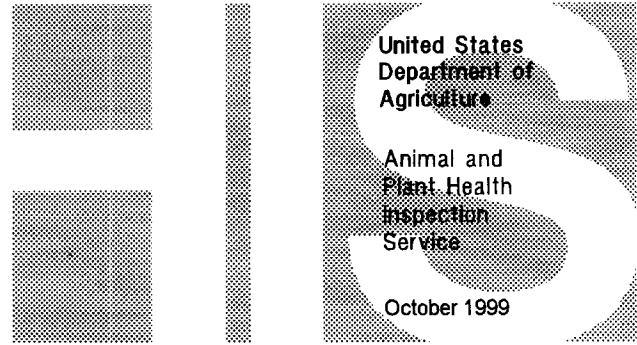


# INFO SHEET

## Veterinary Services



### Highlights of Layers '99 Study Results: Part I

The USDA's National Animal Health Monitoring System (NAHMS) designed the Layers '99 study to provide both participants and the table egg layer industry with information on the United States' layer population for education and research purposes.

The USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) collaborated with VS to select a statistically-valid sample from 15 states<sup>1</sup> for Layers '99. The 15-state target population accounted for over three-quarters of the table egg layers in the U.S. on December 1, 1998. NASS enumerators collected data for *Part I: Reference of 1999 Table Egg Layer Management in the U.S.* from 208 single and multiple-farm companies via a questionnaire administered February 1-26, 1999. These respondents provided information on 526 farm sites which formed the basis of this report. More detailed information on the study and the sampling methodology is available in NAHMS Layers '99 tabular summary reports.

#### Farm Sites & Flocks

◆ Although the majority of farm sites were contract farms (61.0 percent), the majority of birds (on hand December 1, 1998) were on company owned farms (72.6 percent), indicating that company owned farms tended to be larger than contract farms.

◆ The Central region had the largest percentage (23.0 percent) of farm sites with 200,000 or more layers and also the largest percentage (40.5 percent) of farm sites with fewer than 50,000 layers (see regions in map at right). Note: this study was limited to companies with 30,000 or more layers.

◆ Two-thirds (63.9 percent) of farm sites had only one flock in lay or molting, and less than 10 percent

of farm sites had six or more flocks. The average flock size was 63,000.

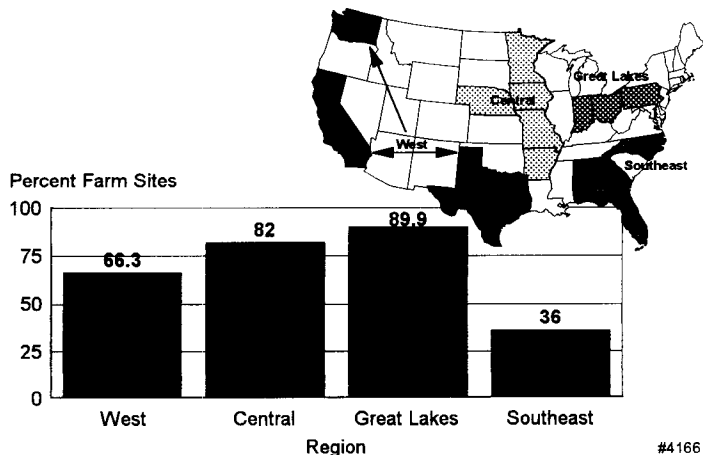
◆ The vast majority of flocks (95.6 percent) and layers (98.8 percent) were white egg layers. (The New England states, which has a higher percentage of brown egg layers, were not involved in the Layers '99 study.)

#### Pullet Management

◆ Almost two-thirds (61.8 percent) of farm sites got all of their most recently placed pullets from a single pullet raising site, while 13.6 percent of farm sites assembled their most recently placed flock from four or more different farm sites.

◆ About three-fourths (78.7 percent) of layers originated from primarily caged pullet rearing facilities, and 21.3 percent of layers originated from primarily floor rearing facilities. The majority of farm sites (71.3 percent) obtained *all* their replacement pullets from primarily cage reared facilities, although the majority of farm sites in the Southeast region obtained pullets from primarily floor reared facilities (see the graph below).

Percent of Farm Sites Where All Pullets Being Placed on the Farm Site Were Primarily Cage Reared by Region



<sup>1</sup> Alabama, Arkansas, California, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Washington.

## Health and Health Management

- ◆ About one-half (53.3 percent) of the farm sites where all pullets came from primarily cage reared facilities had a coccidiosis program, the most common being treatment in response to a problem. Nearly all (93.1 percent) farm sites where all pullets came from primarily floor reared facilities had a coccidiosis program, with the most common being coccidiostats as a preventive measure.
- ◆ Almost all (92.5 percent) farm sites used some type of health service provider during 1998, with the most common being a company service person/veterinarian (78.8 percent) and technical service provider (64.0 percent).
- ◆ Vaccinations against Newcastle disease and Infectious Bronchitis were given in lay (boosting) on less than half the farm sites each (40.9 percent and 41.0 percent, respectively).
- ◆ Overall, layers on 69.6 percent of farm sites came from pullet facilities that monitored for *Salmonella enteritidis* (S.e.). The West region had the largest percentage of farm sites (83.0 percent) that obtained their layers from *Salmonella enteritidis* (S.e.) monitored pullet facilities.
- ◆ Ten percent of farm sites obtained replacement pullets from facilities that used a competitive exclusion product in pullets to reduce *Salmonella enteritidis* (S.e.). An additional 20.5 percent of farm sites did not know whether or not a competitive exclusion product was used.
- ◆ A total of 14.6 percent of layers (on 5.4 percent of farm sites) were vaccinated against *Salmonella enteritidis* (S.e.) as pullets, with an additional 5.4 percent of layers for which vaccination status was unknown. The Great Lakes region had the highest percentage of farm sites where layers had been vaccinated against *Salmonella enteritidis* (S.e.) as pullets (10.2 percent of layer farm sites).
- ◆ About three-fourths (77.3 percent) of farm sites obtained pullets that had been vaccinated against laryngotracheitis (LT). Eye drop vaccination was the most common method used.
- ◆ Vaccination of pullets against *Mycoplasma gallisepticum* (MG) ranged from 7.1 percent of farm sites in the Southeast region to 30.5 percent of farm sites in the West. About one-third of farm sites where replacement pullets had been vaccinated against *Mycoplasma gallisepticum* (MG) did not know the type of immunization product used.

◆ Overall, 89.0 percent of farm sites obtained pullets that had been vaccinated against fowl pox. Fowl pox vaccine was used for almost twice as many farm sites as pigeon pox vaccine, for those farm sites whose replacement pullets had been vaccinated against fowl pox.

◆ Layers '99 producers were asked about the laying flock most recently placed in the laying house and what diseases or conditions occurred in these birds before they were placed (during the growing period). Less than 1 percent of farm sites obtained replacement pullets that had had problems with avian infectious coryza or *Mycoplasma gallisepticum* (MG). More than 5 percent of farm sites obtained replacement pullets that had had problems with coccidiosis (6.8 percent), Marek's disease (6.9 percent), or infectious bronchitis (5.1 percent).

## Feed

- ◆ Overall, it took 3.7 pounds of feed to produce one dozen eggs. About two-thirds (67.1 percent) of farm sites fed between 3.0 and 3.9 pounds of feed per dozen eggs produced.
- ◆ Poultry by-products were present in feed fed to 44.6 percent of layers, and 73.6 percent of layers received feed containing other animal products.
- ◆ Farm sites provided feed containing an average of 17.7 percent protein at peak production.
- ◆ About three-fourths (76.4 percent) of farm sites obtained feed from an AFIA approved plant. About two-thirds (64.1 percent) of farm sites obtained feed from a mill that made feed for other species.
- ◆ The percentages of farm sites where *finished* feed was tested for *Salmonella enteritidis* (S.e.) ranged from 25.9 percent of farm sites in the Central region to 67.6 percent of farm sites in the West. Testing of feed *ingredients* was most common for farm sites in the West (76.0 percent) and Southeast (74.5 percent) regions.

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