

The Chick Papers

A Monthly Newsletter from the Georgia Poultry Laboratory

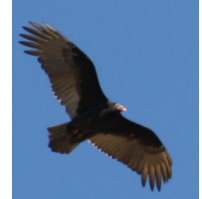


January 2014

Biosecurity is for the Birds... What about the Other Birds?

By Dr. Doug Anderson

Biosecurity is a tough topic. You have heard the reasons and steps and hows and whys and whens and wheres, until you almost want to quit listening. For the purpose of this article, let's look at the topic in a slightly different light. Let's think about other birds we may not think about as biosecurity threats to our commercial flocks.



Buzzard

The first group to consider is the cattle egrets. We find them searching for critters in the tall grass surrounding our poultry farms. Where do they come from? They spend a considerable amount of time frequenting bodies of water, where other waterfowl and shore birds congregate, and where there is an increased likelihood of coming into contact with a strain of avian influenza. Even if it is an odd strain, (it may not be H5 or H7), all possibilities of dragging an influenza virus into one of our farms need to be minimized at all cost. So instead of slipping in through the side or emergency exit door without using disposable boots, or without using the provided boot dip or wash can be a dangerous short cut: wherever you have walked, so possibly has a cattle egret.



Nest of House Finches

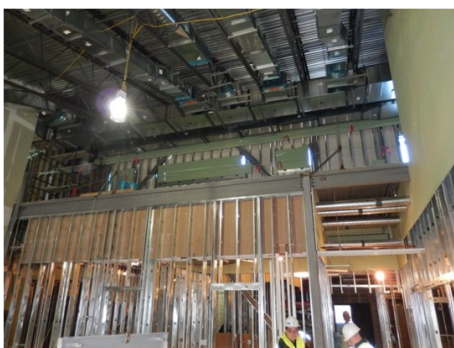
Group Two to consider is the buzzards. They are drawn to rising temperature and dead meat (carcasses). Where are the two best places to find those conditions? Along an asphalt road, where heated asphalt can contribute to rising hot air and where there may be road kill. Another great location is our poultry farms. Buzzards spot houses from the air because of heat generation, and they also find the dead meat in the form of carcasses. While most farms have excellent mortality disposal programs, how long does it really take for carcasses to pile up if the incinerator or pit is full or out of order? What happens if mortality exceeds

the capacity for disposal? It doesn't take long to fall behind. So consider that buzzards may have been at the neighboring farm, and they decide to defecate as they fly over your farm location or decide to visit your carcass pile. Again, we need to consider where we are walking and who may have been present prior to our passage. That side door or two step to avoid the foot pan may be easy and convenient, but it is dangerous.

A third group of birds to consider are the house finches and certain sparrows.....Obviously ornithologists have each of the species named, so not identifying them correctly is a shame. But what is important to consider is their habits. They love the spilled feed around our bins. We try hard to keep that area clean, but even a short delay can attract these birds. When they are done, where do they go? Off to the next farm. They very quickly become adapted to a very similar 'route' as your serviceman, but they cross companies and bird types. Another issue is their desire to build their nests in and around the eaves and ventilation openings of the houses. Then when the young birds are fledged, they decide to build on to the old nest and have another brood or two before the season ends. Couple that constant presence and their uncanny ability to find the 'only' entry point into the building and exploit it so they can enjoy the indoor comforts and your aggravation (and risk) goes up. This close contact puts you at risk to many problems, not the least are the potential spread of disease from farm, and their common infestation with Northern Fowl Mites.

Sometimes we feel that Biosecurity may be a chore, but consider the risks you can eliminate when you consider the 'other' birds. Bird proof, and always use foot protection when entering a poultry house!

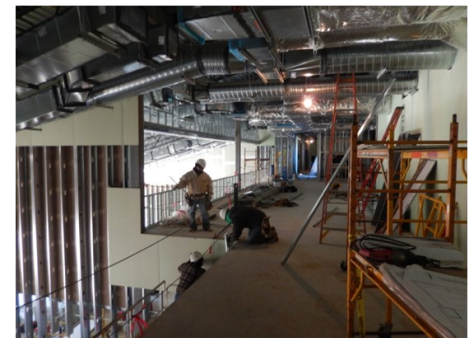
The New Laboratory Construction: Freddie Smith reports the new lab is making good progress. The completion date of August 2014 looks to be right on schedule



Interior of Lab Taking Shape with New Walls



Huge Air Handling Systems on New Lab Roof



Work Continues on the Mezzanine

GPLN Employee Begins Poultry Science Major: at UGA In January 2014, Tyler Reed, began his pursuit of a degree in Poultry Science at the University of Georgia. Tyler began his formal education in poultry science at the University of North Georgia two years ago.

Five Groups of Visitors Tour GPLN in January 2014

1: USDA Visits The Oakwood Laboratory

On January 8, 2014, representatives from USDA toured the Oakwood Laboratory. The goal of their visit was to learn about GPLN and discuss the NPIP database project.



(l-r) Dr. Doug Waltman, Mr. John Picanso, Dr. Lee Ann Thomas, Dr. Louise Dufour-Zavala, Dr. Denise Brinson, Dr. Ben Johnson

2: Dr. James Davis Trains University of North Georgia (UNG) Students

For many years, GPLN'S primary diagnostician has been training the Poultry Science students from the UNG, Gainesville location. The students receive class credit for the day of hands on necropsy procedures that Dr. Davis uses routinely in the observation of sick birds and collection of bird tissue samples to be tested at the laboratory



UNG Students Learn How to Necropsy Commercial Poultry at GPLN (l-r) Shelby, Linda Purvis, Jess Pearson, Eden Hulsey, Michael Smith, Nathan Jablonski, Chance Brown Charles Malcom, and Brooke Vickery

3: Columbia Farms Meet With GPLN Staff

GPLN veterinarians and specialist are very happy to meet with company representatives in discussions of poultry health programs. Strong communications between the testing laboratory and the customer is strongly encouraged at GPLN.



(l-r) Dr. Doug Waltman, Dr. Louise Dufour-Zavala, Dr. Sharon Miller, Chad Mason, Scott Cochran, Michael Cronin

4: South Korean Students Tour the Oakwood Laboratory

On January 28, a group of 14 students studying at the Master level and who have professional interest in the management of commercial poultry operations, toured the Oakwood Lab. Dr. Louise Dufour-Zavala presented an historical introduction to the Georgia Poultry Industry and the commitments GPLN have to the entire Georgia Poultry Industry.



South Korean Students on Tour at the Oakwood Laboratory

5: Large Merial Group Tours GPLN Laboratory

On Jan. 30, 2014, a delegation of 30 Merial staff and guests toured the Oakwood Lab. Before the tour, the group was given a lecture on GPLN's role in the Georgia Poultry Industry by Dr. Louise Dufour-Zavala.



Merial Staff & Guests Attend GPLN Program & Tour

GPLN Professional Activities:

GPLN Staff Tours Hubbard Hatchery in Pikeville, TN:

On Monday, January 13, 2014, Dr. Louise Dufour Zavala, Dr. Doug Waltman and Len Chappell were given a tour of the TN Hubbard hatchery and met with the staff to discuss the company's Chick Quality Monitoring (CQM) reports. Dr. Louise Dufour-Zavala gave a presentation on CQM analysis and some future CQM reports were considered.



(l-r) Len Chappell (GPLN) Tim Churches (asst. hatchery mgr), Tony Britt (hatchery mgr.), Dr. Mario Prado, Dr. Louise Dufour-Zavala (GPLN), William Kilgore (Dir. Of Hatcheries) Dr. Doug Waltman (GPLN)