

September / October 2020 Vol. 15 No. 5

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Alabama Poultry Magazine is published by the
Alabama Poultry & Egg Association
465 South Bainbridge Street
Montgomery, AL 36104
Phone: 334-265-2732
Fax: 334-265-0008

Send editorial and advertising correspondence to:
Alabama Poultry Magazine
Editor
P.O. Box 240
Montgomery, AL 36101
Advertising rates and closing
dates available upon request.

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CEO's Message

We all have experienced so much change the last several months. As we adjust to our new normal, we will continue to find better ways to work together to produce America's favorite protein.

Along with so many changes to our industry, we have needed to make event changes within APEA. Unfortunately, we had to forgo our in-person annual meeting and proceeded with the installation of our new officers via conference call. I am pleased to welcome Jason Shell as our new president and Ryan Turner to the officer team as secretary. I am looking forward to working with this year's team as we plan for the rest of the year and into 2021.

After moving the Evening of Fun from June to Sept. 5, we made the extremely difficult decision to cancel the concert altogether. We didn't make this decision lightly, as we were concerned with the health and safety of concert attendees. We are already working on plans for the 2021 Evening of Fun and will be announcing information regarding it in the coming months.

I would like to congratulate our 2020 Poultry Farm Family of the Year, Scott and Shea Shelley of Beaver Creek Poultry in Houston County. They exemplify excellence, and I am proud to have them represent our industry this year.

Also, I would like to congratulate Steve Smith on being selected for a Distinguished Service Award. Steve is currently the Chairman of the Allied Committee and a member of the Executive Committee. Steve has been active in raising money for Auburn University and community college students over the last several years.

Alabama Department Agriculture and Industries Commissioner Rick Pate was selected to receive the first-ever Government Partnership Award. The commissioner led the way in getting federal and state funds for poultry producers who were harmed economically during the COVID-19 pandemic. Pate was also responsible for attaining more than 200,000 masks, as well as hand sanitizer and gloves, for employees at Alabama poultry and further processing facilities and their families.

Jason Spann, outgoing president, selected the awards recipients.

As always, I am extremely proud of this wonderful industry and the accomplishments it's made during the pandemic. Poultry is part of many of our daily lives, and I'd like to thank everyone who has a role in making sure poultry is a stable part of our supply chain. I hope we will be able to get back to "normal" soon.

Sincerely,



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On The Cover

As incoming APEA president, Jason Shell is looking forward to continuing to support Alabama's largest agricultural industry. He, wife Melissa and their two children reside in Boaz. *Photo by Caleb Hicks*



APEA APPLAUDS GOV. IVEY'S APPROVAL OF ALABAMA AGRICULTURE STABILIZATION PROGRAM

Alabama Poultry and Egg Association, or APEA, applauded Gov. Kay Ivey's Aug. 12 announcement awarding \$26 million of the Coronavirus Relief Fund for the Alabama Agriculture Stabilization Program, which includes \$4 million to poultry farmers.

"This decision by Gov. Ivey comes at a great time," APEA Associate Director Ray Hilburn said. "The funds available to poultry farmers will help cover losses sustained during the pandemic. We thank Gov. Ivey and Alabama Agriculture Commissioner Rick Pate for their assistance to our members and to Alabama agriculture."

Gov. Ivey said agriculture and farmers are important to Alabama's economy.

"Agriculture has an economic impact of over \$70 billion in Alabama," she said. "I know firsthand how hard our farmers work each day, and they are without a doubt a major part of who we are in Alabama."

"Due to COVID-19, numerous farms and processing facilities have struggled to remain open and sell their products," she said. "Establishing the Alabama Agriculture Stabilization Program is not only the right thing to do to protect our farmers, but it is also key to stabilizing Alabama's economy."

"I want to thank Gov. Ivey for her continued support of Alabama agriculture and for providing much needed assistance to farmers and processors adversely effected by COVID-19," Pate said. "Because of these men and women, our food supply chain is safe, abundant and sustainable."

The Alabama agricultural assistance package is funded by the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act, which provided the state more than \$1.8 billion to offset public and private costs associated with the pandemic.

APEA was joined by the Alabama Farmers Federation, Alabama Cattlemen's Association, Alabama Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association, Alabama Agribusiness Council and numerous individuals and businesses that submitted funding requests for the governor's consideration. 🐔

The Alabama Agriculture Stabilization Program will be administered through the Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries and will be allocated to the following:

- 1. Direct Payment Business Stabilization Grants to Cattle Producers:** \$10.5 million for feeder and fed cattle sold between April 16, 2020 and May 15, 2020, and dairy producers that qualified for USDA's Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP).
- 2. Meat Processing Plant Reimbursement Program:** \$1.5 million for reimbursements of up to \$50,000 for existing processors to expand capacity to meet increased demand caused by COVID-19.
- 3. Poultry Farmer Stabilization Grant Program:** At this time, \$4 million is set to assist poultry farmers who have experienced an extended downtime (longer than 21 days) between flocks and have not been otherwise compensated.
- 4. Catfish Processor Reimbursement Program:** \$500,000 to reimburse catfish processing plants for purchases of PPE, disinfectants, workstation dividers, COVID-19 testing for employees, etc. to combat COVID-19 made between March 13, 2020 and July 31, 2020.
- 5. Fruit & Vegetable Processor Reimbursement Program:** \$500,000 to reimburse fruit and vegetable processing plants for purchases of PPE, disinfectants, workstation dividers, COVID-19 testing for employees, etc. to combat COVID-19

TYPE:	AMOUNT:	APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE:	APPLICATIONS DEADLINE:	HOW TO APPLY:
Meat Processors	\$1.5 Million	Aug. 24	Sept. 15	Contact: Lynn.Blue@agi.alabama.gov
Catfish rocessors	\$500,000	Aug. 24	Sept. 15	Contact: Patrick.Moody@agi.alabama.gov
Fruit & Vegetable Processors	\$500,000	Aug. 24	Sept. 15	Contact: Don.Wambles@agi.alabama.gov
Cattle Producers	\$10.5 Million	Sept. 8	Oct. 9	Application available on-line Sept. 8 at www.agi.alabama.gov
Nursery Growers	\$1.0 Million	Sept. 15	Oct. 15	Application available on-line Sept. 15 at www.agi.alabama.gov
State CFAP Supplemental Program	\$8.0 Million	Sept. 15	Oct. 15	Application available on-line Sept. 15 at www.agi.alabama.gov
Poultry Farmers	\$4.0 Million	Oct. 1	Oct. 31	Application available on-line Oct. 1 at www.agi.alabama.gov


made between March 13, 2020 and July 31, 2020. Funds may also be used to reimburse the processors for the purchase of equipment such as washing stations, flash freezers, and packaging equipment to expand production to meet increased demand caused by COVID-19.

- 6. State Supplemental CFAP Grant Program:** \$8 million for a state supplemental payment to producers that qualified for USDA's Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP). The exact percentage to be used for the state payment will be determined after all state supplemental CFAP

applications have been received and USDA's CFAP data is finalized.

- 7. Nursery Grower Reimbursement Program:** \$1 million to reimburse licensed nursery growers for purchases of PPE, disinfectants, workstation dividers, COVID-19 testing for employees, etc. to combat COVID-19 made between March 13, 2020 and July 31, 2020. This program will not apply for nursery growers that are compensated through the State Supplemental CFAP Program for their nursery losses.

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Partnership Helps Feed Needy Alabamians During Pandemic

Alabama Ag Commissioner Rick Pate delivered 64,000 eggs to Feeding the Gulf Coast in Theodore in July. A number of food bank leaders and employees along with state lawmakers and local officials met Pate with the delivery.

By Dennis Sherer

Amid the hardships the COVID-19 pandemic has caused for Alabamians have been some 'eggs'traordinary acts of kindness.

One such case came in July, when Cal-Maine Foods Inc. contacted the Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries about donating 280,800 fresh eggs to economically strapped families. Ag Commissioner Rick Pate, in turn, called Alabama Trucking

Association CEO Mark Colson, who reached out to members of his Montgomery-based organization for help in transporting the eggs to Feeding America Food Banks across the state. LB3 Trucking of Wedowee, N.G. Whatley Trucking of Montgomery and R.E. Garrison Trucking of Cullman volunteered to deliver the eggs to the food banks, which then distributed them to food pantries and agencies that assist Alabama residents.

"The eggs will help local food banks provide hope and nourishment for numerous Alabama families," Colson said. "The Alabama Trucking Association is proud to do our part."

Officials at the food banks said the donation came at a time when many Alabamians were out of work because of COVID-19 and needing help to provide food for their families.



At the Food Bank of North Alabama, state lawmakers, food bank representatives and Alabama Trucking Association members and staff were on hand for the delivery of 54,000 eggs donated by Cal-Maine Foods.



Nearly 300,000 eggs were delivered to Alabama food banks in July, courtesy of Cal-Maine Foods and the Alabama Trucking Association.

"We've seen our need just skyrocket the past few months," said Michael Ledger, CEO and president of Feeding the Gulf Coast Food Bank in Theodore. "The kindness of everyone involved in donating and distributing the eggs is greatly appreciated."

Pate said the egg distribution is an example of what can happen when businesses, agencies and organizations partner to help the less fortunate.

"I want to thank Cal-Maine Foods Inc. out of Baldwin County for the generous donation of 23,400 dozen table eggs and the Alabama Trucking Association for delivering the eggs," Pate said. "This donation will improve the lives of many Alabamians struggling during the pandemic."

Jackson, Mississippi-based Cal-Maine Foods Inc. is the largest producer and marketer of shell eggs in the United States. It manages approximately 36.2 million layers and 9.4 million pullets and breeders.

Josh Matthews, director of operations for the Food Bank of North Alabama in Huntsville, said eggs are an excellent source of protein and a staple in the diet of many Alabamians.

"Eggs are the backbone of one of the most important meals of the day — breakfast," Matthews said. "We were excited to receive the eggs and be able to send them out to food pantries and other agencies throughout north Alabama. It helped a lot of people."

Food Bank of Central Alabama CEO Brett Meredith said the eggs the organization received provided a generous boost to its efforts to feed less fortunate residents in the Birmingham area.

"It was a great help for us," he said. "The number of people in need in our area has increased tremendously. Fresh eggs are not something we get every day, and we were very happy to get these." 🐔

Kilcrease Leaves Advanced Poultry to Farm Full Time

After six and a half years in sales with specialized poultry equipment supplier Advanced Poultry, Adam Kilcrease of Pike County decided it was time to get back to the farm.

"I enjoyed all of my time and the people I worked with," the 40-year-old Kilcrease said. "I knew when I started, I would eventually come home and grow chickens. Now seemed like a pretty good time."

Randy Arnett, manager of Elba's Advanced Poultry branch, said Kilcrease made an impact on growers in the industry during his time with the company.

"Adam is an extraordinary person with high integrity," Arnett said. "He relates so well with growers and can easily talk with them because he has grown chickens and knows what it takes. We're truly going to miss him a bunch, but we're glad he's still a part of the industry."

Ray Hilburn of the Alabama Poultry and Egg Association said Kilcrease brought much expertise to the table.

"Adam is a well-respected person in the poultry industry," Hilburn, APEA associate director, said. "His extensive knowledge and background have allowed him to be very successful and involved in our industry. He will definitely be missed by the producers and customers he has developed working relationships with."

Kilcrease, a 2002 Auburn University poultry science graduate, said he has valued his connections and is looking forward to farming full time.

"I built so many friendships throughout my career in the industry," the Pike County native said. "It meant so much to me to finish it out with such a great group of people." 🐔



APEA's Ray Hilburn congratulates Kilcrease for his career in the poultry industry.



Those on hand for Adam Kilcrease's last day with Advanced Poultry are, from left, incoming south Alabama outside sales rep. Seth Wood, Advanced Poultry store manager Randy Arnett, Kilcrease, APEA Associate Director Ray Hilburn and Advanced Poultry owner Michael Walker.



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14

**FARMS
PENDING**

18

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Smith Poultry Farm - 11 House Broiler Farm in Butler County, AL | **Thomas Farm** - 4 House Broiler Farm in Cleburne County, AL
Langham Road Farm - 2 House Breeder Farm in Conceh County, AL | **Ashley Farm** - 2 House Broiler Farm in Cullman County, AL
Shiloh Farm - 6 House Broiler Farm in Polk County, GA | **Lakeview Farm** - 2 House Broiler Farm in Carroll County, GA
Resaca Farm - 4 House Broiler Farm in Murray County, GA | **Bowen Poultry Farm** - 16 House Broiler Farm in Hall County, GA
Ridgeback Farm Poultry - 6 House Broiler Farm in Banks County, GA | **G&K Farm** - 2 House Aviagen Breeder Farm in Leoma, TN
Asbury Breeder Farm - 2 House Breeder Farm in Dale County, AL | **LeCroy Farm** - 4 House Broiler Farm in Franklin County, GA
Sugar Creek Farms - 7 House Broiler Farm in Greene & Morgan County, GA | **Carroll Farm** - 6 House Broiler Farm in Cullman County, AL
Adcock Poultry - 8 House Broiler Farm in Marion County, AL | **M&M Breeder Farm** - 4 House Breeder Farm in Crenshaw County, AL



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Perseverance Pays off for State's Top Young Farm Family

Ben Johnson of Randolph County didn't realize his longtime dream of farming full time till February, but less than six months later, he, wife Bethany and their two youngsters had earned honors as Alabama's Outstanding Young Farm Family for 2020.

For Ben, an Auburn University, or AU, alumnus, working hard to reach a goal is nothing new, and this time, nearly a decade of dedication, diversification and

perseverance paid off. Those years included full-time jobs, first with the Farm Service Agency and then as a service technician at Koch Foods.

"If I had come home to farm right after graduating from Auburn, I wouldn't have grown certain skills," Ben said. "That includes people skills, banking knowledge through the Farm Service Agency and practical poultry skills at Koch Foods. *Continued on page 7...*



Ben and Bethany Johnson and children Blakely and Brooks are Alabama's 2020 Outstanding Young Farm Family.



Brooks, left, and Blakely Johnson spend a lot of time learning about the farm, even as youngsters.

"This was our third year in the competition," he said. "When we look back, we realize all the hard work we've put in, and we couldn't be more humbled."

In 2017, the couple bought four poultry houses near Woodland, where today they raise 350,000 broiler chickens a year. That's in addition to hay production, a 170-head beef cattle herd and 150 acres of corn and wheat. And in December, the Johnsons bought a fertilizer-spreading business. Randolph County is flush with cattle farms, offering ample opportunities for Johnson Ag Service LLC to spread lime and commercial fertilizer.

"We prayed for a sign that would seal the deal for Ben to farm full time, and this was it," said Bethany, a fellow AU graduate and math teacher at Woodland High School. "He's where he needs to be."

"I have to admit, I was skeptical at first," she said. "For someone young to step out on a limb and rely on farming full time, it was hard, but it was so worth taking that leap of faith and going for it. Whether we had won this year or not, we have seen so much joy and grown as a family in many ways."

As the top young farmers, the Johnsons received \$35,000 toward a Ford truck, courtesy of Alfa Insurance; a John Deere 825i Gator from Alabama Ag Credit and Alabama Farm Credit; and a John Deere tractor lease, sponsored by AgPro, SunSouth and TriGreen dealers.

Ben said he works to manage his time efficiently, knowing challenges pop up on the farm.

"We spend eight weeks raising chickens," Ben said. "From the day they're placed in our houses, we can

see the results of the hard work we put in."

To serve fellow farmers, Ben is an Alabama Farmers Federation State Poultry Committee member and leads the Randolph County Cattlemen's Association. He chairs the Randolph County Young Farmers Committee, and Bethany is secretary. The Johnsons and children Blakely, 3, and Brooks, 1, worship at Providence Baptist Church, where Bethany helps lead the youth.

When Bethany looks across their backyard, she sees chicken houses, farmland and a bright future for their children. The Johnsons are teaching Blakely and Brooks to value faith, family and farming.

"Even though they're young, the kids know farming is a lot of work," Bethany said. "These are lessons they'll value forever." ♡

Alabama Poultry Facilities Recognized for Exceptional Safety Performance

The Joint Industry Safety and Health Council has recognized 14 Alabama poultry facilities with safety awards, citing the companies' outstanding performance through the implementation of innovative and effective employee safety and health programs.

Award consideration was based on injury statistics over three years, 2017-19, and an evaluation of written applications by academia and other safety experts. Five facilities received the highest level of recognition, the Award of Distinction. The other categories included the Award of Honor and the Award of Merit.

The Award of Distinction is given to facilities that have excelled in sharing the essential aspects of safety and health training, education and employee involvement and that have incurred injury and incident rates equal to or greater than 75 percent below Bureau of Labor Statistics, or BLS, results.

The Award of Honor recognizes facilities based on the same level of employee safety training and education but with incident rates between 75 percent and 50 percent less than BLS results, and the Award of Merit honors facilities with incident rates between 50 percent and equal to BLS statistics.

Based on the latest data available from the bureau for the slaughter and poultry processing Occupational Safety and Health Administration, or OSHA, total recordable illness and injury rate for 2018 was 3.5 cases per 100 full-time workers, down from 3.8 in 2017. The poultry industry's rate of 3.5 was below the rate of 5.1 for similar agricultural industries in terms of injuries per 100 full-time workers and lower than the rate of 4.2 for the entire food manufacturing sector. In all of manufacturing, the rate was 3.4.

"It is always encouraging to see so many companies implementing new and innovative programs to promote safety in their facilities," said Frank Cruice, senior director of corporate safety and security at Perdue Farms and chair of the Joint Industry Safety and Health Council. "The awards are indicative of the impressive



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Pilgrim's Corp <i>Fort Payne AL Hatchery Hatchery</i>	Wayne Farms LLC <i>Jack AL Enterprise Complex Processing</i>
Wayne Farms LLC <i>Union Springs AL Processing Processing</i>	

HONOR

Tyson Foods Inc. <i>Eufaula AL Hatchery Hatchery</i>	Wayne Farms LLC <i>Dothan AL Hatchery Hatchery</i>
Wayne Farms LLC <i>Decatur AL Hatchery Hatchery</i>	Pilgrim's Corp <i>Enterprise AL Processing Processing</i>
Wayne Farms LLC <i>Decatur AL West Prepared Foods Processing</i>	Wayne Farms LLC <i>Decatur AL East Further Processing Processing</i>

MERIT

Tyson Foods Inc. <i>Blountsville AL Processing Plant Processing</i>	Tyson Foods Inc. <i>River Valley Animal Foods Aliceville AL Rendering Rendering</i>
Tyson Foods Inc. <i>Eufaula AL Processing Plant Processing</i>	

progress made by the industry regarding the safety and health of its workers."

The joint safety council consists of members from the U.S. Poultry & Egg Association, National Chicken Council and National Turkey Federation. Collectively, the three organizations represent companies that produce 95 percent of the nation's poultry products and directly employ more than 350,000 workers. 🐔



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Jason and Melissa Shell reside in Boaz with their two children. Emma, 17, attends Albertville High School, while Brady, 12, is at Albertville Junior High School.



Poultry THE RIGHT PATH FOR NEW ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT

By Caleb Hicks

Ask incoming Alabama Poultry and Egg Association, or APEA, President Jason Shell what his plans are while heading up the organization, and he'll say two words: "Give back."

After being inspired by Albertville High School ag teachers Ricky Todd and Phillip Williams and awarded a full-tuition scholarship from APEA his senior year, the Marshall County native turned his eyes to the state's largest agricultural industry.

"I was blessed to be mentored and guided by several great leaders

throughout my life who knew this industry," Shell, 44, said. "This organization (APEA) gave me my first big chance. I didn't take that lightly then, and I don't now."

Growing up, Shell wasn't sure what he would choose for his career, but he knew poultry was the right decision once Gold Kist pinned him for summer work experiences prior to offering him a job his senior year at Auburn University.

"When I came home for the summer, I'd go to Snead {State Community College} during the day

and work in the evisceration department on the night shift," Shell said. "That whole experience lit a fire in me. I knew then God was leading me down the right path."

Shell graduated in poultry science in 1998 and is now the plant manager for Food Ingredients Technology Company in Anniston.

The Lord led Shell not only down his career path but also to his bride of nearly 21 years, Melissa. The two met in church more than 30 years ago and finally went out after some convincing by a mutual friend.



The Shells are big dog lovers. Just ask their golden doodles, Sophie and Maverick.



Jason enjoys taking his beloved 1969 Camaro out for a spin when he has the chance.

“When Jason came home from Auburn in ’98, we saw each other at a football game here in Albertville,” said Melissa, who is executive director at the Marshall County Habitat for Humanity. “I was in school at Jacksonville State University at the time, and one of our friends told him we had fought off dating for long enough. The rest is history.”

With Shell as APEA president, Melissa said she couldn’t be prouder of her husband and the accomplishments he has made in his career.

“He gives everything 110 percent,” Melissa, 42, said. “I am excited for him in this new role and proud I get to stand by his side.”

With two kids — 17-year-old Emma and Brady, 12 — three dogs, a full-time job and his role in APEA, Shell said he doesn’t get a lot of free time. When a sliver comes available, though, if he’s not on vacation with his family, you can find him at Talladega Superspeedway managing the media center and other events at the track on race weekends.

“Being able to be a part of that twice a year and seeing everything that goes into putting the show on, because that’s what it is, is one of my favorite things to do,” Shell said. “I also get to give track rides on race weekends sometimes.”

To fuel his passion for fast cars, Shell keeps a prized Lemans Blue, numbers matching, ’69 RS/SS Camaro in his home garage.

In the end, Shell is here to serve APEA and Alabama’s poultry industry, something he considers an honor.

“Being involved in this industry is very humbling,” Shell said. “I want to learn more about what our growers are faced with and what we can do as an industry for them to be more successful. I’m also looking forward to following in the footsteps of people I have looked up to for so long and continuing to support this great industry.” 🐔



In his free time, Jason enjoys volunteering at Talladega Superspeedway and manages the media center on race weekends.



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Pilgrim's Invests \$1.6M in Employees' Hometowns

Building on ongoing sustainability and social responsibility efforts, Pilgrim's, an American-based food company, announced plans Aug. 18 to invest \$1.6 million in Alabama to help local communities respond to coronavirus and invest in the future.

The investment is part of a new \$20 million national initiative called Hometown Strong, a program that adds to commitments Pilgrim's has made this year to protect employees and ensure their job security amid the global pandemic.

"It is because of the great work being done in our hometowns that Pilgrim's is able to provide high-quality chicken to families across our country," said Fabio Sandri, Pilgrim's interim president and CEO. "Through this initiative, we'll have the opportunity to collaborate with local leaders and our team members to determine how best to make meaningful and lasting impacts in our communities."

Pilgrim's, with Alabama locations in Enterprise, Guntersville and Russellville, will partner with local officials and community leaders in those cities to identify investment

projects that strengthen the communities where the company's team members live and work.

"There is no doubt that COVID-19 has taken a toll on Alabamians, but because of strong partners like Pilgrim's, we are bringing much-needed relief to communities around our state," Gov. Kay Ivey said. "The Pilgrim's Hometown Strong initiative is not only helping local communities respond to the ongoing pandemic, but it is also positioning us for a strong comeback and future."

"I am grateful for Alabama's collaboration on this initiative and for the strong partner we have in Pilgrim's. We will overcome this together."

Alabama Poultry and Egg Association CEO Johnny Adams echoed the governor's comments on the relief.

"This donation made by Pilgrim's will bring vital assistance to Alabama communities and poultry processing employees," Adams said. "Things could have been much worse for our facilities here in Alabama. We're grateful Pilgrim's is a part of the



COVID-19 recovery effort in our state."

Pilgrim's has a strong presence in Alabama, employing more than 3,200 people and paying family farmers nearly \$89 million each year to support the area facilities. An important contributor to the state's economy, Pilgrim's has an annual payroll in Alabama of more than \$113 million and has contributed more than \$146 million in capital investments over the last five years.

Nationally, the \$20 million investment from Pilgrim's, as part of a \$50 million nationwide contribution from JBS USA, will include donations to alleviate food insecurity, strengthen long-term community infrastructure and well-being and support COVID-19 emergency response and relief efforts. All funds will be committed by the end of the year.

Visit hometownstrong.jbssa.com to learn more. 🐔

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF A NEW BROILER HOUSE IN ALABAMA

The entry of a new 39,600-square-foot (66' × 600') broiler house in Alabama causes a measurable increase in economic activity within the state in terms of construction and ongoing annual operations. Consider the following economic activity created during construction and a broiler house's first year of operation.

34%



INPUT

A broiler house in Alabama sources roughly 34% of all inputs locally.

OUTPUT (SALES)

\$1.5
MILLION

is supported each year from ongoing operations; \$798,918 during the construction phase.



JOB CREATION

4

jobs are supported each year from ongoing operations; 6 during the construction phase.



TAXES PAID

\$90
THOUSAND

is supported each year from ongoing operations; \$87,105 during the construction phase.



LABOR INCOME

\$357
THOUSAND

is supported each year from ongoing operations; \$290,848 during the construction phase.



VALUE ADDED

\$504
THOUSAND

is supported each year from ongoing operations; \$395,594 during the construction phase.

6 Common Perimeter Air Inlet Problems in Poultry Houses

National Poultry Technology Center — Auburn University — September 2020
Jess Campbell, Jeremiah Davis, Kelly Griggs and Carson Edge



Figure 1: An older example of corrugated metal and framing lumber light shield over perimeter sidewall air inlets in a broiler house. Here we are measuring the size of the opening to see if this shield air opening is properly sized for the inlet it is covering.

From day-old chicks to catch, environmental management offers the number-one opportunity to improve profitability in broiler production. Management during the first two weeks of a flock often dictates the outcome, and the beginning stages of ventilation must be executed properly. Top growers pay close attention to minimum and transitional ventilation details and make sure all ventilation equipment is in top shape before each flock arrives. However, on many farms we often see opportunities for improvement in this area. We see growers that are working hard to grow chickens but seem to have forgotten about the importance of keeping perimeter air inlet doors, also called vents or baffles, and their operating components in good working order. Perimeter air inlet doors play a very important role in minimum and transitional ventilation and must not be neglected when it comes to maintenance. Now is the time to inspect all inlet doors for maintenance, before cooler weather arrives.

1. Light shields/hoods: Many modern farms have metal light shields installed adjacent to the outside of each inlet opening to block sunlight, feed truck lights and reflections from entering the building and disturbing birds. While this is a good practice for light control,

these shields must not restrict airflow to the inlet behind it. Figure 1 shows one example of the many on-farm fabricated designs that have been used on broiler and pullet houses. If the shields over these inlets have less open area than the inlet itself, they are limiting the house air exchange during full inlet door ventilation mode and will likely force the house to transition into tunnel or tunnel assist prematurely. If this is the case on your farm, careful inspection of the current inlet doors and shields should be conducted.

A good rule of thumb to prevent a restriction is to design for a combined free air opening of the shield about 1.5 times larger than the inlet itself. For example, if the area of the inlet door is 3 square feet, the combined open area around the light shield should be about 4.5 square feet total. Any shield with a combined inlet area (example: 2 square feet) less than the air inlet open area (example 3 square feet) would indicate a restriction and might need to be repaired. There are engineered light shields on the market today that are designed to block light but not block airflow into the inlet. This might be an option for shields that are restrictive and causing problems.



Figure 2: Clogged bird wire over sidewall air inlet.

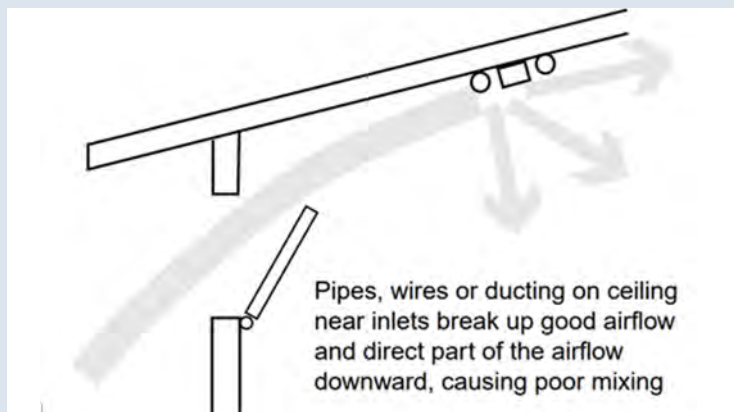


Figure 3: Illustration of air flow obstructions near a sidewall air inlet.

2. Dirty bird wire over inlet opening:

If houses seem to have lost minimum and transitional ventilation capacity, you might want to check the bird wire on the outside of the inlets. It is possible for the inlet doors to be open but not delivering enough air into the house if the inlet screens on the outside are clogged with spider webs, dirt and debris. The doors in this situation could be opened in excess and the house would still run at a higher pressure than normal if multiple inlets were in this same shape. Figure 2 shows the backside of a large inlet opening that is more than 90 percent restricted because it has not been cleaned, rendering it useless from an air supply standpoint. This

problem would have been harder to see if this inlet had a shield installed over it.

3. In-house air flow restrictions:

If houses were built with water or electrical lines installed on the ceiling in the direct path of air flow, as in Figure 3, it is somewhat limiting the ability for air to mix properly during ventilation. Builders and equippers need to understand this and use alternate locations for these utilities. Obstructions that will potentially block air flow will make it harder to get incoming air from the inlet over the feed and water lines to adequately mix before it comes in contact with the birds and bedding. This can cause problems with inadequate moisture

removal, wet litter, drafted birds, poor air quality, increased heating bills and reduced bird performance.

The picture in Figure 4 shows two electrical conduits installed too close to the ceiling inlet door. These would cause minor obstructions to airflow. The picture in Figure 5 is a collection of romex wires that are significantly blocking the path of airflow along the ceiling. We recommend not installing anything on the ceiling between the walls and lighting conduits above outside feeder lines, so the incoming air stream will have a smooth path to travel along the ceiling toward the peak of the house. Obstructions like the electrical conduits in Figure 4 might not be cost effective to relocate due to the cost of the electrical work. However, if the obstruction, for example, is a 1-inch water line that runs the entire length of the house and within about 1 foot of the inlet, then this might be worth relocating. These mistakes should not be made when building future houses. We recommend smoke testing the air inlet during a ventilation cycle to see how the incoming air is being disturbed by the blockage before making a final decision to move the obstruction or not. If the obstruction is forcing air directly to the floor or will not allow incoming air to get over the outside feed and water lines, it should probably be relocated.



Figure 4: Two electrical conduits running parallel to ceiling air inlets will trip the cooler incoming air stream before it gets a chance to mix with warmer air as it enters the house.

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4. Rusty doors and hinges: Every inlet door should open the same amount to allow for uniform air entry and temperature uniformity. Rusty or broken hinges must be repaired or replaced to keep all doors opening properly. The door in Figure 6 is so corroded with rust that it will not shut between ventilation cycles, so the grower latched it closed. However, the inlet still has a cracked opening. Since it will not shut all the way, it has become a constant source of outside air leakage. It is important to repair or replace damaged inlets as soon as possible so they are not a source of air leaks working against the house control and drafting chicks during cold weather. Rusty hinges may also keep the doors from opening to the correct position and restricting air into the house. On some farms, these problems are limiting a grower's ability to ventilate effectively and efficiently, so it is in the best interest of the grower to eliminate as many inlet door malfunctions as possible.

5. Damaged insulation: Darkling beetles, birds and rodents cause a lot of damage to insulation board on metal inlet doors. If the insulation is damaged, as in Figure 7, these doors do not seal tightly when closed and can be a major source of air leakage that works against the environmental control of the house. One damaged door may not seem to be a huge issue, but the fact is that we commonly find multiple damaged doors and many that are leaking when shut due to missing insulation. This should also be a reminder for growers to revisit and possibly upgrade the rodent control program, especially in close proximity to feed bins and evaporative cooling plenum rooms. Do not allow missing insulation on doors to chill birds and rob houses of fuel energy due to increased run times this winter.

6. Cable, pulleys and sprockets: It only takes one broken inlet machine cable, see Figure 8, to make it a long day in the chicken business. Keep a close eye on cables for signs of wear or weak connections. A grower must do everything possible to keep all air inlet actuation components tuned up and ready to go. For all inlets to open evenly, sprockets, inlet cables, rods and connection strings must be inspected for problems on a routine basis. Keeping doors adjusted will help you make sure the air is flowing uniformly in and throughout the house. The difference of only half an inch in inlet door opening can drastically change the incoming air pattern and how it effects the in-house environment. Steel cable can unwind as it ages and may require multiple adjustments to



Figure 5: Several romex wires create an obstruction to incoming air from this sidewall air inlet.



Figure 6: Rusted metal ceiling air inlet door needs to be repaired or replaced.



Figure 7: Metal ceiling air inlet door with insulation damaged by rodents, needs repair.



FARMING FEEDS ALABAMA PHOTO CONTEST



The Alabama Farmers Federation is searching for a bumper crop of snapshots depicting the state's No. 1 industry – agriculture – through the Farming Feeds Alabama Photo Contest.

CATEGORIES

FARM LIFE Family time, generational, working, playing, pets, children, machinery, equipment, farm challenges

CROPS Any stage from planting to harvest for all crops grown in Alabama, including fruits, vegetables, hay and large-scale row crops

ANIMAL AGRICULTURE Cattle, poultry, catfish, goats, sheep and equine



PRIZES

\$150

1ST PLACE
each category

\$100

2ND PLACE
each category

\$50

3RD PLACE
each category

THE PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARD **\$150**
voted on through Facebook in November



Winners will be recognized during the Alabama Farmers Federation's 99th annual meeting and in Neighbors magazine.

RULES

- Photos must have been taken in Alabama in 2020 and must be original, unpublished content.
- Each photographer may enter one photo in each category.
- Minor adjustments are accepted. Photos may be color or black and white.
- Photos with embedded text or logos or watermarks will not be accepted.
- Photos taken with cameras and smartphones are acceptable, as long as quality and resolution are not affected.
- Photos must comply with safe farm practices. Photos exhibiting unsafe behavior will be eliminated.
- Alabama Farmers Federation staff and their immediate families are ineligible.
- All entries could be used by the Alabama Farmers Federation for promotional materials.
- More terms and conditions available at AlfaFarmers.org/PhotoContest.

Submit entries June 1-Nov. 15 at AlfaFarmers.org/PhotoContest.



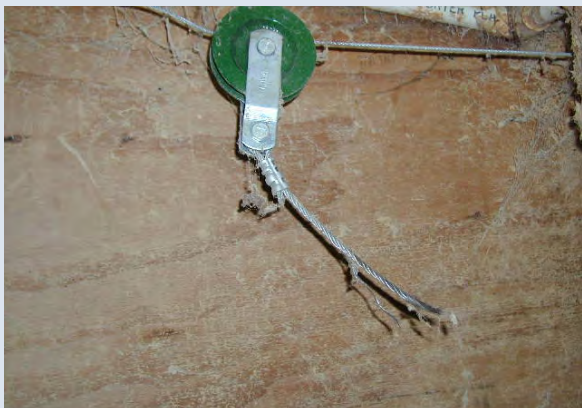


Figure 8: Broken inlet machine cable



Figure 9: Inlet door chain and sprockets

take the slack out of the cable to keep doors completely closed when not being used. Chain and sprocket connections as seen in Figure 9 can be a good alternative to steel cable and pulleys, but they also require routine maintenance and lubrication to keep them from failing.

Bottom line: A four-house poultry farm can have about 200 perimeter inlet doors installed. These doors and associated equipment require constant adjustment to keep the system in good working order. Every grower knows that this is no small task. It only takes one door to be out of adjustment for the grower to get a temperature alarm or one broken cable for a pressure alarm. Some of these problems can take several hours of hard work to resolve and in some cases result in significant out of pocket cost if the inlet machine is damaged or the motor needs replacing. We find it is easier to manage equipment when we set priorities based on the upcoming season to help prevent major problems like this from occurring unexpectedly. This system must operate properly to give the grower the ability to ventilate correctly and grow a healthy and efficient flock. Please make time to inspect and repair perimeter air inlet equipment and components now so you can make a smooth transition into fall.

Please visit www.poultryhouse.com for more information. Good luck this fall from the NPTC. 🐔



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EVENT UPDATES

Poultry Industry Workshop **CANCELED**
Date Sept. 29-30 (Auburn, AL)

All county and area poultry meetings have been postponed until further notice.



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