



Avian Science Notes

University of California - Cooperative Extension

March 2014

They came from SHASTA

The 2014 Avian Bowl State Qualifier was once again held in conjunction with the Greater California Society of Poultry Fanciers' (GCSPF) Show. I wish to express my appreciation to all the members and especially to Alan Gallegos and Bobbie Grim.

It was truly a statewide qualifier with team members from the following counties: Alameda, Butte, Calaveras, Fresno, Kern, Madera, Merced, Monterey, Orange, San Diego, San Luis Obispo, and Shasta. The Junior Avian Bowl got the afternoon off to a fast start with great games. Coming out on top were The Game Birds from San Luis Obispo County. Team members Carson Nautra, Alex Avina, Kayla Hurl, and Katelyn Hurl were coached by Amanda Clark.

The pressure was on as Seniors took their written tests and the teams were seeded. It looked like a strong Orange County team might take it all, but a determined duo from Shasta County had other ideas. Kutter Wright and Emma Osborne, also known as "The Eggheads," captured the Championship title. Coach Mrs. Kris Wright will continue to fine tune the team members as they get ready for the "really big Bowl" in Louisville, Kentucky this November.



The Game Birds from San Luis Obispo County flash their Junior Avian Bowl Championship buckles as Dr. Bradley introduces them the crowd.



Emma Osborne and Kutter Wright looking very relaxed after winning the State Avian Bowl Qualifier and receiving their silver buckles from Dr. Bradley.

National Agriculture Month

Do remember that March is National Agriculture Month. Why not learn a new fact about our state's agriculture and share it with your family, friends, and classmates. What? You ask - who will care? Just remind everyone that we all EAT.

Updates on Recent Poultry Showmanship Competitions

Early February saw many poultry 4-Hers enjoying the youth activities at the Humboldt Poultry Fanciers' Show in Ferndale. Top in their showmanship divisions were:

- Mini, Emma Soberhrad
- Novice, Ella Waterhouse
- Junior, Joshua Albrecht
- Intermediate, Michael Willis

The competition was fierce in the very large Showmanship classes at the GCSPF Show. Top individuals and their divisions:

- Mini, Sammie DeMera
- Novice, Breanna Newhouse
- Junior, Alex Avina
- Senior, Nate Solis

Where Is the Next Avian Bowl Competition?

The above is a question I am frequently asked. You can always check the Calendar section of this newsletter for locations of Bowls I will be judging. In addition, a good number of county fairs have Avian Bowl competitions. If yours has not hosted a Bowl in the past, you can approach the Fair Board NOW and see if a competition can be included. Make it easy for the person in charge to say "Yes." That may mean your offering to write the questions and answers for the contest and finding the premiums. This is worthwhile if it will result in another LIVE competition for your own Avian Bowl team(s).

Before you pick up the phone...NO, I do NOT loan out any of my questions and answers. If you have never done this before, the easiest way to start is to use Fill in the Blank questions, made by deleting key words from sentences in this year's study sections.

One of the best venues for Avian Bowl during the summer months is as the Orange County Fair. It will again be my honor to judge this event. The Bowl will take place at the fairgrounds in Costa Mesa on Sat., July 12, 5:00 PM. Every year this competition grows. The 2013 event drew teams from numerous counties and FFA teams, as well as 4-H.

Fair management has indicated that the on-line entry form should be available by late March. Please check www.ocfair.com.

Changes in Shipping Prices for Avian Bowl

While the price of the Avian Bowl Manual continues to be \$15.00 (as stated in the December 2013 issue of this newsletter), it was brought to my attention that shipment by 4th class mail is no longer available. The new shipping charges are listed below. Please remember that the Manual contains nearly 200 pages. Only specified sections are used during a calendar year. So please do not think you have to order a manual annually. This purchase should last your 4-Her through his/her career.

Available Shipping Methods	Rates
United States Postal Service (Priority Mail™ (2 - 3 days))	\$11.75
United States Postal Service (Priority Mail Express™ (1 - 2 days))	\$42.15
United Parcel Service (1 x 1.20lbs) (Ground)	\$15.62

How Diseases Get Into Your Flock

By Jeanne Smith, DVM

There are many ways diseases get into your birds. If you are aware of them, you can do a better job keeping your birds healthy. For every path a disease takes, there are ways to block it.

Bugs and Insects: Some diseases are carried by bugs and insects that birds eat. Some can be carried by insects that bite the birds, such as mosquitoes or mites and ticks. Some diseases are moved around by flying insects like flies. The fly lands on manure at one ranch and carries the disease on its legs to the next ranch. Keeping your chicken area dry is a good way to keep bugs and insects down. Earthworms come to the surface in mud, so if you have an area that stays wet, such as around a drinker, put the drinker up on a 2x4 frame with welded wire over it to keep the birds from finding worms to eat. Don't have a lot of plants around the chicken coops and keep weeds cleaned up. Use fly traps or baits.

Rodents: Mice and rats not only damage things and eat your chickens' food, they also carry diseases. Keep feed in rodent-proof containers. Hang the feeders and avoid overfilling them. Clean up spilled feed. Use rodent traps and baits.

New Birds: Bringing in birds from another place is the most likely way to bring diseases in. When birds are just exposed to each other for a few hours it's possible to pass a disease, but not likely. When birds live together, passing disease is very likely. Quarantine new birds for at least 30 days as far from your other birds as possible. Take care of quarantined birds last and use a separate pair of shoes and coveralls when you take care of them or wash your boots in disinfectant at the quarantine area and wash your hands and sanitize them after caring for them. Watch for any signs of disease.

Events: When your bird goes to an event and is around other birds it can become infected, even though it isn't as bad as if you brought a new bird in. Diseases can get on the bird's feathers or feet or in the sinuses. After an event, clean and disinfect any cages, carriers, or equipment you brought. Wash your birds in just warm water and a gentle soap, as you would to prepare for show. Quarantine the returning birds for as long as you are able, even if it's only a week. You can also bring diseases home from an event on your clothes, shoes, hands, or sinuses, so you should shower and launder your clothes and disinfect your shoes when you get home.

People: You, your family, your friends can all bring diseases into your flock if they've been around other poultry or around where other poultry people go. So when anyone has been to the feed store, a show, a live

market, they should at least wash their hands and use hand sanitizer and disinfect their shoes before going out in your chicken area. A shower and change of clothes is best if they've been handling other birds at a show or live market.

Feed: Feed can be a source of infection. Buy good quality feed from reputable feed mills and store it properly.

Water: Don't use surface water to water your birds. Poor quality wells can be a source of disease, too, but surface water is the worst. Make sure you keep waterers clean and disinfect them regularly.

Eggs: Hens can lay eggs that have diseases inside them. This is not a common way for infections to spread, but it is possible. Most diseases that spread through the egg only infect a small percentage of the eggs laid and most of those won't hatch. But some chicks can hatch with some diseases. Buy hatching eggs from good breeders. Quarantine chicks from your other birds. If you have had a problem with chicks from one of your own hens, or hatchability is poor, get a diagnosis to see if it is a disease being spread through the eggs. Don't use that hen for breeding if she is passing a disease in her eggs.

Quiz:

1. What is the most likely way to bring disease into your flock? Introducing new birds.
2. Should you try to keep your chicken pens wet or dry? Dry.
3. What should you do when you get home from the feed store? Wash and sanitize hands and disinfect shoes.
4. What should you do with the chickens that went to a poultry event? Wash them, quarantine them.
5. What should you do with yourself after going to a poultry event? Shower, launder clothes, disinfect shoes.

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CALENDAR

July 12, 2014, Sat Orange County Fair, Costa Mesa, California,
Avian Bowl judged by Dr. Bradley.
On-line entries only. See www.ocfair.com

Questions: Dr. Bradley (760) 699-5078