

The Poultry Wire

SPRING 2017 EDITION

DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER

Word From the Department Head



Greetings from Poultry Science – we wish you a Happy 2017 and success in the coming year. Graduation is always a bittersweet time for us, and December was no different as we celebrated the successes of 5 of our Poultry Science and 2 of our Avian Biology students as they received

their BSA degrees. We wish them well as they fledge the nest and begin the next chapter in their lives. January was an exciting and landmark month as well, as we have reached a total of 40 graduate students in the department. A little historical digging (at least to 1987) revealed this is the highest number of graduate students the department in at least 30 years. We are truly excited to the dynamic and energy that they have brought.

As I announced in our Fall newsletter, Dr. Manpreet Singh has joined our faculty in the Extension Poultry Processing/Food Safety Specialist position. We're excited with the perspectives and talents he brings, but also to the dynamic of our department now having three faculty engaged in processing research, teaching, and Extension with himself, as well as Drs. Kiepper and Thippareddi. To help support their efforts and future innovation, the processing unit at the farm will be undergoing a makeover to HVAC shortly. We are also extremely excited to be on the request list for a small capital (\$5M) project request from the college to the Georgia Legislature to assist in upgrades and updates to the poultry research center to keep it as a go-to resource for poultry research and stay at the forefront of innovation for the poultry sector.

Specifically it will expand our research center's capabilities of working with mitigation/reduction strategies for food-borne pathogens (such as Salmonella and Campylobacter) during live production, as well as expand our capabilities into product innovation in ready-to-cook and ready-to-eat products.

We are also in the process of adding research and teaching capacity to the department with the additions of two faculty, one with expertise in Poultry Immunology and the other, a Molecular Poultry Scientist. I'm happy to announce that Dr. Ramesh Selvaraj has accepted our offer and will be joining our faculty this August as our Poultry Immunologist. Dr. Selvaraj has been on faculty at The Ohio State University since 2007 and has garnered a respected reputation in furthering our understanding of the regulation of the immunological response to numerous pathogens, as well sharing his passion for teaching in courses such as Nutritional Immunology. We hope to be announcing the appointment of our new Molecular Poultry Scientist shortly.

Our Extension team has been busy this fall with continuation and creation of new workshops specifically focusing on hatchery, broiler, layer, welfare, and cold-weather ventilation. After IPPE this month, we will host both the International Short Course as well as the Poultry School in Español.

I would also like to give a big "shout-out" to the GA Young Poultry Leaders for their efforts in organizing the first annual poultry scholarship clay-shoot in Elberton this past September. By all accounts, it was a successful event raising approximately \$15K in scholarships for the next generation of poultry scientists. On behalf of the next generation, I thank you.

DR. MIKE LACY HEADED TO AFRICA

By: Merritt Melancon, UGA College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences

Mike Lacy, professor emeritus and former head of the University of Georgia Department of Poultry Science, has been tapped by the U.S. Department of State to help train agricultural extension agents in South Africa and to provide support to poultry farmers there.

Lacy, who retired from UGA in 2016, will travel to South Africa in February 2017 as part of the Department of State's Fulbright Specialist Program, a sponsored exchange program for academics and professionals. Lacy worked in UGA Cooperative Extension poultry housing research for many years before entering administration. He led outreach trips to African countries throughout his career. In addition to assisting fledgling poultry industries, teams from UGA poultry science worked to build the capacity for rural, smallholder farmers, many of whom are women, to manage small-scale poultry flocks.

"Research on improving poultry genetics, reproduction, nutrition, husbandry, disease prevention and marketing especially impacts women in rural areas, who are the primary keepers of small flocks of chickens," Lacy said. "These women, along with their children, will directly benefit from increased income and improved nutrition." Lacy will work with the World Poultry Foundation and the KwaZulu-Natal Poultry Institute to provide assistance to historically disadvantaged poultry producers who have faced significant production constraints due to high feed costs, absence of disease control and a severe lack of educational resources.

"Our college has one of the finest poultry science departments in the world. Mike Lacy's scholarship, leadership and service is a big part of that success," said Sam Pardue, dean and director of the UGA College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences. "He is an outstanding choice to lead this important effort to help these struggling farmers."

Lacy will be helping the KwaZulu-Natal Poultry Institute train extension agents to address the needs of small and disadvantaged producers in the country. He will help to teach government extension agents, poultry and egg farmers attending the KwaZulu-Natal Poultry Institute,

and will visit farmers in South Africa to provide hands-on instruction and training in the areas of biosecurity, poultry housing, feed quality and conversion rates, disease prevention and egg quality.

He will also assist the KwaZulu-Natal Poultry Institute in evaluating their curricula and teaching programs.

An overarching goal of the project is to help South African small farmers increase egg and poultry meat production, which will help address protein malnutrition issues in their families and communities.

The Fulbright Specialist Program links U.S. scholars and professionals and their counterparts at host institutions overseas. The program awards grants to U.S. faculty and professionals who have been approved to join the roster of specialists in select disciplines in order to engage in short-term collaborative projects at eligible institutions in more than 140 countries worldwide.

For more information about the global work being done by faculty in UGA's poultry science department, visit poultry.uga.edu.

(Merritt Melancon is a news editor with the University of Georgia College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences.)



DEPT. RECRUITMENT EFFORTS INCREASE

By: Jessica Fife, Program Coordinator II



Student numbers are on the rise at the Department of Poultry Science thanks to a collaborative effort between faculty, staff, and students! At the beginning of fall semester, we had 31 Poultry Science students and 43 Avian Biology students. As of December, Poultry Science student numbers had increased to 42, and Avian Biology to 53. The increase is largely the result of students changing majors from another area of study to Poultry Science or Avian Biology, and we expect numbers to increase again for Spring semester and again next fall with an influx of new freshmen. This should help offset some of the numerical losses due to the large graduating class from December 2016 and particularly in Spring 2017.

These numbers are reflective of several recruitment efforts taking place within the department:

The Avian Ambassador program is a group of Poultry Science and Avian Biology students that represent the department from the student's perspective. Avian Ambassadors assist in tours of the Poultry Science Building, Poultry Research Farm, and our processing facility, as well as representing the Poultry Science department at various other university-wide events. The Ambassadors are always eager to discuss with potential students the benefits of a Poultry Science major and student life at UGA.

We are also working to increase our presence with STEM programs and students, as well as FFA and 4-H audiences through tours, classroom visits and career shows. We believe that focusing in this area will contribute to a lasting increase in enrollment numbers and ensure a strong and growing program for years to come!



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

- 1.31-2.2.17**—IPPE
- 1.24.17**—Welcome Back Bonfire
- 2.4-7.17**—GA International Poultry Shortcourse
- 3.17.17**—State FFA Poultry Judging CDE
- 3.22.17**—Deep South Poultry Conference
- 5.12.17**—State 4-H Poultry Judging CDE, *Athens*



WELCOME!

DR. MANPREET SINGH

Professor and Extension Food Safety Specialist

In January, Dr. Manpreet Singh joined the Department of Poultry Science as a Professor and Extension Food Safety Specialist. He also has an adjunct appointment with the Department of Food Science and Technology at UGA. Previously, he served on the faculty of the Department of Food Science at Purdue University as an Associate Professor and Extension Food Safety Specialist. He obtained his BS in Food Science and Technology from the Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana, India and his MS and PhD in Food Science and Technology from Kansas State University and Iowa State University, respectively. Manpreet worked in the capacity of Assistant Professor of Food Safety and Microbiology in the Department of Poultry Science at Auburn University, AL. He was an Associate Professor of Food Safety and Microbiology since 2011 onwards at Auburn University prior to joining the Food Science Department at Purdue University in 2013. Manpreet's research interests include Pre- and post-harvest Food Safety and the impact of food processing on safety of foods; development and validation of intervention strategies to control foodborne pathogens in production and processing environments (specifically in poultry); application of rapid detection and identification methods for foodborne pathogens; prevalence and persistence of foodborne pathogens in poultry production and processing environments; stress responses including host-pathogen interactions and survival of foodborne pathogens in foods. Manpreet has worked extensively with broiler processors and assisted in issues relating to food safety and USDA-FSIS regulatory guidelines.

Manpreet is an Extension Specialist and will be working closely with stakeholders on developing food safety programs for the state of Georgia and nationwide. In his new role, Manpreet hopes to work with the poultry industry in the state and assist with on-farm and processing plant issues relating to food safety and regulatory guidelines.

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GRADUATE STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Elizabeth “Liz” Pusch, Ph.D Candidate

I am a Ph.D. candidate in Poultry Science in Dr. Kristen Navara’s laboratory. During my time at UGA, my research has been dedicated to stress physiology in laying hens. My current research is focused on how differences in personality can affect immunity and the stress response in brown and white laying hens. Unlike many graduate students in our department, I came to UGA without any previous poultry science exposure or experience. I did not know what a poultry scientist did and had very limited information about the poultry industry as a whole.

I was raised in southern Oregon in the beautiful Rogue Valley, where my love of science began as a young child tagging along on field trips with my mother. I had the opportunity to learn about geology, marine biology, astronomy, and so many other topics that also included hands-on learning experiences at a young age. As a result of these experiences, I knew early on that I wanted to be a scientist.

I earned a B.S. in Biology and an M.S. in Environmental Education from Southern Oregon University in Ashland, OR. It was during the last year of my undergraduate degree, during a vertebrate natural history class, when I became interested in ornithology. This interest grew exponentially as I worked toward my M.S. degree. While adding to my knowledge of biology and ornithology, I taught undergraduate biology laboratories and created and implemented an outdoor school with my cohort. I learned and put into practice solid teaching methodology and pedagogy in traditional and non-traditional settings. Teaching elementary-age children in an outdoor school setting reminded me how important it is for students to have hands-on scientific activities while they are learning important concepts. Practical activities that provide concrete information in concert with concepts excite students about the subject. These experiences led me to look for a Ph.D. program where I could study birds and also have the opportunity to continue to teach. The Poultry Science Department at UGA has afforded me both of these opportunities.



Not having an agriculture background, I wasn’t sure what to expect when I came for my interview, but I found a welcoming group of faculty and graduate students, which made my decision to join the department an easy one. While learning research methodology and putting it into practice, I have had the opportunity to be a teaching assistant (TA) for classes including Introductory Poultry Science, Avian Anatomy and Physiology, Avian Biology and Behavior, and Poultry Processing. Being a TA for these classes has expanded my knowledge of poultry science and the poultry industry. I have also enjoyed assisting with the annual Avian Adventures short course for high school students that the department hosts. In addition to these experiences, I have taken a leadership role in the poultry science graduate student organization. One of our main activities, helping extension staff with workshops and short courses, has allowed direct interaction with people working in the poultry industry. Of course, one of the best things about this group is the interaction it affords me to have with all the grad students in the department. Thanks to these interactions, I have made many wonderful friends and learned about the many different types of research happening within our department. These friendships will continue as we move on to our careers as poultry scientists. Upon completion of my Ph.D., I will begin my poultry science career as a postdoctoral researcher studying avian influenza.





DEPARTMENT OF POULTRY SCIENCE

Happenings and Honors

Poultry Science Club Update



Laura McLearn, Club President

The Poultry Science Club had a great Fall 2016 semester led by club president, Michael Garrett. We are happy to report that the club is continuing to grow after welcoming in new students. At our bi-monthly meetings we heard from Harrison Poultry,

Wayne Farms, Sanderson Farms, Fieldale Farms, Cobb-Vantress, Mar-Jac Poultry, and Mountaire Farms. As a club, we participated in fundraisers, the Student Involvement Fair, Orientation 2.0 for the College of Agriculture, as well as blood drives. One of our favorite events in the fall semester was the Sporting Clay Classic where we had teams compete and raise money for departmental scholarships.

For the spring semester, we have welcomed in a wonderful group of new officers. The club president is Laura McLearn from Hoschton, GA—a junior poultry science major. Vice President is junior poultry science major, Elizabeth Davis. Chloe Kleinheinz is serving as our secretary and says she is looking forward to recruiting new poultry science students this semester. Serving as treasurer is junior Jennifer Richter from Snellville, GA. Our public relations coordinator is Katie Heerlein from Douglasville, GA. Our Ag Hill representatives are Tanner Sanders from Hartwell, GA and Maria Kriesel from Watkinsville, GA; they will serve as liaisons between our club and the College of Agriculture. Kelly Sweeney is from Clarkesville, GA and is serving as our historian.

With such a great officer group and the support of the club members we are going to have a fun-filled, productive semester. We are looking forward to a professional development workshop before the IPPE this month and have high expectations for the expo, and in

February we will put our cooking skills to the test by providing a delicious dinner for the UGA International Short Course. Along with fun club activities such as movie nights and cookouts, we plan on hearing about opportunities from companies in the industry. We cannot wait to see what 2017 has in store!

Avian Ambassador Spotlight

Jennifer Richter is a third year Poultry Science major from Snellville, GA. She has become an active member of the department by not only joining the Poultry Science Club but also being elected as this semester's club treasurer. She is one of



the department's newly appointed Avian Ambassadors, where she is able to share her passion for the poultry industry with prospective students that come to UGA for farm tours and visits. She also works as a student research assistant for the UGA Poultry farm under both Dr. Gene Pesti and Dr. Justin Fowler. Working for them has given her the opportunity to see how research in nutrition is making an impact on the poultry industry by growing birds to market weight, processing the birds, and collecting samples.

Jennifer's favorite part about being in the Poultry Dept. is the close-knit family atmosphere that is made up by the faculty and students. She said, "The professors provide an immense amount of knowledge as well as support in all aspects of life from my education to advise on future career choices." She enjoys being able to have meaningful professor student relationships and well as strong friendships with students in the same major who share her passion.



CONGRATULATIONS, GRADUATES!

They've flown the coop

Poultry Science

Lindsay Brannon
Cobb-Vantress

Michael Garrett
Agribusiness Risk Underwriters

Michael Corbin
Pilgrims

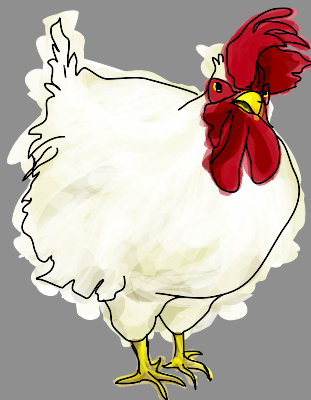
Anne Marie Fink
Poultry Industry

Jared Oxford
UGA Graduate School

Avian Biology

Rebecca Sutcliffe
Vet School Applicant

Chad Dapp
STEM Field



HONORS AND AWARDS

Dr. Sammy Aggrey — Industry Partner Grant Recipient

Dr. Harshavarda Thippareddi — John Bekkers Professor of Poultry Science

Dr. Brian Fairchild — CAES Advisor of the Year

UGA CAES Years of Service Awards

Jeniece Vinson — 15 Years

JoAnn Mosko — 15 Years

Dr. Casey Ritz — 15 Years

John Worley — 25 Years

Marvin Atkins — 30 Years



This is a publication of the UGA Department of Poultry Science.

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