



Avian Science Notes

University of California - Cooperative Extension

May 2016

Important Change in Distribution of Avian Science Notes

Due to reductions in the small contract I receive from the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), it is not possible to print and mail this newsletter out to the hundreds of 4-H families on the mailing list. The new distribution method will be to send out a large post card (now in WHITE, no longer in Avian Science Notes "blue") to all on the list. The mailing will contain at least part of the lead article, a listing of the complete contents of the issue, and instructions to see the ENTIRE newsletter on line at:

<http://animalscienccey.ucdavis.edu/avian/newsletters.htm>

Angry? They're the Champions.

Once again, the Greater California Society of Poultry Fanciers Show was the venue for our Avian Bowl State Qualifier. Senior Avian Bowlers from Ventura to Shasta counties arrived ready to compete. The Angry Birds were rolling down victory road until they met the Quick Quacks from Santa Rosa Valley in Ventura Co. The Birds lost, fell into the Losers' Bracket, but worked their way back to meet the Quacks again. This time the Birds defeated the Quacks and each team had a loss. In the championship game the Birds quashed the Quacks. Coming in third was Team Napa.

The Senior Champion Angry Birds, left to right: Jesiah Neff, Zachary Schnetz, Hannah Neff, Kyle Schnetz



In Junior Avian Bowl, the San Luis Obispo Game Birds ran the Winners' Bracket, defeating the Perfect Peeps in the championship round. Old English Crew took third place.

Clutching their handsome Junior champion belt buckles are left to right: Kayla Hurl (Captain), Katelyn Hurl, and Alex Avina.



To win, teams need dedicated coaches. Coaching the Senior Champions were Kerri and Tara Schnetz. Amanda Stallman coached the Junior Champion team.

Avian Influenza Back (or maybe it never left) in North American poultry

Just when it seemed like the United States was not experiencing any new Avian Influenza outbreaks, on May 2, USDA officials announced a confirmed commercial turkey case in Jasper, Missouri. Destroyed were 39,000 birds. The positive news was that the virus isolated was the low pathogenic form of the H5N1 Avian Influenza virus. The low pathogenic forms are found in wild waterfowl, but when found in domestic poultry, the protocol is depopulation. What makes the H5 and H7 “bad actors” is their ability to convert from low pathogenic to the high pathogenic form. The latter is typically fatal to poultry and will spread rapidly.

We always worry during the migratory seasons about wild birds, especially waterfowl, bringing avian influenza back into the country. I am not sure about your neighborhood, but in the Coachella Valley, I am surrounded by golf courses with water hazards. Many have Federally protected “migratory” waterfowl on those ponds and lakes. But the birds NEVER migrate. Due to plentiful food and freedom from predators they have become residents. Could these birds be on-going reservoirs of Low Path Avian Influenza?

We know that Mexico has been battling and continues to battle High Path Avian Influenza. In April the World Health Organization said that while 10 outbreaks were resolved, there were 9 continuing outbreaks. The impacted areas were listed as Jalisco and Puebla.

The well-respected poultry journalist, Benjamin Ruiz, wrote on April 21, 2016 that what he hears from Tehuacan in Puebla is that conditions are worsening, with hens “dying in droves.” He questions why, after four years of outbreaks, nothing has improved in Mexico (Ruiz, Benjamin, “Brazil, Mexico, eggs and avian flu, 2016-04-21, WATTAgNet).

Of greatest immediate concern to poultry enthusiasts and commercial producers in California, is that Avian Influenza is still with us. It is confirmed in the mid-west and in Mexico. It may even be in some of our resident wild waterfowl, but not yet detected. What to do? I hope it took you dear reader, no more than a blink of the eye, to answer, “Biosecurity - I need to make sure that my biosecurity is in place and strong.” It’s summer and you will undoubtedly have visitors. Be hospitable. Give them lemonade and a cool place to sit. However, do NOT let them near your birds. You do not know all the places they have been. Without even concentrating, I can think of 8 different friends of mine who have traveled to Mexico and back in the last 2 weeks. And how would you know if your card playing pal or scrap booking friend just returned from a graduation in Missouri? Assume everyone is a potential threat and do not let them near your birds.

But “I’m taking my birds to the Fair and they will come in contact with all kinds of people there,” you reply. Yes, and that is why all birds coming home from the Fair or a show should be kept in a quarantine area for 2-3 weeks upon return to your home. One person should care for the birds that never left your home and not go to the quarantine area, while a second family member cares for the quarantined birds, only.

Orange County Fair hosts Summer Avian Bowl

On July 16 at 5 PM, the Orange County Fair (Costa Mesa) will be hosting an Avian Bowl. You need not have birds entered in the fair and the Bowl is open to youth from around the State. This event with both Junior and Senior Avian Bowls, consistently draws competitive 4-H and FFA teams.

I encourage all coaches who are serious about improving the abilities of their Avian Bowl team members to enter them in the Orange County Fair. To be competitive, Bowlers must study and also participate in as many rigorous bowls as possible. Plus, the Orange County Fair makes for a great summer get away. It is located a few miles from the beach and a short drive to the home of Donald Duck (and that less famous Mouse).

To enter, go online to ocfair.com. Entry form, confirmation receipt and fees, and Quiz confirmation due by June 3rd to the Livestock Office (88 Fair Dr., Costa Mesa, California 92026).

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CALENDAR

2016

June 3 - deadline to enter Avian Bowl at Orange Co Fair

July 16 - 5 PM Avian Bowl, Orange County Fair, Costa Mesa (see article above)

November 16-17 - National 4-H Poultry and Egg Conference, Louisville, Kentucky

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