



# Poultry Voice

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## National News

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### Missouri plant converts turkey offal into oil

A plant in Carthage, Mo., is using a "thermal conversion process" to transform turkey offal from a nearby Butterball facility into oil, fatty acids, natural gas, minerals and carbon.

Downers Grove, Ill.-based Renewable Environmental Solutions, which is a joint venture of ConAgra and Changing World Technologies, operates the plant. Currently it's selling between 100 and 200 barrels of oil per day to oil blenders and local residents for use as a heat source. A local utility is also testing the product.

Brian Appel, chairman and chief executive officer of Changing World Technologies, told the Associated Press that when the plant is fully operational in a couple months, it will produce about 500 barrels of oil, which will be sold at prices competitive with No. 2 diesel oil.

Using specific heat, pressure and water, the thermal conversion process reportedly just accelerates the method the earth uses to break down dead plants and animals into petroleum hydrocarbons.

Appel told the AP that this process uses far less energy than other waste-to-energy methods, creates fewer toxic emissions and destroys most pathogens in the feedstocks, all while creating environmentally friendly fuels and fertilizers.

Renewable Environmental Solutions is currently undergoing environmental assessments required to build plants in Colorado, Alabama and Nevada, according to Appel (A. Bagel, 5/24/04, Meatingplace.com).

### Virginia sets new regulations to guard against bird flu

Virginia's state veterinarian announced new regulations designed to protect the state's poultry industry against the H5 and H7 strains of avian influenza.

The requirements which took effect June 1, include: Shipping hatching eggs and certain day-old birds into Virginia is prohibited unless they meet the requirements of the "U.S. Avian Influenza Clean" program of the National Poultry Improvement Plan.

Shipping any subject avian species into Virginia is prohibited unless it is first tested and found negative for avian influenza (H5 and H7) or comes from a flock that has first been tested according to approved protocols and found negative for the H5 and H7 bird flu subtypes.

Any person shipping eggs, day-old birds, or other avian species into Virginia must hold a permit for such shipment from the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

Results of the bird flu test and the permit number must be recorded on a health certificate signed by an accredited veterinarian in the state of origin or on a report issued by a laboratory approved by any state or federal animal health authority.

In testing for bird flu, an accredited veterinarian shall use only the AGID, ELISA, Directigen, PCR or virus isolation test methods in a laboratory approved by a state or federal animal health authority.

Any subject avian species or hatching eggs that pass directly through Virginia to another state without being removed from their primary containers, any broilers less than 55 days of age going directly to slaughter and any pigeons, doves, finches and psittacine birds are exempted from these requirements (A. Bagel, 6/7/04, Meatingplace.com).



## New poultry industry campaign boasts, 'Chicken fits every diet!'

Emphasizing that chicken can be a major part of all the current diet trends, the National Chicken Council and the U.S. Poultry and Egg Association have launched a new campaign with the theme, "Chicken fits every diet!"

The groups worked with registered dietician Colleen Pierre and chef Timothy Cushman to develop recipes designed specifically to meet the guidelines of some of today's most popular diets.

The new recipes include:

- For "low-carb" diets: Deviled Chopped Chicken Salad, Grilled Chicken and Chorizo Skewers, Chicken Lasagna and Chicken Involtini;
- For "carb-conscious" diets: Hibachi Chicken Salad, Asian Chicken Tacos, Chicken Bouillabaisse, and Thai Chicken Basil Stir Fry.
- For "heart-healthy" diets: Chicken Minestrone Verde and Grilled Chicken Caribe Salad.

The organizations initially are aiming the campaign at the food press, with the goal of getting the recipes into magazines and newspapers. They are also targeting recipe developers at various restaurant chains and distributing the recipes to member companies (A. Bagel, 6/7/04, Meeting-place.com).

## Poultry Disease Detected in Hopkins County, Texas; Birds in the Area to be Tested

A breeder flock with about 24,000 birds was depopulated and buried Thursday, May 27, on a commercial poultry farm in Hopkins County in northeast Texas, near Sulphur Springs. Routine blood tests indicated that the flock, which lays eggs for hatching, had the H7N3 subtype of avian influenza (AI), one of the many strains of the viral disease. While AI does not compromise the food safety of cooked poultry or eggs, some forms of the disease can cause heavy death losses in a flock.

"The National Veterinary Services Laboratory in Ames, Iowa, has reported the evidence of the H7N3 AI virus in the flock, but it may be a week or 10 days before virus isolation results are available. There has been very little evidence of clinical signs of disease or increased mortality in the flock, leading us to believe this may be low-pathogenic AI, which causes little death loss in birds" said Dr. Bob Hillman, Texas' state veterinarian and executive director for the Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC), the state's livestock and poultry health regulatory agency. Pathogenicity tests cannot be performed until virus has been isolated from

samples. The pathogenicity refers to the virus' ability to cause illness and death in birds.

"The affected Hopkins County flock was negative for the AI virus during routine surveillance tests 10 weeks ago, and the birds have never been moved from the farm," said Dr. Hillman. "These factors give us some reassurance that the disease may not have spread in the area. However, we will locate the non-commercial and commercial flocks in at least a 10-mile radius of the affected farm, so that we can begin collecting blood samples and swabs from area poultry and other fowl for laboratory testing."

The source of the virus in Hopkins County is yet unknown, but Dr. Hillman said migratory waterfowl are a natural reservoir for AI. The disease is usually transmitted from bird to bird through respiratory discharge, but AI virus also can be passed in bird manure, then mechanically transmitted to flocks on boots, shoes, clothing, equipment or tires.

"In Texas, we need to take all actions necessary to ensure that this AI outbreak is quickly stamped out-even if ours is the low-pathogenic form of the H7N3 AI virus," he said. "Our first priority in Hopkins County was to ensure that the birds were promptly and humanely euthanized, then buried on site, to prevent the potential transmission of disease to other flocks."

"The poultry houses will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected before new birds will be allowed on the farm," Dr. Hillman noted. "TAHC veterinarians and animal health officials are following strict biosecurity measures to prevent transporting virus off the infected farm, or to or from any premise they visit. The field staff will be wearing disposable coveralls, head coverings and gloves, and they'll disinfect their rubber boots, vehicle tires, and equipment prior to entering or leaving a premise."

Laboratory tests on samples collected from area birds will be run at the Texas Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory in Gonzales or in College Station. Any positive test results will be confirmed at the National Veterinary Services Lab in Ames, Iowa.

"AI has been newsworthy this year, after outbreaks of a different, more dangerous strain were detected and eventually brought under control in Asia," said Dr. Hillman. "Low-pathogenic AI strains also were detected in Pennsylvania, Delaware and New Jersey early this year. Additionally, Canadian officials are continuing efforts to eradicate an unrelated outbreak of a highly pathogenic form of the H7N3 AI virus in British Columbia."





"In February and March, we worked with the U.S. Department of Agriculture to eradicate an outbreak of the highly pathogenic H5N2 strain of AI on a farm in Gonzales County, east of San Antonio. About 6,600 birds were depopulated to stop the disease from spreading. Flocks as far as 30 miles from the affected farm were tested, but no additional infection was found," he said.

Dr. Hillman said simple biosecurity measures can be taken to help protect flocks:

1. "Keep a spare pair." Buy a pair of inexpensive rubber boots, and wear them only on your own premise, to avoid 'tracking in' disease.
2. "Give germs the brush off!" Use a long-handled brush to scrape off manure, mud or debris from tires, equipment or boots, then disinfect.

3. "Disinfection prevents infection!" Mix a solution of three parts bleach to two parts water, and use it liberally to clean rubber boots and equipment brought onto your farm. If visitors don't want their vehicle tires sprayed with disinfectant, ask them to park outside your gate.
4. "Make visitors take cover." Don't be shy about asking visitors or customers to disinfect their footwear -- or better yet, provide guests with disposable shoe covers, or footwear worn only on your place.

"Good biosecurity creates a barrier against disease," said Dr. Hillman. "There's no better time than right now to prevent AI from spreading to other flocks." (TAHC, 5/28/04).

## Federal News

### E.P.A. nears pact on waste by processors of livestock

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is close to reaching an agreement with some of the nation's largest animal processors that would lay the groundwork for the first federal emission standards for companies that process millions of pigs, cows and chickens every day.

The agency was cited as saying that the agreement, which would allow the companies to monitor the air quality of their own operations for two years, would produce information that is essential to develop standards for the industry, which generates huge amounts of animal waste. Toxic pollutants in the waste have been linked to a wide range of respiratory problems, especially in children. Thomas V. Skinner, assistant administrator of the agency's office of enforcement and compliance, was quoted as saying, "The industry as a whole needs better monitoring data. This is the fastest and clearest way to do that."

But environmental groups and former agency officials were cited as saying the agreement is a bad deal for the public because while the companies are collecting data, they will be shielded from prosecution for violations of the Clean Air Act and other federal laws. Barclay Rogers, a lawyer for the Sierra Club, was quoted as saying, "The government has the authority to get this data without an amnesty agreement. That's one of the things that makes this so objectionable - there is no reason for the government to cut a sweetheart deal."



Eric Schaeffer, who was an agency enforcement lawyer in the Clinton administration, was cited as saying it could take as long as 10 years for the new standards to be put into effect, giving operators that much more time to elude enforcement action. The story says that new standards would go into effect only after the agreement was announced, a public comment period passed, companies signed up for the program, the agency selected about 30 operations to monitor, data was collected, information was studied, regulations were written and challenges were overcome.

John Thorne, a consultant to the livestock industry who helped negotiate the agreement, was cited as disagreeing, saying the length of time would be no more than four years, and even that is worth the effort because data will provide new standards for such a large part of the livestock industry - dairy cows, pigs, turkeys, chickens and egg-laying hens. Beef cattle processors are not part of the agreement.

Richard Schwartz, a lobbyist for some of the biggest livestock companies, was quoted as saying, "We didn't want to study ourselves into jail," in explaining why the promise of protection against enforcement action was so important to processors. "It would have made no sense for them to be sued, based on what they found in the study." Mr. Skinner insisted the agency was "not giving a lot away" by offering protection, arguing that the need for more information outweighed any other considerations. "This provides certainty for operators," he said. "If there is an imminent threat to human health, we retain the ability to go in and solve the problem." (June 3, 2004 New York Times Michael Janofsky <http://www.nytimes.com/2004/06/03/politics/03enviro.html>)



## **Federal News** *continued*

### **Survey: Costs of HACCP regulations hit small plants harder**

Regulation and market forces prompted U.S. meat and poultry plants to use increasingly sophisticated food safety technologies, according to a new survey released by the Agriculture Department's Economic Research Service.

The survey is the first to examine the types and amounts of food safety investments made by plants nationwide to comply with USDA's 1996 Pathogen Reduction/Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (PR/HACCP) regulation.

More than 1,700 plants classified as cattle, hog or poultry slaughter plants or cooked or raw meat processing plants received surveys, and almost 1,000 responded.

Results showed that from 1996 to 2000, those plants as a group spent about \$380 million annually and made \$570 million in long-term investments to comply with the PR/HACCP rule.

The U.S. meat and poultry industry spent an additional \$360 million during the same period on food safety investments unrelated to the PR/HACCP rule.

The average long-term investment found by the survey of \$180 million per year exceeded cost estimates of \$50 million per year made by USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service prior to enactment of the regulation.

The survey data suggests the PR/HACCP rule has raised beef and poultry plant slaughter costs by about one-third of 1 cent per pound of product, although small plants, which tend to produce more specialized products, had much higher average costs than larger plants, which produce mainly commodity products.

Plant size, which impacts market incentives, also influenced choice of food safety technology, according to the survey. Large plants favored equipment and testing technologies; Small plants relied more on manual sanitation and adjusting plant operations.

In addition, plants that exported products and were subject to food safety requirements by those customers made greater investments in food safety operations across a range of technologies than plants that did not export to other countries (A. Bagel, 6/2/04, Meatingplace.com).



### **FDA delays feed rules, seeks public comment**

The Food and Drug Administration will postpone creating new regulations designed to protect livestock feed from the possibility of harboring material that could cause BSE until more information is gathered, agency officials said Friday.

The officials said FDA was leaning toward a rule banning all specified risk materials from all animal feed because risk assessments show it to be the most effective way to tighten safeguards preventing bovine spongiform encephalopathy, but wanted to give the public the chance to comment first. A proposed rule is expected sometime this year, officials said.

The Agriculture Department and the FDA also announced an advance notice of proposed rulemaking designed to seek public comments on the following topics:

- Mandating dedicated equipment or facilities for handling and storing feed and ingredients to prevent cross contamination
- Prohibiting the use of all mammalian and poultry protein in ruminant feed
- Prohibiting materials from non-ambulatory cattle and dead stock from use in all animal feed
- The details and circumstances of moving from a voluntary to a mandatory animal identification plan

The timeline for any action on these advance notices is a year or two down the line, the officials said.

The American Meat Institute voiced support for proposals restricting the use of poultry litter and plate waste in ruminant feed as well as the use of dedicated facilities to produce cattle feed in an effort to prevent cross contamination.

But the group opposed the mandatory elimination of specified risk materials from all animal feed, calling the policy redundant in light of other feed restrictions.

Separately, FDA announced an interim final rule to take effect on July 14 prohibiting the use of SRMs in human foods such as dietary supplements, as well as cosmetics.

Coupled with that interim final rule is a proposed rule on record keeping requirements for the final rule (E. Hanson, 7/1/04, Meatingplace.com).



## International News

### **Japan lifts ban on some U.S. poultry imports**

Japan's government has lifted its ban on poultry imports from all but six U.S. states now that the threat of bird flu has somewhat subsided.

In February, Tokyo temporarily suspended all poultry imports from the United States following several bird flu outbreaks. Now Japan's Agriculture Ministry has scaled back those restrictions to include only Connecticut, Rhode Island, Delaware, New Jersey, Maryland and Texas — states where avian influenza has been detected most recently.

Japanese authorities indicated that while U.S. officials have confirmed that bird flu in those states is not a threat to humans, there has not been proof that the outbreaks are under control.

The United States is Japan's fourth biggest supplier of poultry, shipping 50,000 tons of product to Japan in the fiscal year that ended in March 2003 (A. Bagel, 6/1/04, Meatingplace.com).

### **New bird flu threat prompts Mexico to ban poultry from Texas**

Mexico's agriculture ministry has blocked poultry imports from Texas for the second time this year, according to a Reuters report.

The ban comes in the wake of a new bird flu outbreak in Hopkins County announced on 5/28/04. (See [Suspected low-pathogenic bird flu found in Texas](#), Meatingplace.com, May 28, 2004.)

According to Reuters, the ban covers most poultry products and will remain in place until U.S. authorities provide information showing that the outbreak is not of the highly contagious strain of bird flu. A high-pathogenic bird flu outbreak in Texas in February prompted Mexico to ban all U.S. poultry imports; Restrictions were later limited to certain states and some Texas counties.

Mexico is the fourth-largest importer of U.S. poultry, buying \$93 million worth of chicken and related products in 2003, Reuters reported (A. Bagel, 6/2/04, Meatingplace.com).

## West Virginia News

### **State Providing Economic Assistance to Turkey Industry**

Gov. Bob Wise, Commissioner of Agriculture Gus R. Douglass and the West Virginia Development Office have announced that the state will provide state turkey farmers with approximately \$250,000 to help them stay operational until a grower-funded cooperative takes over the former Pilgrim's Pride turkey processing plant in Hinton, Va., just across the West Virginia border.

"The turkey industry has historically been one that is stable and dependable," said Governor Wise. "We want to ensure that it remains a viable and productive industry for the economy of our Eastern Panhandle."

"This funding is extremely important to the region and to these turkey growers," said Commissioner Douglass. "These are family farms we're talking about here. Without this support, these families are facing bankruptcy and the loss of their farms."

West Virginia turkey farms contracted by Pilgrim's Pride - roughly one-third of the state's entire production - brought in approximately \$12 million last year for the birds they grew. High overhead keeps profit margins low, though, according to Commissioner Douglass.

"The modern poultry industry is extremely competitive, both domestically and internationally," said Commissioner Douglass. "Maximum productivity can only be achieved with up-to-date equipment and poultry houses, which can run as high as \$200,000 per house. Most poultry farmers are carrying a sizable amount of debt in order to remain competitive."

Other portions of the farmers' overhead go right back in to the local economy through purchases of farm equipment and household supplies. A study by the Florida Department of Agriculture put an economic multiplier of a 2.2 and a jobs lost multiplier of 2.64 on the closure of a plant similar to the Hinton facility.

Pilgrim's Pride announced this spring that the Hinton facility would be closed in October if a buyer was not found. Area turkey farmers from Virginia and West Virginia have formed a grower-owned cooperative that is in the process of purchasing the plant. The plant currently employs approximately 1,300 workers and process about 160,000 turkeys a week. Pilgrim's Pride decided to close the plant in an effort to focus on producing more ready-to-eat products as opposed to raw or frozen turkey meat (Virginia Farm Bureau Federation, WVDA News Release 7/9/04).



## 2004 West Virginia Poultry Association Convention and Festival Program of Events

### Monday, July 26, 2004

- 6:00 P.M. **NEW** - Wing Cook-off, sponsored by the W.Va. Poultry Assoc., & Moorefield Volunteer Fire Company  
Bingo Hall, Three Classifications: Professional, Amateur, and Youth (pre-registration required) Contact  
Poultry Office - (304) 530-2725.
- 6:30 P.M. Kiddie Parade, sponsored by the Moorefield Volunteer Fire Company

### Tuesday, July 27, 2004

- 11:00 A.M. Lunch for the Poultry Pageant participants, Moorefield Middle School
- 7:30 P.M. 2004 WV Poultry Pageant, sponsored by the WVPA Pageant Committee, Moorefield Middle School  
Admission, \$5.00 for adults, \$3.00 for children under 12; children 5 and under Free

### Wednesday, July 28, 2004 - Youth Day Program

(All activities held at Moorefield Middle School)

- 8:30 A.M. General Registration for youth participating in contest
- 9:30 A.M. 4-H and FFA Poultry and Egg Judging Event
- 12:10 P.M. Youth Luncheon
- 12:30 P.M. Youth Cook-off (pre-registration required)
- 1:30 P.M. Poultry Skill-A-Thon
- 3:15 P.M. Presentation of Awards

### Educational Program

Reservations and a \$2.00 per person fee are required. To make reservations contact Mrs. Emily Funk, P.O. Box 612, Moorefield, WV 26836. Make checks payable to the **West Virginia Poultry Association**. Deadline for reservations is July 7, 2004.

#### **Broiler Section** - Peru Community Center, Peru, WV

- 6:30 P.M. Welcome- Allen V. Evans, Broiler Producer Rep., WVPA - Invocation and Dinner
- 7:15 P.M. Mark Howell, NC Dept. of Ag. & Consumer Sciences, "Biosecurity, Bioterrorism and the Farm: Producer Perspectives and Government Insight."
- 8:00 P.M. Questions for Speaker - Integrator Comments and Adjourn

#### **Broiler Breeder/Pullet Section** - Moorefield Church of the Brethren, Moorefield, WV

- 6:30 P.M. Welcome- Daniel Poling, Vice President-Pullets, WVPA - Invocation and Dinner
- 7:15 P.M. John Blakeley, Technical Manager - Eastern Region, Aviagen, "Maximizing Hatching Egg Production"
- 8:00 P.M. Questions for Speaker - Integrator Comments and Adjourn

#### **Turkey Section** - Franklin Community Building, Franklin, WV

- 6:30 P.M. Welcome- Jeff Bowers, WVPA member - Invocation and Dinner
- 7:15 P.M. Mike Stringham, M.A., Extension Entomologist, NCSU "House Flies and Biosecurity"
- 8:00 P.M. Questions for Speaker
- 8:15 P.M. Youth Science Fair Presentation - Sarah Staley, "Cool Fumes"  
Integrator Comments and Adjourn



## Thursday, July 29, 2004

### Golf Tournament at Valley View Golf Course

Team of Four: Tee Time: 7:45 A.M.- Morning limit to 28 teams of 4 players  
Tee Time: 1:00 P.M.- Limit 28 Teams

### 2003 Chicken In A Basket Contest - Moorefield Middle School, Sponsored by the WVDA and the WVPA

8:00-9:00 A.M.      Entries Received  
10:00 A.M.        Judging Begins  
12:00 Noon        Winners Announced

### Other Thursday Events

8:00 A.M.        Festival Of Ideas (Ladies Day) Moorefield Middle School, Contact: Miriam Leatherman, WVU Hardy Co. Ext. Office for specific information on registration, times & classes (304-538-2373.)  
11:00 A.M.        Moorefield Lions Club Chicken BBQ at the Town Park in Moorefield  
1:00 P.M.        WVPA Annual Meeting at Moorefield Middle School  
6:00 P.M.        WVPA Poultry Parade, Sponsored by the Moorefield Volunteer Fire Company #46  
Line-up at 5:00 P.M.

## Friday, July 30, 2004

8:00 A.M.        Traditional Breakfast, Duffy Memorial United Methodist Church, Moorefield, WV  
9:30 A.M.        WVPA Annual Meeting Cont'd.- Comments from State agencies, institutions and industry leaders. Moorefield Middle School  
12:00 Noon        Lunch-Moorefield Presbyterian Church-TICKET REQUIRED, Contact Poultry Office at 530-2725. Opening Remarks & Introductions, Mr. Dale Walker, Vice-President, WV Poultry Assoc.

### Other Friday Events

4:00 P.M.        Reception at the South Branch Inn sponsored by Summit Financial Group  
6:30 P.M.        The President's Dinner-Moorefield Middle School-TICKET REQUIRED-Contact the WVPA Office at 538-2725. Speaker: Mr. Lonnie "Bo" Pilgrim, Pittsburg, Texas.

## Saturday, July 31, 2004

10:00 A.M.        Muzzleloaders Turkey Shoot-Hardy County Rod and Gun Club  
5:00 P.M.        45<sup>th</sup> Annual Riding Tournament conducted by the Hardy County Riding Association





## Upcoming Meetings

### July

25-29 Federation of Animal Science Societies Combined Annual Meeting, St. Louis, Mo., 217-356-3182, [kims@assochg.org](mailto:kims@assochg.org); [www.fass.org](http://www.fass.org)

27-30 Meat & Poultry Marination Short Course, Univ. of Georgia, Athens. 706-542-2574; [marianw@uga.edu](mailto:marianw@uga.edu), [www.efsonline.uga.edu](http://www.efsonline.uga.edu)

### Aug.

8-11 International Association of Food Protection Annual Meeting, Phoenix, AZ. 515-276-3344, [info@foodprotection.org](mailto:info@foodprotection.org); [www.foodprotection.org](http://www.foodprotection.org)

### Sept.

13-15 HACCP for Meat & Poultry, Athens, GA. 706-542-2574; [marianw@uga.edu](mailto:marianw@uga.edu), [www.efsonline.uga.edu](http://www.efsonline.uga.edu)

### Oct.

5-6 Advanced HACCP for Meat & Poultry, Athens, GA. 706-542-2574; [marianw@uga.edu](mailto:marianw@uga.edu), [www.efsonline.uga.edu](http://www.efsonline.uga.edu)

*Poultry Voice* is published quarterly to provide those interested in the poultry industry with pertinent production information from industry, academia, and federal and state governments to help ensure economic production of poultry in a manner that sustains the environment. *Poultry Voice* is sponsored by the West Virginia Extension Service.

Contact: June deGraft-Hanson, WVU Poultry Specialist, PO Box 6108, Morgantown, WV 26506-6108

Phone: 304/293-6131 ext. 4099 E-mail: [June.deGraft-Hanson@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:June.deGraft-Hanson@mail.wvu.edu)

WVU Extension Service Poultry Web Site: [www.wvu.edu/~agexten/poultry/index.htm](http://www.wvu.edu/~agexten/poultry/index.htm)

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West Virginia University  
Extension Service  
P.O. Box 6031  
Morgantown, WV 26506-6031