

# Egg Industry

News for the Egg Industry Worldwide

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### FDA still expects to complete egg farm inspections in 2011



The U.S. Food and Drug Administration is conducting inspections of large egg farms to check compliance with the Egg Safety Rule.

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### Ethanol Waiver Legislation RFS Flexibility Act of 2011

U.S. Corn Stocks-to-Use Ratio for the Current Crop Year	Reduction in RFS Required
• Above 10.0%	No adjustment
• 10.0 – 7.5%	10% reduction
• 7.49 – 6.0%	15% reduction
• 5.99 – 5.0%	25% reduction
• Below 5.0%	50% reduction

Proposed legislation would make the corn-based renewable fuel standard flexible in response to low corn inventories.

### US egg company wins Crystal Egg Award for investment in Mozambique



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The Crystal Egg Award was given to Center Fresh Egg Farms for its role in helping to develop a modern egg operation in one of Africa's fastest growing economies.

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## EDITORIAL

BY TERENCE O'KEEFE

# US still trapped in the ethanol roach motel

All of the soybeans and corn hadn't been harvested yet when the November crop report was released by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, but it was still evident that it wasn't a



Terrence O'Keefe

great crop year. With a low carryover from last year and disappointing harvests this year, experts say grain prices might not set new historical highs as they did in 2011, but they likely won't fall much. If Congress takes no action, the mandate for corn-based ethanol will be 13.2 billion gallons in 2012. Bill Roenigk, senior vice president, National Chicken Council, told the audience at USPOULTRY's Grain Forecast and Economic Outlook Conference that U.S. ethanol policy suffers from the "roach motel syndrome" — politicians have checked in, but they won't check out.

### Corn rationing

The USDA estimates that for the 2011-12 crop year, ethanol production will consume 37% of the U.S. corn crop, animal feed and residual will use

35%, 12% of the crop will be exported, food and industrial uses will total 11%, and there will be a residual of 5%. After making ethanol with corn, the residual solids can be dried into Distiller's Dried Grains with Solubles, which are available as a feedstuff for livestock and poultry feeding. The total volume of DDGS produced in the 2011-12 crop year is expected to be equivalent in weight to 12% of the corn crop.

Under current legislation, the corn-based ethanol mandate is scheduled to increase incrementally to 15 billion gallons in 2015 where it stays until 2022. In addition to this, the corn-based ethanol industry wants to be approved for some or all of the Undifferentiated Advanced Biofuels Mandate, which will be a half billion gallons in 2012, and will rise in steps to 5 billion

***If Congress takes no action, the mandate for corn-based ethanol will be 13.2 billion gallons in 2012.***

gallons by 2022. The U.S. will export 1 billion gallons of corn-based ethanol in 2011.

### Over \$4 billion

Since October of 2006, it is estimated that the cumulative additional cost of corn to the egg industry due to ethanol subsidies, mandates and tariffs is \$4.6 billion,

# Egg Industry

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Proposed legislation would make the corn-based renewable fuel standard flexible in response to low corn inventories.

according to Roenigk. The monthly additional cost to the egg industry exceeded \$140 million this past summer.

A coalition of groups is calling for Congress to take a number of actions regarding ethanol this year:

- ✓Let the Volumetric Ethanol Excise

Tax Credit for blending ethanol with gasoline and the import duty on ethanol sunset at the end of 2011.

- ✓Prohibit the definition of advanced biofuels to be changed to allow corn-based ethanol to qualify.

- ✓Allow for removal without penalty of

non-environmentally sensitive land from the Conservation Reserve Program program.

- ✓Minimize or prohibit further government subsidies and federal grants for funding the building and expansion of infrastructure that encourages the manufacturing, distribution and selling of corn-based ethanol.

- ✓Seek a partial or full waiver of the Renewable Fuels Standard through legislation for a mandatory stocks-to-use ratio trigger mechanism, legislative action permitting individual states to opt-out of the federal RFS mandate and/or file a legal challenge with the Environmental Protection Agency. (See Table 1.)

### Industry call for action

The corn lobby and the ethanol industry have been remarkably successful over the years keeping Congress tied up in the “roach motel.” They suffered some setbacks this summer when efforts to extend VEETC and the imports tariffs beyond 2011 failed, but the battle isn’t won yet.

***Just because the corn-based ethanol lobby lost a battle this summer doesn't mean other battles will be easy to win.***

Roenigk called on poultry producers to contact their representatives and senators to ask them to support the five initiatives listed above.

I agree with Roenigk and I want to remind producers that just because the corn-based ethanol lobby lost a battle this summer doesn't mean other battles will be easy to win. Your support is needed.

Terrence  
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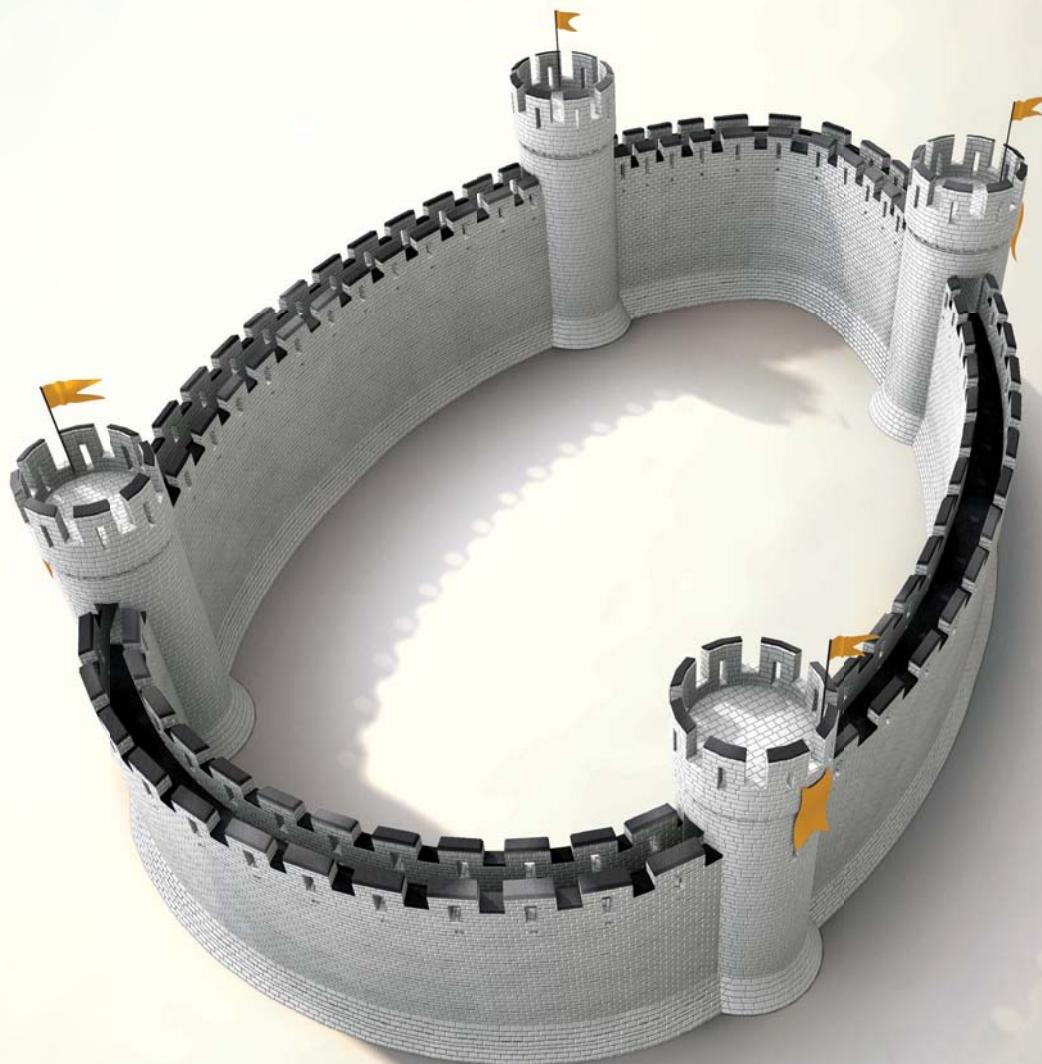
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# Making the case for enriched colony housing for layers

*Former UEP Animal Welfare Advisory Committee chair, Dr. Jeffrey Armstrong, says the welfare agreement prevents move to all cage-free production.*

By Terrence O'Keefe

Involvement with the United Egg Producers' Animal Welfare Advisory Committee from its inception in 1998 until a few months ago, Dr. Jeffrey D. Armstrong, president, California Polytechnic State University, defended the UEP's welfare agreement



**Dr. Jeffrey Armstrong said, "The industry is at a key tipping point just as it was before science based animal welfare guidelines were adopted."**

with the Humane Society of the United States at the cooperative's executive conference in Tucson. "This deal saves cages; that to me is a big deal. It is a big deal for bird welfare. It is a big deal for the consumer. It is a big deal for producers."

industry and consumers. He said that welfare for hens in enriched colonies will be better than for birds in traditional cages. Enriched cages allow for the expression of hen behaviors while maintaining the advantages of relatively small group size. He explained that without the enrichments, if you give the birds more room, they will peck each other and increase mortality.

## Tipping point

"The industry is at a key tipping point just as it was before science based animal welfare guidelines were adopted," Armstrong said. Public perception has shifted against housing birds in traditional cages because a bird can't flap



**Enrichments like perches reduce stress in layers and improve bird welfare. Photo courtesy of JS West.**

social expectations and the values of the community and other stakeholders. If public trust continues to erode, then the egg industry would lose its social license to operate, according to Armstrong.

Social license is the privilege of operating with minimal formalized restrictions; legislation, regulation or market requirements, based on public trust by doing what is right. Without a social license an industry faces greater regulation, litigation and legislation that lead to a rigid, bureaucratic and high-cost industry.

National standards for hens are needed to shift the tipping point back to keep the egg industry's social license intact, according to Armstrong. Otherwise even more control from outside can be expected.

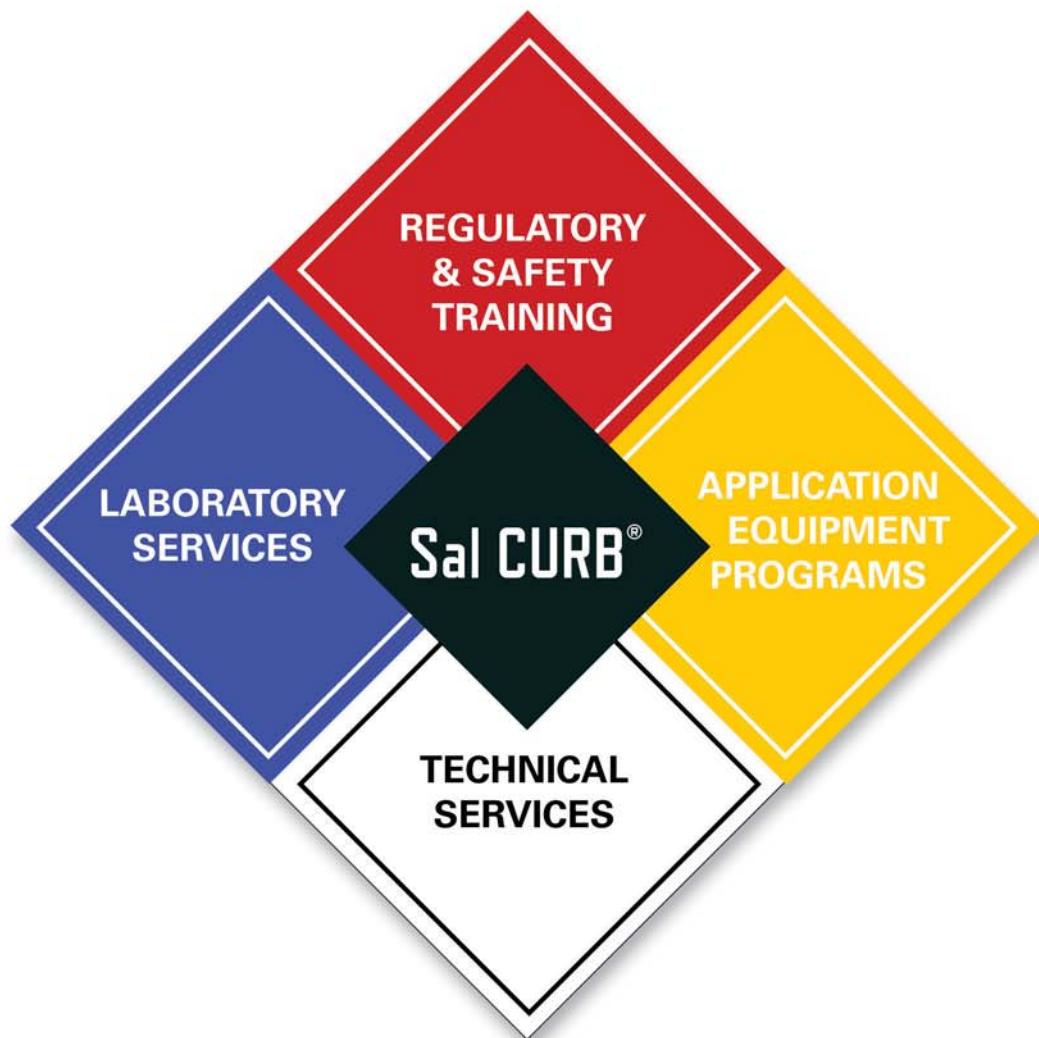
## Other options?

Armstrong said that he knows the UEP-HSUS agreement is not perfect. The cage space allocations in the agreement were not established based on research, they were negotiated, but he suggested that this agreement was the

Armstrong, who also serves as an advisor to McDonald's Corporation on matters involving animal welfare and corporate social responsibility, said that national standards for laying hen welfare make sense for both the egg

its wings in the cage like they can in enriched colonies or in cage-free housing. This shift in public opinion has reduced public trust in the egg industry. Armstrong said that public trust is a belief that activities are consistent with

**Learn more about the impact of enriched colonies and bird behavior by reading *Enriched colonies: An attempt to solve the welfare dilemma* at [www.WATTAgNet.com/27027.html](http://www.WATTAgNet.com/27027.html)**



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best deal available for egg producers. “It is easy to list reasons why the deal is bad, but it is difficult to list alternatives,” Armstrong said. “The agreement is not ideal, but I don’t think it is possible to keep the current (UEP Certified) guidelines with cages.”

The UEP established its animal welfare advisory committee in 1998 and in 2000 adopted science-based guidelines. The committee has made recommendations over the ensuing years and these voluntary guidelines have been modified as the science has progressed. Armstrong said that had UEP not chosen to take a unified approach back in 1998, the egg industry would be fragmented. Multiple states with cage bans would be in place, a great disparity between ballot initiative and non-ballot initiative states would exist and the industry’s social license would be equally fragmented. He stated that the end result would have been an unsustainable situation, with non-cage as the dominant source of eggs.

Because the UEP was proactive in 1998, the egg industry is in a much bet-

ter place, according to Armstrong. He acknowledged that passage of federal legislation would be difficult, but he said that this was now the best course for the egg industry. He said that egg producers need to explain to the rest of animal agriculture that a non-cage future would be tough for the egg industry. He also said that producers need to ask other animal

agreement fails to pass in Congress, Armstrong cautioned the industry that the road could get quite rocky. He asked producers to think about how HSUS might act “with a busted deal.” “The fact that HSUS agreed to enriched cages will be dwarfed by the positive view they will receive by saying: We proposed what was best for the birds but the in-

***“The agreement is not ideal, but I don’t think it is possible to keep the current guidelines with cages.”***

agriculture groups not to oppose the legislation without considering the impact on the egg industry if the legislation doesn’t pass.

### The future of egg production

Armstrong challenged egg producers to think carefully about multiple futures for the industry. “I contend that pathways to saving cages are limited,” he said. “The science behind enriched cages is solid; public perception favors enriched cages and the HSUS. Economics favors non-enriched cages, how do you think that this will play with consumers?”

If legislation based on the UEP-HSUS

dustry chose money and greed over hen welfare,” Armstrong said.

Armstrong challenged producers who oppose the deal to “make sure you have a plan B before you sink plan A.” He stressed again that a key to passage of the legislation would be to explain to the rest of animal agriculture the unique position that the egg industry is in, in regards to animal welfare.

### Not just science

A holistic approach provides for evolutionary not revolutionary changes in the food supply chain, according to Armstrong. Science-based guidelines are key but not the only component to this approach. He said that research, education and extension programs must grow and adapt to the holistic approach.

Armstrong called on the egg industry to support the Coalition for a Sustainable Egg Supply. This organization is supporting a commercial-scale research project that evaluates the sustainability impact of cage-free aviary housing systems, enriched colonies and conventional cages. He also asked the industry to support the new research facility for alternative housing for layers at Michigan State University.

The increased cost of enriched cage eggs over those produced in conventional cages is around \$0.01 per egg, according to Armstrong. He said that enriched cages offer welfare improvements over conventional cages and that enriched colonies are better than non-cage because of animal welfare and food affordability.

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# FDA still expects to complete egg farm inspections in 2011

*Inadequate rodent and pest control, not following the written Salmonella enteritidis plan, and/or not following environmental testing program cited as most critical deficiencies found.*

By Terrence O'Keefe



The FDA is conducting inspections of large egg farms to check compliance with the Egg Safety Rule.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration expects to complete its inspections of the nation's approximately 600 egg farms with more than 50,000 layers by the end of 2011, according to Dr. Gerardo A. Ramirez, Center for Food Safety & Applied Nutrition, Office of Food Safety. Ramirez told the audience at the United Egg Producers' annual board meeting that the agency and affiliated state inspectors had completed around 300 inspections through the end of September. He said that the "600 farms" on the inspection list of egg farms include several that he called "washouts," establishments that are on the list but are not farms. An example of a washout would be a stand-alone egg packing facility that does not have layers present on the premises, but at sometime it was registered as a farm.

Ramirez made his presentation electronically because FDA budget restrictions prevented him from attending the meeting. When asked to characterize whether or not the FDA was satisfied with the progress made by the egg industry in implementing the Egg Safety Rule, he said, "This rule

is in its infancy. I couldn't speak to whether the agency is satisfied with the industry's actions. We are happy with the way the inspections are going. We can't say yet whether or not the industry is giving the kind of results that the agency wants."

## Two kinds of inspections

The FDA's on-farm inspections are intended to evaluate the farm's *Salmonella enteritidis* plan implementation and compliance with the Egg Safety Rule. Ramirez said that the FDA is conducting two types of egg farm inspections in 2011, targeted and comprehensive. A risk assessment tool was used to decide if a farm gets a comprehensive or targeted inspection.

All of the inspections in 2010 were comprehensive. Targeted inspections consist of a records review and a walk through of some of the houses, no environmental samples are taken. A comprehensive inspection consists of records review, a walk through of some of the houses and environmental

## Comprehensive on-farm inspections: What is FDA looking for?

### Evaluate SE prevention plan to be sure that it includes:

- ✓ Procurement of SE monitored pullets
- ✓ Biosecurity measures
- ✓ Rodent and pest control measures
- ✓ Cleaning and disinfection measures
- ✓ Adequate refrigeration of shell eggs
- ✓ Determine if the environment was sampled, if any positive results, determine whether eggs were tested and/or diverted as required

### What will the inspector do?

- ✓ Determine if the SE plan has been implemented
- ✓ Review records
- ✓ Determine if the SE prevention measures are being practiced
- ✓ Conduct environmental sampling
- ✓ Verify farm registration
- ✓ Walk through and a sample of houses

Source: FDA

swabs taken in the houses to look for SE. Targeted inspections can become comprehensive inspections if after the inspector arrives on the farm red flags are raised, according to Ramirez. Some states have cooperation agreements with the FDA and state inspectors are performing some of the on-farm inspections in those states. Ramirez said that state inspectors are only performing targeted inspections.

## Inspection results

In the inspections conducted in 2010, Ramirez said that the biggest problem found was inadequate control of rodents on some farms. Besides the presence of too many rodents, Ramirez said that some farms were not checking rodent traps on the schedule dictated by their plan. He also said that some farms were not eliminating clutter that can serve as rodent harborage around the layer houses. Harborage needs

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## Common questions asked of FDA by producers

**Q: Does the producer have to give the FDA a copy of their SE prevention plan?**

**A: One has to be provided to be copied, if you don't want it taken off the farm, you might want to produce a copy in advance.**

**Q: Who can the producers call to get results of the inspection?**

**A: The lead investigator should give the producer a business card and you should start calling this individual and then call the district office if necessary.**

**Q: Do producers have to change Tyvek suit or boots between houses if the houses are considered to be part of one bio unit?**

**A: No, this is really more of an issue when a house becomes SE positive; not during normal operations. If a farm has an SE positive house, then they need to control movement of people from the positive house to other houses.**

**Q: Does issuance of a 483 automatically mean a warning letter?**

**A: No**

**Q: If rodents are observed during the walk through of a house will I automatically be out of compliance with the egg rule?**

**A: No, a rodent index is used and the same holds true for flies.**

**Q: Why are some farms that have never had previous issues classified for comprehensive inspections?**

**A: The risk assessment tool was used to decide which farms got targeted inspections and which got comprehensive inspections. Size of the farm plays a role in the risk assessment calculations.**

Source: FDA

So the average positive rate for all 1,976 environmental samples was only 2.5%.

Ramirez stated that one deviation from the Egg Safety Rule that has been cited by inspectors at multiple farms has been a failure to test pullets for SE at the proper time. He said the FDA requires that pullets are tested for SE at 14-16 weeks of age, even if you move pullets at an earlier age. Pullets need to be tested wherever they are at 14-16 weeks of age. So far in 2011, Ramirez said that the most significant findings in the inspections have been farms that don't have an SE plan, don't have adequate

to be eliminated by controlling vegetation growth and removing trash, implements and other items even if rodent numbers are under control.

Through the end of September of 2011, the FDA had conducted 276 inspections, 46 comprehensive and 230 targeted. An

additional 31 farms had been inspected by state inspectors. On the 46 comprehensive inspections, 147 houses were environmentally sampled, and 20 of these were found to be positive for SE. But in the 147 houses, a total of 1,976 individual samples were taken, and 49 of these samples were posi-

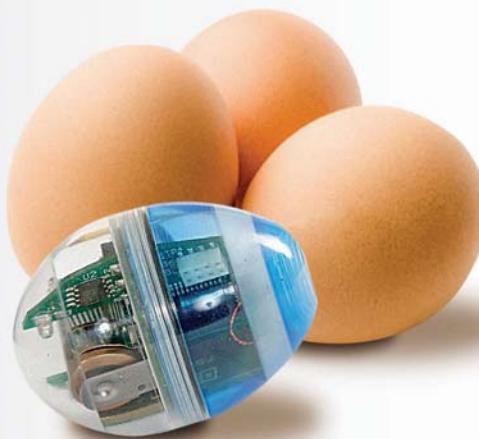
rodent and pest control programs, or don't do environmental testing as required.

After the inspection is complete, there will be a close out meeting to go over the inspector's observations. Ramirez stated that if deficiencies are found, a Form 483 can be issued, which can serve as a warn-

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**FDA considers any of the following findings during an on-farm inspection to be significant deviations:**

- ✓Lack of a written SE plan or significant requirements of a plan not included
- ✓Failure to procure SE monitored pullets
- ✓Failure to include rodent and pest control measures
- ✓Failure to include measures for cleaning and disinfection of the poultry house
- ✓Failure to include measures for adequately refrigerating shell eggs
- ✓Failure to test the environment at the required time intervals
- ✓Failure to divert eggs or test eggs following a positive environmental sample
- ✓Failure to implement an SE prevention plan
- ✓Failure to maintain records documenting implementation of an SE prevention plan
- ✓Failure to monitor conditions required for implementation of an SE prevention plan

Source: FDA

sample is collected by the producer on the farm. The USDA and FDA signed a memorandum of understanding, which states that USDA will notify FDA of any SE positive samples reported by egg producers. As a result, while egg producers are not required to notify FDA of SE positive environmental samples, it will be informed by USDA after the producer has notified the USDA.

Ramirez said that there has been considerable discussion about how organic egg production, which requires outdoor access for layers, fits with the Egg Safety Rule. Some people are opposed to the use of outdoor elevated porches, and they contend that outdoor access should require that the birds are actually in contact with the ground. Ramirez said that the FDA has heard comments from some people that FDA is against outdoor access, and he said “this is not true.”

“FDA is not opposed to outdoor access,” he said. “FDA wants safe outdoor access.” FDA and USDA have a working group looking at SE prevention for organic production. **EI**

ing for items of regulatory concern. A step above receiving a Form 483 would be if the FDA issues an untitled letter. Another more serious action by the agency is the issuance of a warning letter. Ramirez said that a warning letter is a “serious notification,” and it is posted online. A warning letter requires a written response to the FDA within

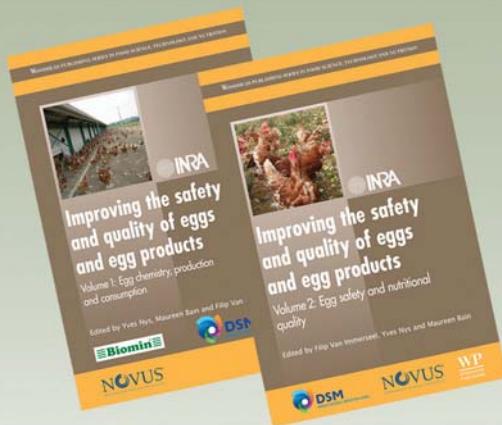
15 days. The most serious outcome of an inspection would be issuance of an injunction by the FDA, or a seizure of eggs.

**Notification of SE positive test**

The USDA Agricultural Marketing Service requires that its graders be notified if an SE positive in-house environmental or egg



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# 2012 IPE/IFE offers more for the egg industry

*The 2012 International Poultry Expo and International Feed Expo features a conference on the future of the American egg industry.*



Over 800 companies display the latest technology, equipment, supplies and services used in feed manufacturing and in the production and processing of poultry and eggs.

The 2012 International Poultry Expo, co-located with the International Feed Expo, has moved to a Tuesday-Wednesday-Thursday format to increase the number of educational programs available before and after the Expo. The global poultry and feed industry event is scheduled January 24-26, 2012, at the Georgia World Congress Center in Atlanta.

Sponsored by the U.S. Poultry & Egg Association and the American Feed Industry Association, the Expo will highlight the latest technology, equipment and services used in the production and processing of poultry and feed products.

## 2012 Expo highlights

Egg producers, processors and marketers will want to attend Charting the Course: An Executive Conference on the

Future of the American Egg Industry. This event will be held on Wednesday morning, January 25, and it will explore the challenges facing the egg industry including high input costs, social issues and government regulations.

This year's education program schedule also includes the International Poultry Scientific Forum, Pet Food Conference, Animal Agricultural Sustainability Summit, Hatchery-Breeder Clinic and the AFIA International Feed Education Program. New for 2012 are the IPE Pre-Harvest Food Safety Conference and the National Renderers Association's 2012 International Rendering Symposium.

## UEP board meeting

As usual, the United Egg Producers will hold a board meeting in Atlanta during IPE week. In 2012, UEP meetings will be held prior to the show on January 23-24 at the Omni Hotel, which is adjacent to the World Congress Center. UEP members and allied members are invited to attend industry briefings held on Monday and Tuesday. Registration for this meeting is separate from IPE registration, for details go to [www.unitedegg.org](http://www.unitedegg.org).

## International Poultry Expo/ International Feed Expo 2012

Tuesday, January 24—Thursday, January 26

Georgia World Congress Center  
285 Andrew Young International Boulevard  
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For more information about the 2012 IPE/IFE, go to [www.ipeweek12.org](http://www.ipeweek12.org).

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## Register for the show

Attendee and exhibitor pre-registration and hotel registration for the 2012 International Poultry Expo and International Feed Expo is available online for the discounted price of \$40 through January 6, 2012. After January 6, 2012, the registration fee will increase to \$60.

Resuming for 2012 is the popular "Member to Atlanta" (M2A) program, which waives the registration fee for attendees from member firms of either IPE or IFE engaged in the production of poultry or eggs for consumption and feed products. The program is supported through the sponsorship of Expo exhibitors. **EI**



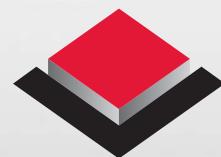
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# US egg company wins Crystal Egg Award for investment in Mozambique

*The Crystal Egg Award was given to Center Fresh Egg Farms for its role in helping to develop a modern egg operation in one of Africa's fastest growing economies.*

By Terrence O'Keefe



Workers at Mozambique Fresh Eggs are trained how to beak-trim pullets.

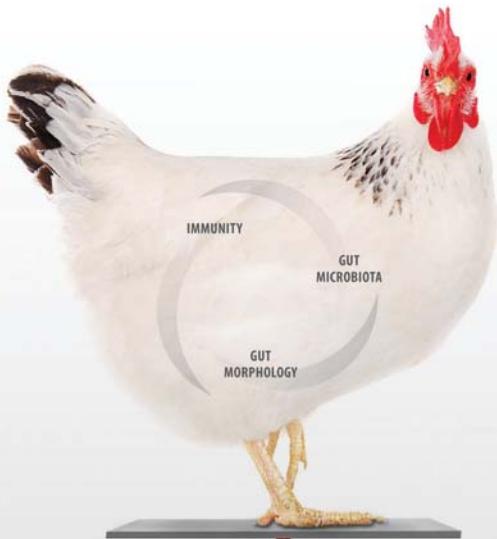
**T**he International Egg Commission recently gave its Crystal Egg Award for outstanding Corporate Social Responsibility to Center Fresh Egg Farms. Brothers Bruce and Kim Dooyema, part owners of Center Fresh, began exploring opportunities for egg production in Mozambique in 2006. The brothers are active with Partners Worldwide, a group that is committed to using business as a ministry for creating a world without poverty. An old proverb illustrates the focus of Partners Worldwide: "Give a man a fish and he will eat for a day. Teach a man to fish and he will eat for the rest of his life."



The eggs are gathered by hand, and the birds are fed by hand at Mozambique Fresh Eggs.



The climate in Mozambique allows for year-round natural ventilation for pullets and layers.



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## Why Mozambique?

Mozambique is located in Southeastern Africa, north of South Africa and west of the Indian Ocean. There is good arable land that is underutilized. Some Brazilian companies are working to develop row crop operations. The standard of living is relatively low in Mozambique, and there is a lot of unemployment.

Mozambique's nearly five centuries as a Portuguese colony came to a close with independence in 1975. Large-scale emigration, economic dependence on South Africa, a severe drought and a prolonged civil war hindered the country's development until the mid 1990s. The ruling Front for the Liberation of Mozambique party formally abandoned Marxism in 1989, and a new constitution the following year provided for multi-party elections and a free market economy.



Workers are trained in all aspects of poultry husbandry, including weighing pullets to track their growth.

Mozambique now has one of the fastest growing economies in Africa, growing at 7% to 8% per year. Since 2001, Mozambique has ranked among the top ten countries in the world

for fastest GDP growth. Kim said that good land was available to be farmed, "the people just needed someone to walk beside them" and help to show them the way.

## Mozambique Fresh Eggs

Entrepreneur Andrew Cunningham was developing a broiler business in Mozambique, and he thought the egg business had potential as well. The Dooyema brothers researched the market potential for eggs, evaluated the sourcing of feed inputs, and determined the amount of capital required to start the business. Several of the needed inputs such as a feed mill and hatchery were already in place to support the

broiler business.

Mozambique Fresh Eggs now has around 8,000 hens in lay, and has 7,000 more about to come into production. All

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the birds are housed on the floor in curtain-sided, naturally ventilated buildings. Kim said they will evaluate whether or not cage production makes sense at a later date.

Feed is mixed at a mill shared with the broiler operation. Ingredients and finished feeds are packed in 110-pound sacks which are carried by workers.

There are challenges at almost every step

when you start an operation from scratch without infrastructure in place; there is a lot to think about, according to Kim. But there is potential; the farm is located in an area with high population, on a road that is about to be paved, with access to a rail line, and they have electric power.

There is currently no cold chain infrastructure, so the eggs are sold the day they

are laid. Some eggs are marketed to young adults who line up to buy the eggs and take them home on their bicycles to hard boil them. Using their bicycles, these entrepreneurs travel up and down streets selling the hard-boiled eggs. Other eggs are marketed to surrounding communities and cities.

There is a good market for the spent layers, which can be sold to individuals live or processed at the broiler plant. Kim said one person bought 50 hens and hauled them away on the back of a motorcycle.

### Building for the future

Kim said that they see the potential for the business to grow to 30-35 thousand layers. “We consider this to be a viable business, but we look at it from a triple bottom line



**Feed ingredients and grains are moved in 110 pounds sacks by hand, and the finished feed is bagged for use in the houses at Mozambique Fresh Eggs.**

standpoint, social, economic and spiritual,” Kim said. “It is a way to give back; it is a way to help develop an economy; it is a way to help develop relationships. We think it can be good long term economically.”

Mozambique Fresh Eggs isn't just providing high quality animal protein and jobs to people in Mozambique. The company has helped to provide the land for a vocational agriculture school which will start next year. The school is patterned after a similar school in Zimbabwe that charges tuition, but students are provided with a plot of land to clear and plant, and they sell their crops. The money the students earn farming is used to pay back the loans they are given to cover their tuition. Graduates are then prepared to contribute to agricultural production of their communities and to support their families.

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# Nutrition and internal egg quality

*The role of nutrition should not be ignored in producing the best possible egg.*

Ioannis Mavromichalis, PhD



**Consumers prefer rich coloration to egg yolks, often only achievable through diet.**

Consumers expect to find a perfect yolk and albumen each and every time they crack open an otherwise good-looking egg. Yet, eggs are imperfect, a natural, biological life form, produced by less-than-perfect creatures. Thus, a small number of eggs are prone to be laid with inherent, internal issues that make them

unacceptable to the modern consumer.

The most important issue regarding internal egg quality is, of course, that of a lack of freshness, which can be avoided by judicious management and handling of eggs from the point of collection to the point of use. Other, less frequent problems, such as blood spots, discoloration, pale yolks, etc., cannot be resolved after the egg is laid. These issues are usually the outcome of a combination of factors, including genetics, flock age, nutrition, health, management and stress, and ambient temperature and humidity. Here, we will examine a short list of common issues of internal egg quality that can be influenced or even prevented by nutritional intervention.

## Pale eggs

The color of the yolk of a healthy egg is expected to be strong yellow-orange. This perception is based on experience from when hens were kept outdoors. Free range hens kept at each farm house consumed plants rich in xanthophylls (natural pigments) that gave to the yolk its strong orangey hue. Under those conditions, only sick hens produced pale eggs and, as such, these were not consumed.

Today, under modern commercial conditions, the color of the yolk can range from pale yellow (hens fed an all-wheat diet) to light orange (hens fed an all-maize diet). Of course, in both cases, such eggs have the same nutritive value and are perfectly safe. Nevertheless, most markets

worldwide still prefer yolks that are deep orange in color.

This intense color can be achieved only by feeding such ingredients rich in xanthophylls as maize gluten and alfalfa meal, or concentrated forms of natural

**To learn more about how nutrition can influence egg quality, read: Using flax for omega-3 enriched eggs.**

[www.WATTAgNet.com/21141.html](http://www.WATTAgNet.com/21141.html)

and synthetic pigments, such as canthaxanthines and apocarotenoid esters. The exact inclusion rate for each ingredient or pigment depends on the desired yolk color. For example, feeding about 10% maize gluten will produce a deeply orange yolk, while adding as much alfalfa meal in an all-wheat diet will give the equivalent of an all-maize diet in terms of egg yolk color. Today, achieving the desired yolk color is not difficult but it requires prior and careful design.

Apart from diseases, other factors can reduce egg yolk coloration. For example, a deficiency in vitamin A (due to a mixing error, or losses during premix storage) can reduce the intensity of yolk color. In contrast, a hyper dosage of vitamin A (usually through drinking water as part of a veterinary

*Ioannis Mavromichalis is an international consulting nutritionist with Aris-ton Nutrition.*



**Discoloration of the yolk, including blood spots, may not be of great significance, yet are still objectionable.**

treatment) can lead to egg color variation that includes loss of color intensity. Also, the absence of synthetic or natural antioxidants (such as vitamin E) can affect the potency of carotenoids (natural and synthetic), and thus the degree of egg yolk coloration that is achieved.

### Blood spots

Apart from an aesthetic point of view, blood (or even tissue or meat) spots have no real significance. But, they are, nevertheless, objectionable, especially when they are large or diffused. It is estimated that this problem can affect as much as 10% of all eggs, but this is usually less than 5%, and most blood spots are hardly noticeable.

Blood spots occur when blood vessels rupture in the hen's reproductive system. From practical experience, ensuring diets (a) contain sufficient vitamin A and vitamin K, and (b) they are free from mycotoxins is all that can be done nutritionally. Here it should be added that vitamin K antagonists exist in alfalfa meal.

### Watery albumen

Normally, a watery albumen is an indication of an old egg or one that has been allowed to deteriorate due to improper storage and handling. To help strengthen the albumen, several nutritional strategies have been suggested over time. Of these, manipulation of protein and acid-base balance appear to be the least effective.

In contrast, adding magnesium and

zinc appears to be rather more effective, but a high level of magnesium can impair the integrity of the shell. Vanadium, a metal contaminating most phosphates, reduces albumen quality severely even at low levels; this should be taken into account when purchasing phosphates for feeding to laying hens.

### Egg mottling

This refers to complete discoloration

or the appearance of patches of different color throughout the yolk and even the albumen. Nutritionally, this can be related to low levels of vitamin A (a variation of pale egg syndrome), but evidence is rather empirical and limited. A greenish hue in the yolk can be due to feeding cottonseed meal high in free gossypol. This problem is usually resolved by adding about 0.5% ferrous sulfate in the final diet (the exact amount depends on total free gossypol).

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<sup>1</sup> "Northern Fowl Mite." Cornell University College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Department of Entomology website. Accessed 3/4/2011. <<http://www.entomology.cornell.edu/cals/entomology/extension/vet/aid/chicken/nfmite.cfm>>.

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Likewise, a pinkish hue can be seen in albumen, again due to high levels of cottonseed meal in the feed, due to the presence of cyclopropene fatty acids in this ingredient (and also in certain weeds that could possibly contaminate other feed ingredients).

### Off-smelling eggs

Here we refer to eggs that have an undesirable odor due to certain feed ingredients. Naturally, the most offensive is that from feeding high levels of fish meal or fish oil. Fishy eggs are highly objectionable to consumers and this can

be avoided by limiting total fish oil concentration in the final diet below 1%. When high levels of fish oil are required to produce designer eggs rich in omega-3 fatty acids, this can be achieved only by using deodorized fish oil.

Rapeseed meal can also produce a fishy smell in eggs, but only when fed to hens with the Rhode Island gene. In these hens, there is a genetic anomaly

▶ *The exact inclusion rate for each ingredient or pigment depends on the desired yolk color.*

that prevents them from breaking down trimethylamine (a derivative of sinapine, a natural compound in rapeseed and other plants). Finally, it has been reported that eggs from hens fed high levels of flaxseed (also used to produce eggs rich in omega-3 fatty acids) can have the smell (and even taste) of paint!

Nutrition may not play the greatest role in most cases of egg internal quality problems. Yet, careful formulation design and certain intervention strategies can solve some rather unpleasant issues.

Achieving 100% perfect eggs is rather impractical, or even impossible, but at least they don't have to taste like wall paint! **EI**

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## UK warns against selling conventional cage eggs once banned

Food manufacturers and retailers in the UK selling eggs or egg products produced from hens in conventional battery cages after the EU ban on such cages takes effect on January 1, 2012, will be breaking the law, confirmed the country's Agriculture Minister James Paice.

The minister has pledged his strong support for the UK egg industry to ensure that manufacturers and retailers do not use illegal eggs. He has also welcomed the commitment from the British Retail Consortium that the UK's major retailers will ensure that their cage-produced shell eggs, and their own-label products containing cage-produced eggs, will come from enriched cages. However, he said, it needs to be made clear to owners of branded food products that the law also applies to their ingredients and that any company using eggs produced in conventional battery cages after January 1 will be breaking both the letter and the spirit of the law.

"Food manufacturers and retailers need to know that they will be exposed if they do not ensure that all the eggs they use are fully compliant with the new legislation," said Andrew Parker, British Egg Industry Council chairman. "We welcome the minister's commitment to take action to ensure that illegally-produced eggs do not undermine British egg producers."

## AFIA supports Commodity Futures Trading Commission funding

The American Feed Industry Association signed onto a letter in support of full funding for the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. Addressed to the Agriculture Conference Committee, the organizations that signed the letter support President Obama's funding request of \$308 million, and at minimum, supports the request for \$240 million in Senate funding.

AFIA says the funding is seen as crucial to CFTC, whose responsibilities have expanded in light of the Dodd-Frank Act. The new responsibilities include oversight of approximately \$280 trillion in previously unregulated domestic swaps markets.

According to AFIA, the proposed House funding freeze at the prior year level of approximately \$170 million would leave CFTC drastically underfunded, which would "jeopardize market stability and integrity, and threaten the confidence of market participants who use these markets for bona fide hedging purposes." Without the funding, it would also be difficult for CFTC to enforce new limits on speculation, fueling instability in commodity prices.

## US poultry, egg exports up in 2011

U.S. poultry and egg exports are up through September 2011 compared to 2010 numbers, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's latest meat trade data.

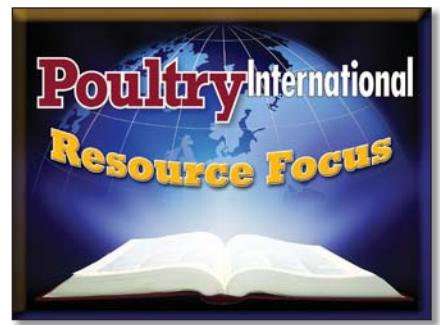
Broiler exports reached 5.11 billion pounds in the January through September 2011 period, compared to 4.81 billion pounds during the same time in 2010. Mexico was the largest target of exports during this period, receiving 751 million pounds of broiler meat. Hong Kong came in second, with 412 million pounds exported. Other chicken exports reached 68.82 million pounds during the January-September 2011 time period, up from 2010's 58.28 million pounds.

Turkey exports hit 504 million pounds, up from 2010's 408 million pounds, according to the USDA. Of the countries the U.S. exported to, Mexico was the top recipient, importing 283 million pounds of turkey meat. China came in second, importing 67.5 million pounds of meat.

U.S. egg exports in the January-September 2011 period came to 209.89 million dozen, up from 2010's 191.79 million dozen. Of the various coun-

tries exported to, Japan, Hong Kong and Canada rounded out the top three, with 35.56 million dozen, 29.23 million dozen and 29.14 million dozen eggs imported.

## WATT launches directory of poultry associations in Poultry International Resource Focus



WATT Publishing has launched Poultry International Resource Focus, a regularly updated directory of key organizations worldwide serving the poultry and egg industries.

Over the last couple of years, Poultry International has been focusing in each issue on a key player in the poultry industry, the egg industry or in a related sector. Now, all these entries have been brought together in one, easy-to-use reference resource at [www.wattagnet.com/27343.html](http://www.wattagnet.com/27343.html).

If you need to know who represents Chile's poultry producers, or where to find out about egg processing in Europe, the Poultry International Resource Focus should be your first port of call. As well as looking at representatives of primary poultry meat and egg production, the Poultry International Resource Focus offers you details of packaging organizations, international standard setting organizations and those organizations conducting research into poultry meat and eggs.

Each entry offers details of whom that particular organization represents, explains what exactly it does and offers a link to the home page of each particular body — a poultry and egg directory of organizations.

This is an ongoing resource that WATT is continuing to expand and build each month. So be sure to keep visiting to see whether we have included the organization that you have been looking to identify.

If there's an organization you'd like included, please contact Poultry International Editor Mark Clements, at [mclements@wattnet.net](mailto:mclements@wattnet.net).

### World feed grain use increases

World utilization of grains for animal feeds is forecast to resume a trend of annual growth in 2011-2012 after two seasons of stagnation, according to the latest Food Outlook global market analysis from the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization.

Strong demand from the livestock sectors in the leading emerging economies is seen as the main driver for a projected 1.7% increase in feed grain use to 780 million metric tons. Some 637 million metric tons of this will consist of maize and similar coarse grains, according to the FAO forecasters. This would represent a relatively small annual rise of about 1% for reasons including tight supplies and comparatively high prices against more abundant and cheaper feed wheat and large availabilities of distilled dried grains.

The latest indications point to a 5.6% increase in the global utilization of wheat for feeds, up to 130.9 million metric tons, driven by more competitive prices boosting

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feed use especially in China, the EU and the U.S.

Overall, however, prospects in the developed-economy countries and regions are predicted to be affected by slow economic growth. In fact, rather than expanding, feed demand is expected to contract in the U.S. (reducing by 3.7%), in the EU-27 (down by 2.6%) and in Canada (lower by 1.4%).

These declines are considered to offset strong expansions elsewhere, particularly in the CIS area including Russia (up 11%) and in China (higher by 4.8%). Total feed utilization of coarse grains in the developed countries is forecast to be around 323 million metric tons, or some 0.5% less than in the previous season. By contrast, the aggregate feed use of these grains (excluding wheat) in developing countries is expected to grow by 2.5% from the 2010-2011 level, to 313 million metric tons.

## Egg washing doesn't damage cuticle, may enhance food safety

Responsible egg washing does not damage the egg's cuticle, and may enhance food safety, according to a study by the Institute for Agricultural and Fisheries Research and the University of Glasgow's College of Medical, Veterinary & Life Sciences published in the October 2011 issue of the Journal of Food Protection.

The study, commissioned by egg industry consultancy Egnology on behalf of Kuhl Corporation, has led to Egnology preparing a submission requesting the European Commission to amend current legislation in order to enable all EU member-states to authorize responsible egg washing — long considered a controversial practice by the EU. An undamaged cuticle is one of the EU's requirements for class A eggs, those destined for human consumption.

## US corn harvest to be smallest in three years



**US corn stockpiles may drop before the 2012 harvest, contributing to an overall drop in global supplies.**

The U.S. is predicting its smallest corn harvest in three years after a drought damaged what was being called a record crop as recently as July. Analysts are expecting production of 314.7 million metric tons, 27.4 million metric tons less than forecast four months ago, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

U.S. corn stockpiles may drop by 29% before the 2012 harvest in September, causing global stockpiles to reach a five-year low of 122.75 million metric tons, according to analysts. Corn futures have gained 4% to \$6.54 a bushel on the Chicago Board of Trade in 2011. Prices rose 14% from 2011's low of \$5.7225 on October 3, and futures are indicating rising prices through at least the middle of 2012.

## Poultry, egg associations urged to stand up to supermarkets

Farming organizations across Europe and North America should campaign for tough and effective measures to deter and punish the abuse of supermarket power, said Peter Kendall, president of the UK's National Farmers Union, speaking at the North American and EU Agricultural Conference, held in Warsaw, Poland, in late October.

Kendall said that farmers in Britain have been engaged in a struggle to secure a legally binding code of practice, policed by an adjudicator with statutory powers, to deter and punish retailers who illegally exploit their dominant po-



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# GLOBAL MARKETPLACE FOR THE POULTRY AND FEED INDUSTRIES



The 2012 International Poultry Expo and International Feed Expo will be held January 24 – 26, 2012, and the week of the Expo has been officially designated as “IPE Week” with an emphasis on educational programs rounding out the week-long event.

The Expo is shifting to a **TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY, THURSDAY** format to increase the education programs available to attendees.

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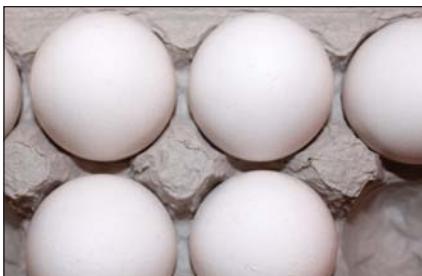
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sition. “Farmers are the poor relations of the food chain, not just in Britain, but across the developed world,” said Kendall. “But this has got to change. If farmers and growers are to have the incentive and the resources to invest in achieving the step change in farm productivity that the world needs, we must ensure that supply chains deliver a fair share of what consumers pay for food to primary producers.”

According to Kendall, even with the progress that has been made, and the prospect of legislation in the reasonably near future, there is still a lot of work to do to ensure that any code of practice put into place is truly effective. “This means allowing third parties, like farming organizations, to make complaints on their members’ behalf, so as to preserve anonymity and prevent victimization, and it means giving the watchdog the power to impose big fines, if naming and shaming proves an insufficient deterrent,” said Kendall.

## US shell eggs broken down 11% from 2010



**Shell eggs broken were down in September but up in the first nine months compared to respective 2010 totals.**

U.S. shell eggs broken totaled 176 million dozen during September 2011, down 11% from September 2010 and 3% below the 182 million broken in August, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

During the first nine months of 2011, shell eggs broken totaled 1.567 billion dozen, up 1% from the comparable period in 2010. Through September, cumulative total edible product from eggs broken in 2011 was 2.028 billion pounds, up slightly from 2010 numbers. Of that number, 1.24 billion

pounds were whole eggs, 525 million pounds were egg whites and 268.3 million pounds were egg yolks.

For more information on U.S. egg production and prices, see [www.wattagnet.com/marketdata.html](http://www.wattagnet.com/marketdata.html).

## Aviagen poultry feed mill saves energy, expands production



**Aviagen’s Alabama mill has seen natural gas use drop by 28% since the upgrades.**

Aviagen’s newly expanded poultry feed mill in Athens, Ala., is producing 30% more feed while reducing its electric, natural gas and diesel gas costs by \$169,836 and cutting its CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 615 tons, according to the company.

The 2010 expansion, which focused on sustainable practices, added new equipment and procedures ensuring the biosecurity of pelletized and crumbled feed for Aviagen’s Pedigree operation in Tennessee and to 115 company poultry farms in Alabama. “Our Athens mill expansion is achieving all our goals,” said Richard Obermeyer, Aviagen’s director of feed production. “We grew capacity, ensured biosecurity and cut costs. But the added benefit is that we enhanced the sustainability of our feed mill operation by reducing energy consumption across the board.”

After the upgrades, electricity consumption dropped by 15%, natural gas use dropped by 28% and diesel fuel savings came in at \$63,200, according to Aviagen.

## Moark signs agreement for assets of Maine egg producers

Shell egg processor and producer Moark LLC has agreed to a long-term lease arrangement for the assets of three Maine egg producers: Quality Egg of New England LLC, Dorothy Egg Farm LLC and Mountain Hollow Farms LLC.

Under the lease arrangement, Moark will be the sole operator of the egg production, processing and warehousing operations (as well as a feed mill) owned by the companies, which are located in Turner, Leeds, and Winthrop, Maine. At the end of the 10-year lease period, Moark will have the option of purchasing the facilities.

“This expansion enables Moark to better serve customers in the Northeastern U.S.,” said Moark President Craig Willardson. “It complements our existing operations by adding approximately 3.6 million layers, and it provides greater access to a growing market for eggs.

The transaction is expected to close shortly.

## FDA denies citizen petitions regarding animal antibiotics

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has denied two citizen petitions urging the FDA to withdraw the approvals for antibiotics given to animals in feed or water for purposes other than disease treatment if the antibiotics are also used in human medicine.

The petitions were filed by Environmental Defense, Center for Science in the Public Interest, Food Animal Concerns Trust, and the Union of Concerned Scientists along with other groups. They contend that using antibiotics in this way in food animals can lead to the spread of difficult-to-treat resistant infections in humans. They also asked that the FDA take action on the Agency’s own safety findings from 1977 and withdraw approval for most uses of penicillin and tetracyclines in animal feed.

In denying the petitions, the FDA did not challenge the need to reduce antibiotic use, but argued that the withdrawal process itself was too expensive and resource intensive. The FDA stated that it plans “to work with sponsors who approach the FDA and are interested in working cooperatively to phase out production uses of medically important antimicrobials.”

The FDA has released a draft version of a document that describes its plan to reduce use through the voluntary withdrawal by pharmaceutical companies of currently marketed uses of antibiotics in feed. **EI**

# ▶ PRODUCTNEWS

## Larson Electronics VPHLED-12W-25 trouble light



Larson Electronics' Magnalight.com provides the VPHLED-12W-25 trouble light for vapor-proof and food safe operation. The LED is equipped with 25 feet of SJOW cord with a rubberized housing and food safe polycarbonate lens. The 26-watt handheld light ends in a standard 5-15 straight blade plug.

[www.magnalight.com](http://www.magnalight.com)

## Lechler Inc. tank cleaning nozzles

Lechler Inc. offers two separate lines of tank cleaning nozzles: PTFE Whirly and Spray Ball. Each uses a sanitary slip-on pin to connect to the inlet and has a smooth finish. The PTFE Whirly model is a free-spinning tank cleaner that has only an in-



ternal slide bearing for rotation, and is self-lubricating and self-flushing. It comes in 3/4- and 1-inch tube connections. The stainless steel Spray Ball is a static, non-rotating nozzle that comes in 3/4-, 1 1/2- and 2-inch inlet connections. Nozzles are made for use in sanitary environments.

[www.lechlerusa.com](http://www.lechlerusa.com)

## Banner Engineering Corp. WL50S high-intensity LED spot light



Banner Engineering Corp.'s WL50S high-intensity LED spot light is designed for use in general purpose applications. The spot light consists of three high-intensity

LED bulbs with three lens options ranging from +/- 5 degrees to +/- 20 degrees, and is made of IP69K-rated sealed housing for washdown applications, the company says. It has a 50 mm diameter with a flat profile and 30 mm mounting base.

[www.bannerengineering.com](http://www.bannerengineering.com)

## Eagle Product Inspection SimulTask PRO

Eagle Product Inspection offers the SimulTask PRO image analysis software for X-ray inspection systems. SimulTask PRO can detect multiple types of contaminants in many different products, in various packaging types. The software also allows for check weighing entire products as well as detecting product and package defects in extreme conditions, the company says. The fully customized interface allows various operator log-in levels, and has color-coded tags and locations to make it easier for the operator to detect contaminants.

[www.eaglepi.com](http://www.eaglepi.com)

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Weeks Over 90% Production	25	25
Eggs Above Standard	13	25
Eggs Laid Per Hen	253	373
Average Production 20-60/80 Weeks	89%	79%
Livability At 60/80 Weeks	98.2%	96.5%
Average Case Weight	48.8 lbs.	51.0 lbs.
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