



Establishment of a Poultry Science Consortium Sam Pardue

Issue: In 1960, 44 departments of Poultry Science existed in the US. Today only six poultry departments grant an undergraduate degree and are engaged in all functions of the land-grant mission: teaching, research, and extension. Over the past 40 years, the number of “scientist years”, research projects, and relative federal support for poultry related activities has declined precipitously. The declines in personnel and resources have negatively impacted the ability of the remaining poultry departments to address the needs of the nearly \$27 billion [farm gate value] US poultry industry. A failure to retain a critical mass of poultry expertise at these institutions jeopardizes the technological advantage that the US has established in the international market place. Historically the US poultry industry has flourished in an environment that rewarded innovation, entrepreneurial vision, and free market economics. It is a model of efficiency and has done so with essentially no federal subsidies or price controls. US consumers overwhelmingly choose poultry products “grown in America” with virtually no poultry imports entering the country. The US poultry industry’s dominance of domestic and international markets is threatened by our limited potential to train and educate future leaders in Poultry Science, to conduct relevant basic and applied research, and to disseminate new technologies in a timely manner. This requires resources to expand educational, research, and outreach programming. In nearly each of the proposed consortium member states, poultry production ranks as the single largest sector in the agricultural economy, e.g. AL 65%, GA 51%, MS 51%, AR 48%, and NC 35%. The poultry industries in these states employ well over two hundred thousand individuals and generate tens of billions in sales and salaries. In the US, nearly 65% of broilers, 25% of turkeys, and 40% of chicken eggs are produced in these six states alone. We propose a National Poultry Consortium among the six remaining comprehensive US Poultry Science departments to address the current and future needs of the nation’s poultry producers.

What has been done: Each of the six Poultry Science departments offering a degree in Poultry Science in the US: NC State University, the University of Georgia, Auburn University, Mississippi State University, the University of Arkansas, and Texas A&M University, have agreed to participate a Poultry Science Consortium. State and National Poultry Federations, Councils, and Associations have agreed to provide letters of support for the consortium. The poultry consortium concept has been submitted for Congressional consideration as an earmark.

Impacts:

- Development of innovative nutritional and management techniques to maximize nutrient availability and utilization of feed grains destined for commercial poultry feeding.
- Significant reduction of overall energy input and carbon-nitrogen footprint required to produce the (increasing) domestic and global demand for poultry meat (chicken and turkey) and eggs.
- Prevention of biologically or chemically unsafe poultry meat and eggs from entering domestic markets.

Funding Sources, Cooperators, Partners, Mentors etc.: USDA, National Chicken Council, National Turkey Federation, US Poultry & Egg Association, NC State University, the University of Georgia, Auburn University, Mississippi State University, the University of Arkansas, and Texas A&M University

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