



PARTNERS

May 2020

COVID-19 Update

– Dr. David Caldwell –

Greetings:

I hope this finds you safe and well. Since the time of our last Partners newsletter, like many of you, we have remained in a telecommuting mode of operations and have been strictly following all necessary mitigation strategies to limit the spread of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). Last week, the administration for the University of Arkansas and the U of A System Division of Agriculture distributed new guidance documents for preparing for the initial stages of reopening university and division facilities. This plan, which involves risk assessment and specific planning to ensure the safety and welfare of all personnel and students, will be implemented across three specific phases or stages. We are currently preparing for Stage 1 reopening, which in actuality, will look very similar to the telecommuting mode in which we find ourselves currently. During Stage 1, all educational and outreach activities performed by our departmental faculty, staff, and students, will be conducted remotely. Business office, HR, and other administrative functions will continue to be overseen by our personnel working from home. We will, however, begin to phase in additional essential or critical research activities led by our research active faculty. These projects will be conducted according to administratively approved plans for risk assessment and worker safety. Essential activities and functions, including animal care or

husbandry at our research farm, have continued and will continue without interruption.

I am pleased to report that we have not had a single member of the department or center test positive for COVID-19 during this pandemic. This has been possible by the strict adherence of all of our faculty, staff, and students to all CDC guidelines for social distancing in the workplace. We feel our faculty, staff, and students are taking all necessary precautions to keep themselves and their families safe during these challenging times. I will continue to provide updates with each edition of Partners we distribute.

Until next time, stay safe, and stay well.

Kindest regards,
David J. Caldwell, Ph.D.



Carruth Family Creates Endowed Scholarship for Poultry Science Majors

A \$200,000-plus gift to the Dale Bumpers College of Agricultural, Food and Life Sciences by the Phillip O. and Phyllis K. Carruth Foundation has created an endowed scholarship for students majoring in poultry science at the University of Arkansas. The gift counts in Campaign Arkansas, the university's \$1.25 billion capital campaign to advance academic opportunity at the U of A.

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Congratulations to the 2020 Spring Poultry Science Graduates!

As you are aware, the Spring 2020 Commencement ceremonies were cancelled due to COVID-19. Therefore the university recognized spring graduates online in May as part of an enhanced website. The same commencement information that would have been printed in the program book next to each recipient's name was included as a part of an online directory. Please note that Spring graduates will be recognized in a combined graduation weekend in conjunction with the fall ceremony set for Saturday, Dec. 19, 2020. Depending on the number of spring graduates interested in participating in the fall graduation ceremonies, an additional ceremony could be added on Friday, Dec. 18, 2020.

We would like to recognize our May 2020 Poultry Science graduates below (according to the database of those who applied for graduation):

Bachelor of Science:

M.S.

Ph.D.

Lacy Jo Barrett	Mandie Beck Browning	Juan Caldas Cueva
Noah Mackane Burchfield	Michael Thomas Kidd	Antonio Beitia Guerra
Zachary Scott Cain	Derrell Trevor Lee	Anamika Gupta
Shelby Leann Calico	Clay Johnny Maynard	Katie M. Hilton
Jefferson Cole Chaney	Kenia Mitre Herrera	Kyle D. Teague
Cole David Crumpacker	Tesfasilasie Abraha Mussie	
Aaron Joel Forga		
Hannah Taylor Hammond		
Nathan Alan Hayes		
Mayra Hilario		
Kerrigan E. Kissinger		
Cheyenne Rose Loncarich		
Carter Reid Oswald		
Guillermo Tellez		
Kristina Lee Tretenburg		
Savannah C. Wells		
John Thomas Wray		
Bernell Yancy		

2 Students from Poultry Science named Bumpers College 2020-21 College Ambassadors

A select group of students have been chosen to serve as ambassadors of the Dale Bumpers College of Agricultural, Food and Life Sciences for 2020-21.

Following an application and interview process, 12 students were selected from different areas in the college to work both on-campus and off-campus recruiting events, to assist at Dean's Office events, serve as representatives of the college, assist in other recruiting functions, and share the philosophy and benefits of enrollment in the college to prospective students, parents and alumni.

The group includes two students from Poultry Science: Stephanie Bennett, who will serve as lead ambassador and Hilsden Moseley poultry science ambassador.



In addition to serving as the 2020-2021 lead ambassador, Stephenie also serves as the 2020 Sigma Alpha president and as an officer with UARK Alumni FFA. She is a past Arkansas FFA State Officer as well. Originally from Brinkley, Arkansas Stephanie is now in her senior year as a poultry science major and Ag leadership minor. "I chose poultry science at the UofA because not only was it my dream college, but it was the



Hilsden Moseley is the 2020-2021 Bumpers College Ambassador for Poultry Science. Hilsden transferred to the University of Arkansas from Crowder College, where he received his Associates in Animal Science. He is originally from Wheaton, MO and chose UA because, in his words, it is one of the best poultry schools in the nation. After graduation, Hilsden plans to apply to Veterinary School at the University of Missouri to

only college that offered the degree I wanted to pursue. The POSC department has helped me become more knowledgeable within the industry and grow professionally” said Bennett. She joined the ambassador program because she wanted to be able to share her experiences with the Dale Bumpers College and the poultry science department with students across the U.S. and around her hometown area in the delta. Stephanie hopes to pursue a career in talent/leadership development in the poultry industry.

become a Poultry Veterinarian and work in the industry.



RESEARCH UPDATE: Assessment of Meat Quality of Broilers Used in the Poultry Meat Industry: Effect of Genetic Strains and Diet **PI Casey M. Owens**

Meat and carcass quality are very important issues in the poultry industry because of the relation to consumer acceptance, labor issues, and profits. In fact, meat quality concerns are at an all-time high due to an increase in quality defects and due to the wide range of birds sizes processed in today's markets (Figure 1). There are various market segments which provide consumers, in one way or another, chicken for purchase at retail, fast-food and higher end restaurants, and further processed products. There are a few different broiler strains (genetic lines) that supply the broiler industry

and these sometimes have different market purposes. For example, one poultry producer might supply a small bird market segment while another supplies a market segment focused on further processing because it provides more breast meat. Water holding capacity and texture of broiler breast meat, as well as product uniformity (weight and shape), are primary concerns. These attributes as well as production costs can all be affected by many factors including, but not limited to, genetics, age, and production and processing conditions. Furthermore, processors are faced with decisions to change broiler strains on occasion for performance and yield purposes, but they are also concerned with potential changes in meat quality as a result.

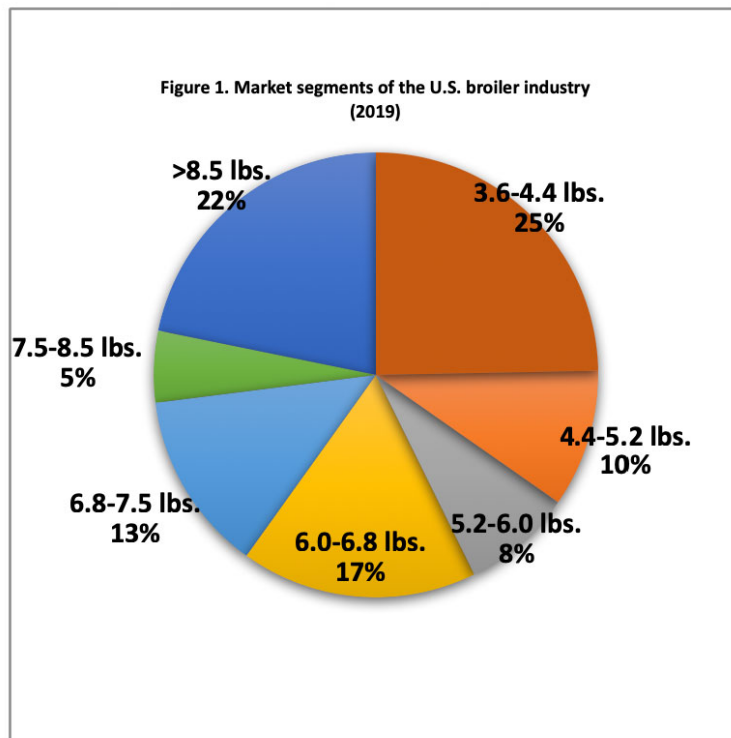
Owens and her lab have two studies in progress to evaluate meat quality and uniformity of broilers from the genetic strains representing the major strains used in the broiler industry today. In the first of two studies, the effect of genetics at given target weights representing two market programs (5.5 lb and 8.5 lb) using two planes of nutrition on these quality traits were evaluated. Though data analysis from this large dataset is still underway, initial results show that there is an impact of bird size on quality traits and that males and females exhibit different qualities, especially as the birds get older. Females tend to have higher cook loss and tougher meat at higher body weights, in addition to a quality defect that causes frayed meat. High breast yielding birds tend to have greater incidences of quality defects especially in broilers with higher body weight. At times, broilers on a higher plane of nutrition had greater quality differences than those on a lower plane of nutrition.

“The research that Dr. Owens is conducting on meat quality has been crucial for the poultry industry as a whole. As a primary breeder for the poultry industry, Cobb always needs quick and clear feedback on the quality of the chickens that we are providing to the industry. Dr. Owens has played a key role in providing us feedback so that we can adjust our breeding program and strive to provide

the industry with a bird that will meet our customers' needs. Her evaluations and advice are a necessary part of us doing a better job in the future" said Mark Cooper, Ph.D., Managing Director of Global Genetics for Cobb-Vantress, Inc.

Owens and her lab were still on the job during the height of COVID-19 with a second study that was conducted to evaluate meat quality of broilers raised of birds processed at various common market weights, ranging from 4.5 to 9.5 lbs in 1 lb increments. Analysis of this study is still underway and is expected to be completed over the next few months.

The overall study will result in multiple graduate student studies including two master's theses for graduate students Clay Maynard and Ashleigh Mueller. In addition Drs. Samuel Rochell and Michael Kidd will contribute to analysis of growth performance and economic analyses.



2 freshmen level poultry science courses combined for the Fall semester

POSC 1002 - Introduction to Careers in Poultry Science, and POSC 1012 - Avian Biology, have been combined into one course: POSC 1003 - Introduction to Poultry Science. The class will be taught by Dr. Sam Rochell. The Careers component will introduce students to the career opportunities in the poultry science industry and the biology component will introduce students to the biological sciences associated with poultry. Topics will include avian origin, anatomy, physiology and behavior.

A little about Dr. Rochell (in his own words):



Dr. Sam Rochell, right, and Dr. Casey Owens, left, serving ice cream to poultry science students, faculty and staff at the annual poultry science Ice Cream Social.

I hail from Elkmont, AL, a small town in an important region of commercial broiler production within the Tennessee River Valley. At the age of 14, I landed my first summer job working on a large broiler farm, and I have been studying and working in the field of poultry science ever since. I completed BS (2009) and MS (2012) degrees in poultry science at Auburn University where I also had the opportunity to do a couple of internships. Through these experiences, I came to appreciate the incredible impact that nutrition and feeding programs have on poultry production. At the

same time, I discovered a keen interest in the scientific process as applied to poultry and nutritional science. This led me to the University of Illinois, where I completed a PhD (2015) in Animal Science and conducted nutrition research in both broilers and swine. Teaching opportunities during graduate school also helped me discover a passion for classroom instruction, which I probably inherited from my mother and grandmother, who were both highly regarded school teachers. I've been a faculty member in POSC at the University of Arkansas since 2016, and I teach Intro to Poultry Science (POSC 1003) to our new students, typically in their first semester on campus. I also teach Poultry Nutrition (POSC 4343) which is taken by our upperclassmen. Additionally, I'm the faculty advisor to the Poultry Science Club which meets about once a month to provide professional networking and development opportunities and social events for our students. I really enjoy interacting with our students, and I am very proud to be able to help them prepare for meaningful and rewarding careers in the poultry industry.



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