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Sanitation and disease prevention for poultry

Byron F. Miller¹

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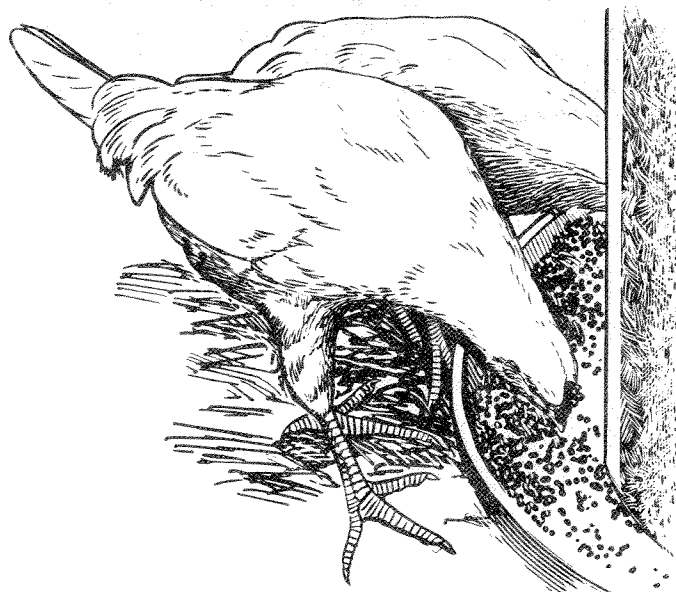


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Quick Facts

- Disease prevention is essential for the poultry producer.
- Good management will include isolation practices, a stringent sanitation program and a sound nutritional program.
- Chemicals are not a substitute for a good cleaning program.
- Water is the least expensive nutrient a producer can provide for poultry.
- Follow an all-in-all-out replacement program.

- Purchase only newly hatched chicks or fertile eggs for replacement of stock.
- If you must purchase adult birds, quarantine them for four weeks before adding to flock.
- Keep people, dogs, cats and vehicles out of poultry houses.
- In your poultry house, wear clean clothing, especially shoes that you do not wear elsewhere.
- Do not enter other people's poultry houses.
- Screen all openings to control insects and wild birds.



For the small poultry producer disease prevention is essential. Basic disease prevention rules in a poultry operation, regardless of size, are:

- Keep birds isolated from people, animals and other birds,
- Provide a good sanitation program, essential to poultry health,
- Provide a balanced diet and fresh clean water to reduce stress,
- Practice good management with an all-in-all-out replacement program.

Isolation

Isolation is a basic and sound principle for preventing disease in your animals. Anything that moves, living or non-living, can be a vector and bring pathogenic agents to your birds. The wind can carry virus particles for long distances. They can be attached to dust, equipment, animals or people. You can protect your birds from the wind but air circulation and ventilation is a basic necessity. Anything the size of insects and larger can be controlled. Strive to keep your birds from being unnecessarily exposed to disease by the following practices.

Sanitation

Sanitation should be a way of life. The most effective sanitizer is hot water, detergent and a brush. Be sure to first use the shovel and scraper. Remove as much filth, litter and debris as possible before trying to sanitize a surface. Chemicals will not substitute for a good cleaning program. They only help clean and sanitize after the shoveling, scraping and scrubbing is properly completed.

¹Byron F. Miller, CSU extension poultry specialist (7/85)

Many good chemical sanitizers are available to use on clean surfaces. Chlorine and lye are good germicides, relatively inexpensive, and must be used with care. Borax is effective with long-time exposure to the microorganisms. Sunlight is a cheap sanitizer and available to all. However, sunlight does not penetrate well and may require days to be effective.

- Place new birds in a well-cleaned, sanitized pen.
- Allow houses to remain clean and vacant at least two weeks between broods or flocks.
- Keep equipment, especially waterers, clean and sanitary.
- Remove manure from pens and dispose of it promptly. Do not stockpile it near the poultry house.

Nutrition

A sound nutritional program is the cheapest feed you can provide. Feed is the major expense in caring for poultry, and many people try to save by diluting a well-balanced diet with grains, etc. If you have grains available, purchase the proper concentrates and mix to directions to give your

birds the proper diet. Unbalancing a scientifically prepared diet is not economical.

Water is the least expensive nutrient you can provide for poultry. They need 2 to 3 pounds of water for every pound of feed they consume. Be sure it is available when they need it.

Feed a balanced ration at all times.

Provide a clean, fresh water between 40° and 70° F.

Control rodents by eliminating habitat, feed and water sources.

Management

Management is a combination of all the above factors and many others to make your poultry project a sound, enjoyable, profitable enterprise.

- Purchase only strong, vigorous, healthy stock.
- Set up brooder facilities and have them working properly before new chicks arrive.
- Keep different aged birds separate.
- Follow an all-in-all-out replacement program.
- Care for the youngest first and work toward the oldest birds, if you must have two or more age groups on one farm.
- Replace your stock yearly.
- Be considerate of your neighbors.