

When I first worked with the industry, it was facing the dark cloud of cholesterol. While it has literally taken decades, the medical profession, scientists, nutritionists and hopefully one day, even the government agencies will recognize that cholesterol is basically a non-issue. Further, more people than ever before recognize the great nutritional benefit and value that eggs represent.

The industry has always been ahead of others on food safety. The 5-Star Program and our voluntary SE efforts are evidence of this. Decades ago, the egg and egg products industry successfully lobbied for the Egg Products Inspection Act. This industry-driven legislation has been validated by the increased safety of our nation's egg and egg products supply. In fact, the Centers for Disease Control have not linked an outbreak of human illness to egg products in almost 40 years. Not a bad record.

I know that the industry will continue to make contributions to the nutritional needs of our nation. **E**

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EU 'mega house' saves money in Georgia, USA

United Egg's environmentally-friendly unit optimizes investments in feed, labor and overhead. By Simon M. Shane, Editor

United Egg, the production arm of Dixie Egg Co., recently commissioned a 303,000 hen unit on their

Humpty-Dumpty Farm near Hoboken, Ga. According to Jacques Klempf, president of Dixie Egg, the decision was made

Matt Edwards, complex manager, demonstrates selection of ventilation, feeding and lighting operations.



“to optimize resources including energy and feed and to provide the most cost efficient production system.” He added that “by concentrating hens in a house equipped with multi-tier manure belt batteries we have created an environmentally acceptable and flock-friendly unit, eliminating the use of pesticides, enhancing food safety and the productivity of our flock.”

Nine hens per cage

After reviewing alternative suppliers, United Egg opted for the Tecno Universal multi-tier, on-belt drying system, based on durability, ease of operation and proven success in the European Union. Tecno supplied the steel work and cladding for the house, cages and associated equipment and ventilation. The system houses nine hens to a cage at a density of 67 square inches per bird with a total of just over 303,000 pullets transferred. Five rows are installed in the 62 foot wide house with a 450 foot cage length.

The twelve-tier installation has a catwalk dividing the system into two sub-units of six tiers. Gantry are installed



Feed cart installed on Tecno battery installation distributes feed to 12 tiers along a 400-foot cage row. Unit can be pre-programmed as to the desired number of feedings per day.



Dennis Hughes, general manager (left), and Jacques Klempf, president of Dixie Egg Co. outside the new complex in Hoboken, Ga.

to facilitate inspections of flocks and the placement and removal of hens. Air is forced over the manure belts to expedite drying. Belts are moved approximately 75 feet each day resulting in complete removal over the 400 foot cage length over five days.

There are twelve side-wall extraction fans for minimal ventilation and 42 hp

extraction fans mounted in one gable wall for tunnel ventilation. There are two sets of eave inlets with baffles and

What are the real results of housing regulations? Go to www.WATTAgNet.com/13360.html

the ventilation system is programmed to operate in four stages depending on environmental conditions. Each fan is rated at 34,000 cfm providing a total air displacement approaching 6 cfm per hen. Evaluation of the flock showed uniform temperature with minimal stratification from the lowest tier to the highest and along the cage rows.

The Tecno computer management system can program ventilation, adjust inlet openings and operate a high-pressure nozzle evaporative cooling system which may be installed in the future. The computer also monitors feed and water consumption, egg production for each tier and the entire house and maintains a database of production variables. A feed cart system is installed which operates on a two-phase cycle distributing feed on the outward leg and returning after 60 minutes to be refilled. With five feed cycles per day troughs are effectively “refilled” ten times daily.

Clean shells, minimal damage

Manure is conveyed to an adjacent shed where turbine blowers force hot air exhausted from the building down through the manure to reduce moisture content. A detached manure shed with a composter is contemplated for the future when additional houses are

erected on the site. Egg roll-out is efficient due to the slope of the cage floor which follows the EU standard.

An arrestor wire holds the eggs beneath the feed trough preventing shell damage. The height of the arrestor wire is adjusted during collection to ensure that eggs are released gently onto belts. The combination of roll-out and staggered release to the belts contributes to clean eggs with minimal shell damage.

Lower cost per hen

Tecno Impiante of Padova (near Venice) supplied the turnkey installation with advanced features at a cost in the vicinity of \$14 per hen. Initial estimates of operating costs – including utilities and labor – appear lower than existing high-rise houses on the same farm expressed as a cost per dozen. Obviously fixed components of cost including depreciation and interest have to be considered in establishing how competitive this installation will be against U.S. sourced equipment and housing.

At the very least the advantages of

scale are apparent in feed efficiency, labor utilization and management overhead.

For further equipment information access the Techno Impiante website at www.poultryequipment.com. **EI**

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INDUSTRY NEWS

Egg prices expected to vary by 31% (chart on cover)

The chart on the front cover shows the projection prepared by Don Bell for the remainder of 2010 depicting hen population and anticipated UB Midwest egg price.

Hen population will remain constant with the traditional reduction during the three summer months and a buildup during the fall to Christmas.

It is expected that there will be a 7 million hen difference between the highest months at 283 million and the lowest months at 277 million hens representing a swing of 2%.

There will be a 44 cent/dozen differential between the lowest UB projection for May at 98 cents/dozen and the highest in November at 142 cents/dozen or a 31% swing from the highest monthly value.

United Egg Producers meets with legislators

United Egg Producers will be reviewing a number of issues with federal legislators, according to the association's newsletter, United Voices. Topics to be discussed include welfare and implement-

tation of the FDA rule on salmonella, which is due to take effect on July 9, 2010. These topics have been raised at the level of the House Agriculture Committee and with FDA regulators. HR 4733 would require the U.S. government to purchase eggs only from facilities meeting guidelines similar to those outlined in California's Proposition 2.

FDA to investigate restricting antibiotic use in livestock

Food and Drug Administration Commissioner Dr. Margaret Hamburg stated in a House Agriculture Subcommittee hearing that the FDA is investigating regulatory pathways to restrict antibiotic use in farm animals. Some members of the congressional panel questioned the evidence that antibiotic use in livestock is associated with the emergence of drug-resistant pathogens of significance to humans.

Rep. Tom Latham, R-Iowa, invited Dr. Hamburg to visit the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Animal Disease Center at Ames, Iowa, and gather scientific information from producer organizations.

American Egg Board establishes relief program for Haiti

The American Egg Board has established "Eggs for Haitian Relief" as an extension of its ongoing Good Egg Project, which provides eggs to hunger relief efforts. This initiative will be carried out in conjunction with Feed the Children, which accepts food, medicines, clothing and other necessities for children and families following natural disasters.



Jacques Klempf of Dixie Egg, chairman of the AEB with Joan Ivy, president of AEB, with a donation for relief following the earthquake in Haiti.

Producers participating in the program include Rose Acres, Michael Foods, Herbruck Poultry Ranch and Dixie Egg. Producers wishing to contribute should contact the American Egg Board at aeb@aeb.com or phone 1.847.296.7043.

The American Egg Board cooperated with Feed the Children in 2005 following the devastating Asian tsunami. **EI**

MARKETPLACE

Ad sizes start at one column by one inch and can be any size up to six column inches. Logos and photographs are acceptable. Add color for an additional \$30 per color per insertion. The rate for EGG INDUSTRY is \$130 per inch per insertion (1-time rate), \$120 per inch per insertion (6-time rate), and \$110 per inch per insertion (12-time rate). The production charge is included except for ads with excessive make-up demands.

For more information on how to place your ad, contact: **Ginny Stadel, Tel: 815-966-5591, Fax: 815-968-0941 E-mail: gstadel@wattnet.net**

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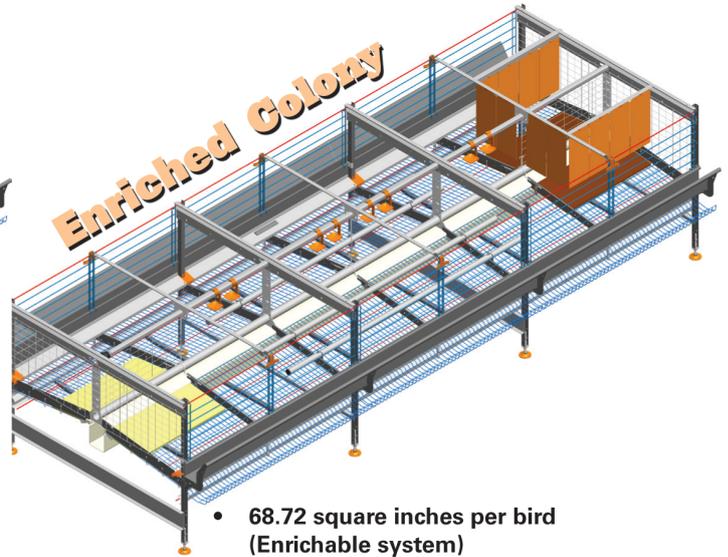
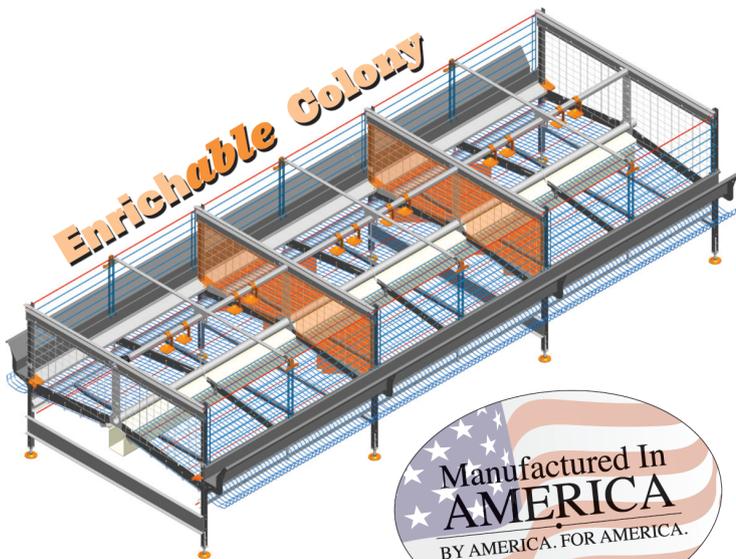
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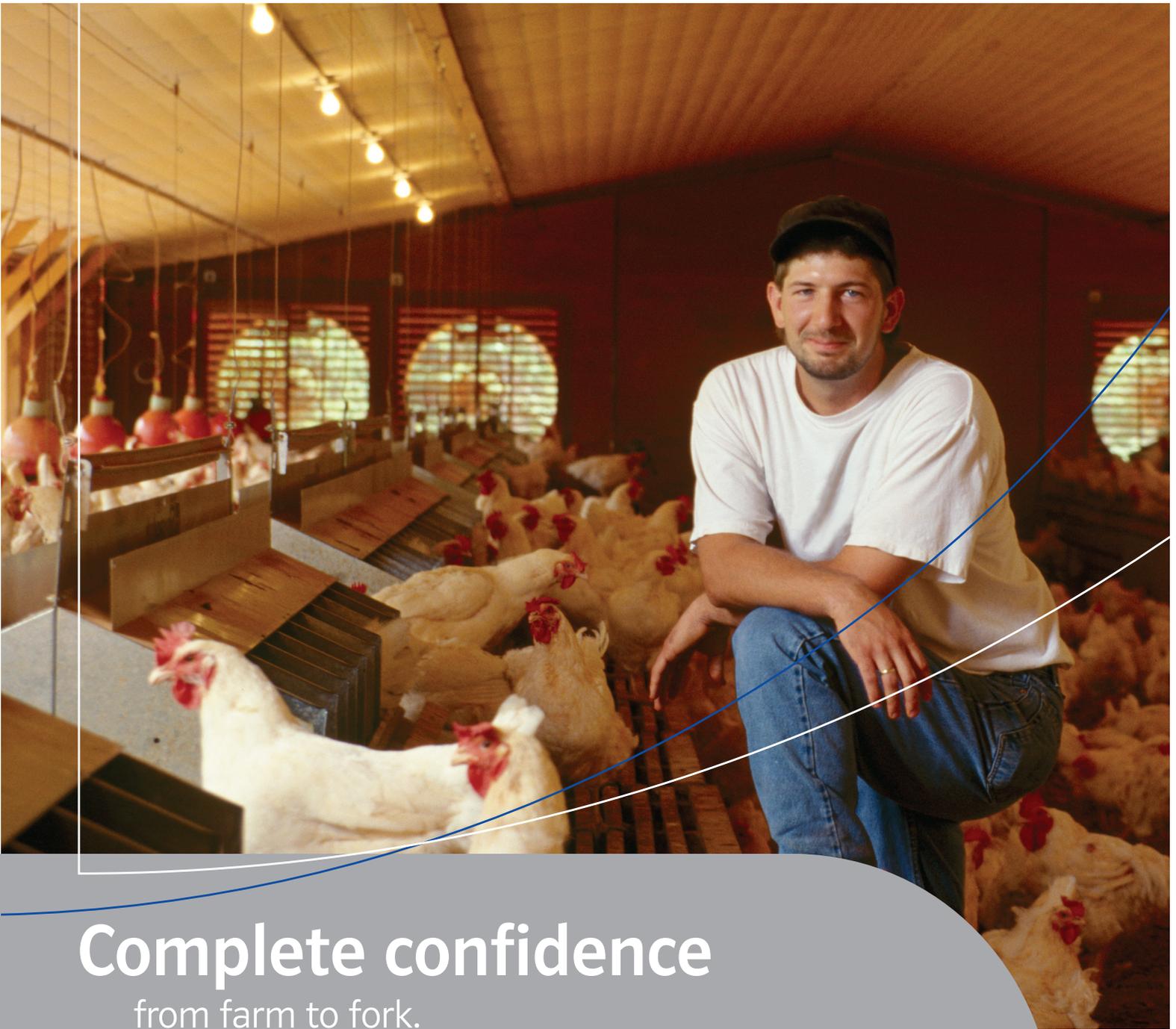
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