

## Development of a Series of Poultry Science Certificate Programs To be Offered via AgIDEA

**Issue:** There are only six remaining independent poultry science departments in the country and at some point almost all of these departments have faced the potential of merging with other departments. Past history has shown that once a poultry science department merges with another department (generally animal science) as faculty leave if replacement faculty are hired, they generally are not faculty with poultry expertise. This has led to a shrinking number of faculty who teach poultry science courses. Even within remaining departments, often times there is a need for a broader array of course offerings. The remaining departments have been looking for a way to share courses for over 10 years. The creation of AgIDEA offers a potential opportunity. Thus my project was to explore ways for the remaining departments and other departments who would like to offer poultry courses to be able to share courses.

**What has been done:** Representatives from all interested universities held a series of meetings to discuss how we could use AgIDEA to achieve our goal of sharing courses. I took the lead role to complete the paperwork necessary to submit a series of undergraduate and graduate certificate programs in several focus areas related to poultry science. The certificate programs were submitted to AgIDEA who have requested we make some changes. We are currently negotiating those proposed changes. More information about the proposed certificate program can be found at <http://www.ag.auburn.edu/poul/agidea/>.

**Impacts:** Upon approval, the certificate programs will allow for the sharing of courses between universities to offer both graduate and undergraduate students a broader variety of poultry related courses.

**Funding Sources, Cooperators, Partners, Mentors etc.:** Auburn was a collaborator with the University of Georgia and North Carolina State University on a USDA Higher Education Challenge Grant that eventually led to the creation of AgIDEA. Funds from this grant provided support for some of the meetings held to design the poultry certificate programs. The universities participating in the development of this project include Arkansas, Auburn, Clemson, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi State, North Carolina State, Purdue and Texas A&M. Dr. Ken Esbenshade from North Carolina State served as my mentor for this project. He is also the AgIDEA past chair and liaison to AgIDEA for this project.

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