

Georgia's Participation in Depopulation of Avian Influenza (AI) Infected Turkey Farms in MN

The Deployment: Upon request from USDA to assist with the depopulation of confirmed positive H5N2 avian influenza infected flocks in Minnesota, the Georgia Depopulation Team hitched up three foaming trailers, packed up our gear, and on April 20th & 21st, made a 1,300 mile journey to several counties throughout southwest Minnesota. Quarantine and euthanasia of infected flocks are of the highest priority in any state's HPAI response plan, MN being no exception. At the time of deployment to MN, there were 64 confirmed AI positive cases in MN and Iowa (turkeys and commercial layers) and 52 depopulations were already completed. Our focus and efforts were on the 12 MN turkey farms awaiting euthanasia. Once the Team arrived, we met with USDA officials to develop strategies for the depopulations on a farm-by-farm basis. The Georgia Team, comprised of personnel from USDA, GDA, and GPLN, knew we would need to produce very large volumes of foam; much more than we have ever produced in previous routine practice exercises. We anticipated having to build foam to heights of greater than 4 feet in most of the turkey barns. This is something that we had never tried. Water and concentrated phosphate foam availability was a major issue before our deployment. USDA effectively provided both foam and water resources as needed at the farms throughout our time in MN.



Members of the Georgia Team in PPE



Equipment Set-Up

assessment of the farm to see if the birds could be comfortably tightened up, 4) Set-up of equipment including hoses and accessories, 5) Hook up to a water source, 6) Foaming, and 7) Cleaning and disinfecting prior to leaving the farm. Farm location information was provided readily by USDA. In many instances, the Georgia

The Activities: The Georgia Team participated in the depopulation of 9 turkey farms and one commercial layer operation. Over 350,000 turkeys and 44,000 commercial layers were euthanized over the three week period by the Georgia team. Although each farm was somewhat different (the number of barns per farm, accessibility to the barns, condition of the birds, etc.), the depopulation process had a basic, yet familiar, structure... 1) Travel to the farm using GIS coordinates 2) Dressing into personal protective equipment (PPE), 3) Assessment of the farm to see if the birds could be comfortably tightened up, 4) Set-up of equipment including hoses and accessories, 5) Hook up to a water source, 6) Foaming, and 7) Cleaning and disinfecting prior to leaving the farm. Farm location information was provided readily by USDA. In many instances, the Georgia



Foaming a Turkey Barn from the Outside



Cleaning & Disinfecting of Equipment

Team and USDA would make assessment of the farm the evening before the flock depopulation the next morning. The PPE did get very hot and uncomfortable especially when temperatures reached above 60°F. With cool MN nights in the 30– 40°F range and daytime highs of 60°F, the PPE were tolerable throughout our three week stay. Many turkey barns had very high mortality and decisions had to be made on whether foam concentrate and water resources might be better used on other barns on the farm. The set-ups were generally quick and disassembly of the hoses were not needed as we moved the trailers along the outside walls of the very long barns. The average water usage was 10,000 gallons per barn. Contracted water haulers, were in place the morning of the depopulation. For most farms there were multiple tanker trucks available for use, with each truck holding approximately 8,000 gallons of water. The birds were foamed from both sides of the barn simultaneously. Once the foam reached sufficient height in the center of the house (approximately 4 feet), the nozzle was moved along the remainder of the house. Cleaning and disinfection of all the equipment is vital to the control of any highly pathogenic organisms. USDA had cleaning & disinfection stations set up at each

farm so that trailers, equipment, tankers, and personnel could be properly cleaned & disinfected once work was complete at the farm for that day.

Comments: The Georgia Team was glad to have the opportunity to partner with USDA and MN in providing depopulation expertise in efforts to control the HPAI in the state. We gained a wealth of experience during our three weeks effort and in the process had an opportunity to meet some of the growers and citizens of MN. The poultry producers of MN were so kind and appreciative of our efforts as they have faced some very difficult times in the recent months. Our thoughts and prayers go out to the people of MN.

Workshops & Training



- **NPIP Salmonella Workshop** May 4th-8th
- **NPIP AI Workshop in Athens** May 19th-20th - Len Chappell participated in the AI workshop in Athens

Tours and Visitors

- **Georgia Poultry Federation and Poultry Science Meeting** May 12th
- **Channel 46 News Story** May 12th
- **Lakeview Academy Middle School Robotics Team** May 12th
- **United Way of Gainesville** May 15th
- **IDEXX Tour** - May 18th three IDEXX representatives from Portland, Maine visited the new GPLN Facility en route to the NPIP AI Workshop. IDEXX supplies the AI, MGMS, and Vaccine Monitoring ELISA test kits currently used by GPLN. They were most impressed with the IDEXX kits being used with the Liquid Handling Robotics from Beckman Coulter and Perkin Elmer.

- **PTAC Meeting and Tour** May 19th
- **UGA PDRC Lecture and Tour** May 20th
- **OPB Tour** May 21st
- **Georgia Tech Tour** May 22nd



Dr. Waltman hosting tour group

GPLN Events

- **Georgia Poultry Federation Golf Tournament** - On May 1st, Iyen Omoruyi and Melissa Chewning attended the Second Annual Young Leaders Golf Tournament for the Georgia Poultry Industry. Joined by Jake Tench, son of Mar-Jac's Gary Tench, and his roommate Taylor Teague, they proudly finished the game right on par. A special thanks to Frank Dougherty and Aviagen for our sponsorship. Proceeds go to youth education initiatives and public outreach for the poultry industry.
- **Humana Lunch & Learn** - Humana's Kelly Cato presented us on May 13th some wonderful information about wellness and fitness gadgets and gizmos. She not only informed us about the different gadgets and apps available to track fitness and promote wellness, but showed how these could be linked to our myHumana accounts. After the presentation, Kelly met individually with employees who had specific questions regarding their own health and wellness or who needed help with their gadgets and gizmos. Lunch consisted of baked potatoes and salad with a wide variety of toppings and fillings, beverages and desserts.
- **Gwen's Retirement Party** - Gwen Waters celebrated her 30 year retirement with fellow employees on May 29th.



Gwen Waters