

THE CHICK PAPERS

Georgia Poultry Laboratory Network's Monthly Newsletter



1958 and Disease "X"

From the GPLN Historical Archive

GEORGIA POULTRY LABORATORY

737 SOUTH MAIN STREET

GAINESVILLE, GEORGIA

January 10, 1958

The following is a brief report on so called "X disease", "water belly", or heart disease of poultry.

Disease characterized clinically by respiratory distress, some gasping, but more often in the form of labored breathing and usually high mortality in chicks approaching three weeks of age and up through broiler age. Typically post-mortem examination shows an excessive accumulation of straw colored fluid in the heart sac and occasionally in the abdominal cavity. The liver and kidneys are usually enlarged and pale. The affected chicks that do not die for several days may show necrotic areas on the liver and eventually atrophy or shrinkage of the liver.

We are suspicious that the condition, when involving poultry older than broiler age may show less fluid accumulation and less mortality. We have some reason to believe that flocks that are involved may never produce eggs profitably from standpoint of production and or hatchability. Some evidence also exist to indicate that affected flocks in production will suffer a drastic drop in production within a fairly short time.

Much work has and is currently being accomplished in the interest of a specific answer to this problem. We feel that the following can be said with a fair degree of certainty:

1. Have no reason to feel that bacteria, virus or parasite is the cause.
2. Have no reason to believe the condition is infectious.
3. Have good reason to believe the condition is associated with a feed ingredient contaminant, exactly what or just how its action is exerted in poultry is not known.
4. Some reason to suspect fat or fat complex contamination in some way, but not just fat as such.
5. At present "so called involved feeds" where this condition has been seen and reported since March 1957, consideration should be given to at least three different sources or suppliers of fat.
6. Feel that work on this problem now can and will be centered along more definite lines of approach.
7. Have reason to believe that the American Feed Manufacturers Association will have a release on this problem, probably this week. To date I have seen this condition involving five different feeds in Georgia.

I personally feel much more optimistic about an eventual specific answer to this problem, but do not feel that an attitude of complacency, in the absence of current trouble, is justified.

Yours very truly,

GEORGIA POULTRY IMPROVEMENT ASS'N, INC., GAINESVILLE, GEORGIA
R. J. LEE, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY AND CONTACT REPRESENTATIVE

Dank Morris
Dank Morris



4-H Leadership and staff visited and toured the lab on October 20th.



Dr. Zavala snapped a selfie with Bob Wheeler, model train mastermind, and his friends, Brian Chapin and Karen Silverthorn, after their tour.



Mike Giles brought by Candace Long with Hargol FoodTech, and John Vardeman of Morton Vardeman & Carlson for a visit to the lab.

Below: Dr. Kathryn McCullough from UGA visited the lab to spend time observing in necropsy and histology.



Brendan Wassar, Peter Ettinger, and McClain Porter with Bioenergy Devco toured the lab this October.



White County Chamber of Commerce toured the lab on October 7th.

