



## MESSAGE FROM UPGA PRESIDENT LUCIUS ADKINS

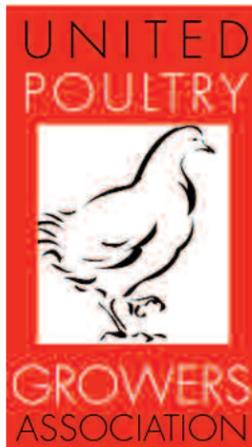
Wow, what a summer it's been both on the farm and on the campaign trail! With tropical storms and drought hitting the geographically diverse state of Georgia, we've had some growers looking for water and conversely, some running from it. Meanwhile, the 2016 General Election looms on the second Tuesday in November (8th) and at press time counties are already mailing their absentee ballots. The whirlwind of the last few months has produced some strange turn of events. While I can't begin to adequately explain what is going on in the political arena, it may well be that the tumultuous weather patterns have impacted migratory bird patterns and thus our biosecurity environment. Georgia Agriculture Commissioner Gary Black has been vigilantly watching this and inside explains some of his departments activities to address one of the greatest threats to our livelihoods. Austin Scott relays his experiences growing up in a farming community and stresses the importance of agricultural research to the Growers bottom line.

Finally, as I began this column I will finish with a nod to this year's elections. While the presidential campaign has consumed the media limelight, don't forget that it's our local and state elected officials that can have the biggest impact on our day to day lives on the farm. With over one third of the state House of Representatives possibly changing and half of the state Senate, this is a pivotal election year in Georgia. Please exercise your constitutional right to vote and support those candidates who understand and support poultry production, the largest component of Georgia's largest economic sector of Agriculture.

Sincerely,  
Lucius Adkins  
President, United Poultry Growers Association



Remember to get out and vote  
Tuesday, November 8, 2016.



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# Chicken Wire

## OP-ED ABOUT UGA CAES POULTRY SCIENCES



Austin Scott,  
Congressman, 8th Dist

I grew up in South Georgia, spending most of my time picking butterbeans on my granddad's farm. Agriculture is in my blood. At a young age, I was taught the importance of agriculture not just to our state's economy, but to American families across the country. And now, agriculture is a big part of what I do in Washington as the Representative for Georgia's Eighth Congressional District in the United States Congress and a member of the House Committee on Agriculture.

My granddad always said the old adage "you should thank a farmer three times a day," and most of the time, I thought of the farmers, like my granddad, who harvested row crops or peaches. But many often forget that the "Peach" State has led the country in broiler production for the past 25 years.

As the amount of poultry consumed around the world has risen 30 percent over the past 15 years, Georgia's top achievements in poultry production make our state a vital component to future production as a source of new innovation to keep up with the demand. A shortage in poultry production, a vital source of protein around the world, could have catastrophic effects in a world whose population is expected to reach 9 billion in roughly 30 years. Additionally, as the average age of farmers is drastically increasing at the same time as population growth is requiring more food, so too does the need to engage young Americans not only in the agriculture industry, but also in the science and technology industries as innovators in agriculture science to help us produce more with less. Leading the nation, and arguably the world, in these efforts is the Department of Poultry Science in the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences' (CAES) at the University Of Georgia (UGA). Poultry scientists from CAES have made great strides in improving feed efficiency, poultry well-being, and production in a 21st century world. With the knowledge that millennials today will become our farmers tomorrow, professors employed the one tool they knew all of these young producers would have - a smart phone.

Assistant Professor Justin Fowler's smartphone app, FeedMix, is a resource for small farmers and poultry producers that allows for the maximization of flock health and growth by displaying a recommended ratio of feed mix to feed

*Continued on page 3*

## AVIAN INFLUENZA / BIOSECURITY



Robert M Cobb, Jr DVM  
State Veterinarian  
Ga Dept of Agriculture

In 2014 and 2015, Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) caused the largest animal disease event in the history of the United States. This disease outbreak cost over three (3) billion dollars nationwide, interfered with interstate and international trading of poultry and poultry products and identified weaknesses in disease prevention strategies. This outbreak identified and confirmed wild waterfowl as the reservoir for Avian Influenza viruses. It forced the establishment of improved biosecurity procedures, new testing capabilities, better epidemiology investigative techniques, more efficient quarantine, permitting, animal/product movement and depopulation procedures and helped bring regulatory and producer entities together to fight this Foreign

*Continued on pg 2*

## UPGA Annual Meeting

Wednesday, October 26, 2016  
11:00 AM

Two board member positions will be elected by director's ballot at the 2016 annual meeting. Current Board members, Mark Glass and Billy Hodges, have been nominated to fill the two expiring three-year terms.

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Continued from pg 1 Animal Disease.

Twenty-one states were affected in 2014/2015 and the outbreak involved all segments of the poultry industry – commercial, backyard/free range, captive wild birds and wild birds. Working together with USDA, states were able to eventually contain the outbreak and with hastily developed processes safely move poultry and poultry product. However, many countries prohibited poultry imports. These prohibitions ranged from the total ban of poultry from the whole USA to more localized prohibition such as affected states or counties. The restriction of movement was very costly and caused much disruption to all parts of the poultry industry.

In Georgia, leaders at the Georgia Department of Agriculture and the poultry industry worked together with multiple state and federal agencies to establish an emergency Incident Management Team (IMT) and develop emergency procedures, training, documents and agreements. Poultry importation requirements were made to establish Avian Influenza testing requirements for all poultry entering Georgia. Equipment and supplies were inventoried and new equipment/supplies purchased as deemed necessary. Logistic procedures were established, practiced and utilized to strategically locate equipment and supplies around the state. Robust IT and communication capabilities have been established. The Department continues to provide training on a regular basis for our IMT and work closely with the Poultry Industry and other state and federal agencies.

Working with the poultry industry, educational meetings were held with poultry growers, allied poultry industry businesses, law enforcement, Public Health, other state agencies and related interested parties all over Georgia to raise biosecurity awareness and provide helpful information and contact information. Biosecurity recommendations were made for outdoor poultry to minimize their contact with wild birds, especially wild waterfowl. Nationally, avian influenza testing of wild waterfowl is ongoing by USDA.

The result of the HPAI awareness campaign, prepa-

ration, educational meetings, training events and testing has been prevention of HPAI in Georgia. Not only has HPAI not been found in Georgia, but the increased biosecurity practiced by producers, vendors and poultry workers has reduced the incidence of all poultry disease. The grower education meetings and biosecurity awareness meetings seem to have stopped a five (5) year MS outbreak. The number of cases went from 5.4 per month in 2014 to 1.6 in 2016. This is the lowest number of cases since 2008. Continued biosecurity awareness and practice is essential to prevent Avian Influenza and maintain the low disease prevalence among our domestic poultry.

It is important to realize that Low Pathogenic Avian Influenza (LPAI) is found in the wild bird populations, especially water fowl, at all times as has been demonstrated by USDA wild bird testing. However, not until 2014/2015 had HPAI been found in the wild. Avian Influenza is classified by proteins on the surface of the virus – H and N. It is the H5 and H7 type viruses that are known to become highly pathogenic. LPAI causes a mild illness, but HPAI causes rapid widespread illness and death of susceptible birds. As happened in 2016 in Indiana, LPAI can mutate, or change, into HPAI. This small outbreak was quickly contained and eliminated due to prior planning and the use of good biosecurity.

Biosecurity is the key. We cannot prevent the Avian Influenza virus from coming to Georgia; however, by continued practice of good biosecurity at all times on our poultry farms, we can prevent the introduction of the virus into our domestic poultry. It takes a continuous effort by all aspects of our Georgia Poultry Industry. All poultry allied industries must practice good biosecurity when they come onto poultry sites – even relatives and the family dog must help. Georgia has an established LPAI and HPAI response plan that is practiced and updated yearly. It is important to be prepared. Georgia is the number one poultry producing state in the country and as such must be the best prepared for disease prevention and control.

## VILSACK SAYS GIPSA POULTRY RULES COMING SOON

Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack told the National Farmers Union in September that USDA plans to adopt final livestock and poultry standards rule prior to the end of the year. While providing no specifics, growers should take heart that Secretary

Vilsack said his department is pressing forward on a new Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA) rule to protect poultry farmers from retaliation by processors. Congress blocked the legislation through the appropriations process, but that provision was stricken from the FY 2016 omnibus appropriations bill prior to passage, prompting the department to move ahead.

Continued from pg 1 flocks based upon users' data input.

FeedMix follows the app, CHKMINVENT, as the Department's second app designed for farmers. CHKMINVENT makes it easy for poultry producers to calculate the estimated minimum ventilation rate required to remove moisture from their poultry houses during cold weather conditions.

In the last 50 years, research has significantly decreased the time required to grow a meat-type chicken to a market weight from 100 days to 45 days, and it has led to similar strides in egg production and poultry health. In Georgia, we see the economic impacts of this kind of research with thousands of jobs and millions of dollars added to the economy across the state that is directly tied to poultry production. Additionally, the work done in Georgia by our research institutions, like the Department of Poultry Sciences at UGA, and our poultry producers who embrace their innovation makes a global impact.

That is why I joined my colleagues from Georgia in

working to secure full funding for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Southeast Poultry Research Lab, located at UGA. The lab's research on solutions to combatting poultry diseases, like avian influenza, that could be catastrophic to producers and consumers alike is utilized and implemented across the world. As a legislator on the House Committee on Agriculture, I understand the valuable role the federal government plays in targeting research dollars. However, I also understand the impediment that the federal government can be. Therefore, I am also leading the charge against inadvisable and overreaching government regulations that would harm the poultry industry in Georgia and across the country, including the recently proposed rule on organic poultry production and the Environmental Protection Agency's Waters of the United States rule. It is an honor to represent the state of Georgia, our Agriculture industry, and our world class poultry growers in Congress.

## GEORGIA STILL NUMBER ONE IN POULTRY PRODUCTION AND VALUE

Source: USDA - NASS

Top 5 States in 2015	Number Produced (1,000 head)	Value (1,000 dollars)
Georgia	1,324,200	4,808,012
Alabama	1,061,500	3,854,232
Arkansas	970,100	3,831,300
North Carolina	795,200	3,849,710
Mississippi	727,200	2,871,978

## COURT SIDES WITH PRODUCERS, AGAINST EPA OVERREACH

In September, the 8th Circuit Court of Appeals found that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) had "abused its discretion in deciding" to release personal information about livestock and poultry producers under a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request from three environmental organizations. It's a blow to activists and the federal government's efforts to invade producers' personal privacy. Reversing a federal district court in Minnesota's rul-

ing, the 8th Circuit also found that "EPA here is more than simply a second source for identical, publicly available information. The agency has aggregated vast collections of data from the majority of states—much of it obtained through state specific information requests—and provided it to requesters in a single response." The court further objected, saying "CAFO owners still have a privacy interest in preventing the mass aggregation and release of their personal information by the government." The matter is now sent back to consider the a request for relief from American Farm Bureau and National Pork Producers.