



# Midwest Poultry Consortium

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## 2025 OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARD

The Midwest Poultry Consortium (MPC) awarded Dr. Michael Cressman of The Ohio State University (OSU) with its 2025 Outstanding Service Award. The award is given to individuals who exemplify outstanding service to the Consortium and to the poultry industry. Dr. Cressman has been a key contributor to MPC's Center of Excellence Scholarship/Internship (COE) Program. He has been the Poultry Products Technology Course Coordinator since 2020, and has built strong student connections and earned the *Mark Cook Pullet-zer Prize* (Faculty Member of the Year) multiple times. In 2023, he expanded his commitment by taking on additional sections of the course. Dr. Cressman has also been a strong advocate for the COE program at OSU, actively supporting student recruitment and helping grow participation in the program.

Dr. Cressman, the 24<sup>th</sup> recipient, joins past winners: Carl Parsons, *University of Illinois* ('24); Anup Johny, *University of Minnesota* ('23); Sally Noll, *University of Minnesota* ('22); Elizabeth Bobeck, *Iowa State University* ('21); Greg Fraley, *Purdue University* ('20); Mick Fulton, *Michigan State University* ('19); Ken Koelkebeck, *University of Illinois* ('18); Steve Jurek, *GNP* ('17); Mark Richards, *University of Wisconsin* ('16); Mike Lilburn, *The Ohio State University* ('15); Dan Schaefer, *University of Wisconsin* ('14); Patricia Hester, *Purdue University* ('13); Mark Cook, *University of Wisconsin* ('12); Hongwei Xin, *Iowa State University* ('11); Bernie Wentworth, *University of Wisconsin* ('10); Lou Arrington, *WI Poultry & Egg Association* ('09); Senator Tom Harkin ('08); Wendy Wintersteen, *Iowa State University* ('07); Dennis Casey, *Hy-Line North America* ('06); Sue Lamont, *Iowa State University* ('05); Ron Kean, *University of Wisconsin* ('04); Bob Sparboe, *Sparboe Companies* ('03); and Congressman Tom Latham ('02).



Michael Cressman

## RESEARCH LEGISLATION

**Laying Hen & Turkey Research Program (LHTRP).** The LHTRP is a key component of MPC's research mission, supporting poultry research at our member universities. MPC led efforts to secure authorization of the program in 2018 with its first appropriation in 2023. MPC has since secured \$2.5 million for the LHTRP, including \$500,000 for FY'26. Sustaining this funding requires ongoing advocacy. In 2025 MPC conducted 17 meetings with congressional offices, with support from industry partners, faculty, and alumni who helped communicate the value of poultry research to food security, workforce development, and strengthening land-grant universities' poultry focuses. In FY'25, USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) awarded \$449,020 to Purdue University (Tim Johnson) for research examining the role of the gut microbiome in poultry growth and its relationship to antibiotic use, aligning with LHTRP priorities in gut health and antimicrobial alternatives.

Public funding through LHTRP helps ensure poultry-focused research remains on university campuses while providing students with hands-on research opportunities that strengthen their connection to the industry. Thank you to those who supported our 2025 outreach activities: Mike Cressman, *The Ohio State University*; Francine Czerniawski, *Michigan State University*; Jim Dean, *Versova*; Greg Herbruck, *Herbruck's Poultry Ranch*; Anup Johny, *University of Minnesota*; Ron Kean, *University of Wisconsin*; Jeremy Lies, *Hy-Line North America*; Carrie McFarland, *H&N North America*; Zachary Simons, *Adisseo*; and Pete Sonstegard, *Sonstegard Foods*.

## COE HOST UNIVERSITIES

**2025 COE Hosted by Iowa State University.** The COE rotates annually between Iowa State University (ISU) and the University of Minnesota (UMN). ISU hosted in 2021, 2023, and 2025. UMN hosted in 2022, 2024, and will host in 2026. Host universities play a critical role in the success of COE, helping educate and prepare the next generation of poultry industry professionals. MPC is grateful to ISU and UMN for their continued partnership and collaboration.

## MEETINGS & EVENTS

**MPC 2025 Annual Meeting.** MPC's Annual Meeting was held April 8 at the Minneapolis Convention Center during PEAK. More than 50 participants, including MPC members, COE alumni, and faculty attended. Speakers included Dr. Kahina Boukherroub (*University of Minnesota*), who provided a faculty perspective on the COE Program, and Dr. Eliza Ripplinger (COE graduate; *Best Veterinary Solutions*), who shared her experience with COE and the program's impact on her career. Beth Nelson, MPC President, delivered an overview of Consortium activities, including membership, sponsorship, and continued success in securing funding for the Laying Hen & Turkey Research Program. Chelsea Russell, COE Student Director, provided updates on COE programming, including classes, recruitment, internships, and student placement. MPC recognized Dr. Michael Cressman (*The Ohio State University*) with the Outstanding Service Award. Chair Novak approved the Secretary's, Treasurer's, and Nominating Committee reports. Board seats were filled by: Pete Block, *Hy-Line North America* (Allied); Dave Hasemann, *Rose Acre Farms* (Egg); Evan Hayes, *Fremont Farms of Iowa* (Egg); Meagan Hartje, *Life-Science Innovations* (Turkey); Andrea Kuehne, *Cooper Farms* (Turkey); and Steven Corbitt, *Maple Leaf Farms* (Other Species).

**Additional Engagement at PEAK.** MPC created additional opportunities for current students, alumni, faculty, and sponsors to connect beyond the Annual Meeting. "COE" badge stickers helped identify participants and expand networking across the growing alumni base. MPC supported student participation in networking events, educational sessions, and internship interviews, helping students build industry connections and career awareness. A COE Meet & Greet brought together alumni from the 2015–2024 classes and faculty. COE graduates were also featured in educational sessions and on the show floor, demonstrating the program's continued impact across the poultry industry.

## 2024-2025 Sponsors

AB Vista  
**Adisseo**  
 AEI  
 Ag Installers  
**Alltech**  
 Anderson Chemical Co.  
 Arrington, Lou  
 Aviagen  
 Aviagen Turkeys  
 Best Veterinary Solutions  
 Big Dutchman  
 Boehringer Ingelheim  
 Bosma Poultry  
**Butterfield Foods**  
 Cal-Maine Foods  
**Cargill**  
 Case Farms  
**Center Fresh Group**  
**Centrum Valley Farms**  
**Centurion Poultry/PLG**  
 CEVA Animal Health  
 Chore-Time, Egg Prod. Sys.  
 Cobb-Vantress  
 Cooper Financial  
 Cooper Farms  
 Cottingham & Butler  
 Creighton Brothers  
 CSA Animal Nutrition  
**Daybreak Foods**  
 Devenish Nutrition  
 DSM Nutritional Products  
 Egg Traders  
 Eggs Unlimited  
 Elanco Animal Health  
 Falcon Packaging  
 Farm Credit Mid-America  
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 Farmers Hen House  
 Fienhage International  
 Formaldehyde Solutions LLC  
 Forsman Farms  
**Fremont Farms of Iowa**  
 Frost, PLLC  
 H&N North America  
 Headstart Hatching  
**Hendrix Genetics**  
 Henning Companies  
**Herbruck's Poultry Ranch**  
 Hickman's Egg Ranch  
**Hidden Villa Ranch/NestFresh**  
 Huvepharma  
**Hy-Line North America**  
 ILC Resources  
 Indiana State Poultry Assn.  
 Iowa Area Development Group  
**Iowa Cage Free**  
**Iowa Egg Council**  
**Iowa State University**  
 Iowa Turkey Federation  
**Jamesway**  
**Jennie-O**  
 Jones-Hamilton  
 Kemin Animal Nutrition & Health

**COE Students, Faculty, & Industry Gather for Banquet & Awards Ceremony.** MPC held its *COE Banquet and Awards Ceremony* to honor the 2025 class (pictured), marking the end of its 30<sup>th</sup> year. Over the years, more than 620 students have participated in the program, earning up to 18 credits, completing industry internships, and building a professional network that supports their careers.

The banquet provided an opportunity for students to connect with faculty, alumni, and industry representatives while recognizing student and faculty achievements. Molly Brown was recognized as the most dedicated student (*Ducks in a Row Award*), Briana Bernath as class clown (*Yolkster Award*), and Breven Stark as the most intelligent student (*Egghead Award*). Faculty members receiving the *Mark Cook Pullet-zer Prize* were Dr. Michael Cressman, *The Ohio State University* (SSI), and Dr. Eliza Ripplinger, *Best Veterinary Solutions* (SSII). Also nominated were Kelsey Held (*Pilgrim's*), Dawn Koltes (*ISU*), Carl Parsons (*UIUC*), and Yuko Sato (*ISU*). Awards are voted on by the students. The 2025 COE graduates completing both years of the program were Molly Brown (*KSU*), Belma Frlj (*UMN*), and Megan MacArthur (*UT*).



*Banquet Sponsors: Alltech; Daybreak Foods; Fremont Farms of Iowa; Henning Companies; Hy-Line North America; Jennie-O; Life-Science Innovations; Naturally Recycled Proteins; Rembrandt Foods; Rose Acre Farms; Sonstegard Foods; VALO BioMedia North America; and West Liberty Foods.*

## 2025 COE – SCHOLARSHIPS, FACULTY, LEADERSHIP, FORUMS, & INTERNSHIPS

**Scholarship Selection.** Thirty-two students participated in the 2025 COE program, the highest number of students attending COE at Iowa State University. Full scholarships were awarded to 22 students and partial scholarships to 10 students.

### SUMMER SESSION I

Adriana Behl - *North Dakota State University*  
 Briana Bernath - *University of Illinois*  
 Lexandria Carey - *Iowa State University*  
 Caitlyn Christiani - *Iowa State University*  
 Shuo-Wen Chung - *Purdue University*  
 Kiana Dotson - *Iowa State University*  
 Dasha Estrada - *University of Florida*  
 Samantha Gaul - *Iowa State University*  
 Nathan Hartwig - *University of Wisconsin-Madison*  
 Regina Hoefer - *Purdue University*  
 Melody McGranahan - *Iowa State University*  
 Olivia McGrath - *Ohio State University*  
 Kailey Meadors - *Iowa State University*  
 Sadie Peters - *Iowa State University*  
 Elizabeth Stern - *University of Minnesota*  
 Jonica Wooton - *Purdue University*

### SUMMER SESSION II

Evan Brown - *Purdue University*  
 Molly Brown - *Kansas State University*  
 Guangye Chen - *Ohio State University*  
 Hayden Cornwall - *Iowa State University*  
 Emma Dixon - *Purdue University*  
 Belma Frlj - *University of Minnesota*  
 Rylie Hana - *Purdue University*  
 Megan MacArthur - *University of Tennessee-Knoxville*  
 Jessica Majewski - *University of Missouri*  
 Daniel Rosendo - *University of Florida*  
 Zenzilé Samuels-Skinner - *University of Nebraska*  
 Emily Smith - *University of Missouri*  
 Sadie Stark - *University of Wisconsin-Madison*  
 Breven Stark - *University of Illinois*  
 Katelyn Wakenell - *Michigan State University*  
 Nina Wilson - *Purdue University*

**Poultry Leadership Experience (PLE).** Beth Nelson (*MPC*), Chelsea Russell (*MPC*), Hally Frandrup (*MPC*), and Zachary Simons (*Adisseo*) taught PLE, a three-day session incorporated into the Poultry Enterprise Management course. PLE uses interactive curriculum to present and reinforce concepts of leadership styles, emotional intelligence, communication, and teamwork, skills identified by industry partners as critical for workforce success. MPC piloted the addition of an industry student, with John Hohenstein (*Forsman Farms*) joining PLE as a student. His participation provided real-world perspective for students while demonstrating the continued relevance of PLE content for professionals at all career stages.

**Wednesday Night Forums.** *Wednesday Night Forums*, a popular weekly event, offer students opportunities to network with industry leaders, learn more about the poultry industry, and explore future career opportunities. Speakers: Dave Hasemann\* and Alexis Hakizimana\* (*Rose Acre Farms*); Stacey Roberts and Erin Jacobson (*Versova*); Isaac Harrel\* and Kalie Pettit (*Hy-Line North America*); Alex Hohenstein\* (*Jennie-O*); and Craig Burda\* and Trevor Rebhahn (*Pilgrim's*). \*COE graduate



**Internships.** Twenty-seven industry internships were awarded by 16 companies, allowing students to take their classroom knowledge and apply it to real-world settings. Internships last six to ten weeks, following COE classes each summer. Thanks to the internship hosts.

Cal-Maine Foods	Hendrix Genetics	Miller Poultry	Rose Acre Farms
Center Fresh Group	Herbruck's Poultry Ranch	MPS Egg Farms	Select Genetics
Daybreak Foods	Hy-Line North America	Ohio Poultry Assn.	Sonstegard Foods
Fremont Farms of Iowa	Michael Foods	Pilgrim's	Trillium Farm Holdings

**Faculty Integral to COE Success.** Faculty members, dedicated to the industry and to the students they educate, are key to COE's success. They commit to educating the next generation of poultry leaders, making sure students are well-prepared to face the future challenges of the industry. The enthusiasm they bring to their work is infectious and generates excitement about future employment opportunities. Thanks to the following 2025 COE faculty members and guest speakers.

### SUMMER SESSION I

#### Poultry Products Technology

Michael Cressman, *The Ohio State University*  
Rodrigo Tarté, *Iowa State University*  
Daniel Unruh, *Iowa State University*

#### Avian Physiology

Dawn Koltes, *Iowa State University*  
Gregory Fraley, *Purdue University*

#### Breeder Flock & Hatchery Management

Ron Kean, *University of Wisconsin*  
Maria Dashek, *University of Minnesota*  
Kelsey Held, *Pilgrim's*  
Kalie Pettit, *Hy-Line North America*

*Coordinators; Instructors; Guest Lecturers*

#### ISU Lab Support & Teaching Assistants

Michael Carroll, Lillie Decker, Kayla Elmore,  
Cameron Hall, Michael Kaiser, Alex Menke,  
Jessica Seward, Jeff Tjelta, Isabella von Seggern,  
Brooke Wilson

#### Field Trip Hosts

Hoover's Hatchery, Select Genetics, Iowa State  
University Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory,  
West Liberty Farms

### SUMMER SESSION II

#### Poultry Nutrition

Liz Bobeck, *Iowa State University*  
Caitlin Evans, *AB Vista*  
Carl Parsons, *University of Illinois*  
Kristjan Bregendahl, *Devenish Nutrition*  
Chasity Pender, *DSM Nutritional Products*

#### Avian Health

Yuko Sato, *Iowa State University*  
Justin Brown, *Iowa State University*  
Eliza Ripplinger, *Best Veterinary Solutions*

#### Poultry Enterprise Management

Ken Koelkebeck, *University of Illinois*  
Hally Frandrup, *MPC*  
Anup Johny, *University of Minnesota*  
Beth Nelson, *MPC*  
Chelsea Russell, *MPC*  
Gretchen Beyler, *Cargill*  
Landon Brehm, *Maple Leaf Farms*  
Brian Davis, *MacFarlane Pheasants*  
Kelsey Held, *Pilgrim's*  
Maro Ibarburu-Blanc, *Egg Industry Center*  
Cody Lucero, *Iowa Cage Free*  
Brett Pickar, *Daybreak Foods*  
Zachary Simons, *Adisseo*

## STUDENT PLACEMENT

MPC supports students beyond coursework by assisting with internships and helping COE alumni enter or re-enter the poultry industry as a career path. MPC staff remain engaged with students as they approach graduation and serve as a resource for connections to employment opportunities with MPC sponsor companies, with a focus on retaining COE alumni in the poultry industry. These efforts bring talented individuals into the poultry workforce. Congratulations to the following students on their poultry employment!

**Marydith Hudson**, a 2019 COE graduate, accepted the position of Farm Compliance Specialist with Centrum Valley Farms. She graduated from Iowa State University in May 2019 with a degree in Animal Science.

**Natalie Hunt**, a 2024 COE participant, accepted the position of Supply Chain Planner with Centrum Valley Farms in Clarion, IA. She graduated from Iowa State University in May 2025 with a degree in Animal Science.

**Sumaya Luger**, a 2024 COE participant, accepted the position of Flock Service Manager with Hy-Line North America in Wilton, IA. She graduated from University of Minnesota in December 2024 with a degree in Animal Science.

**Whitney Martin**, a 2024 COE participant, accepted the position of Flock Manager with Trillium Farm Holdings in Johnstown, OH. She graduated from The Ohio State University in December 2024 with a degree in Animal Sciences.

**Madison Morrow**, a 2024 COE participant, accepted the position of Farm Associate with Vital Farms in Mitchell, IN. She graduated from The Ohio State University in May 2025 with a degree in Animal Sciences.

**Josh Mumm**, a 2024 COE graduate, accepted the position of Regional Sales Manager with Jamesway. He graduated from University of Wisconsin-Madison in December 2024 with a degree in Agricultural Business Management and Economics.

**Khanyma Nelthropp**, a 2023 COE participant, accepted the position of Certification Officer with Certified Humane in Orlando, FL. She graduated from University of Florida in May 2024 with a degree in Animal Science.

**Congratulations to COE Students Entering Graduate or Vet School.** COE students accepted into graduate programs related to animal or poultry science: Ivana Hernandez Garbati (*University of Illinois*) and Shayna Morris (*Purdue University*).

COE students accepted into veterinary school: Chiara Cutts (*Colorado State University*), Kaden de Jong (*University of Missouri*), Carissa Gerwig (*Iowa State University*), and Allison Matzek (*University of Wisconsin-Madison*).



## 2024-2025 Sponsors cont.

Kindstrom-Schmoll  
Koechner Manufacturing  
Life-Science Innovations  
Lincoln Premium Poultry  
Lubing Systems  
MacFarlane Pheasants  
Maple Leaf Farms  
Merck Animal Health

### Michael Foods

Michigan Allied Poultry Ind.  
Michigan Turkey Producers  
Midwest Livestock Systems

### Midwest Poultry Federation

Miller Poultry  
**MN Turkey Research Promotion Council**

Moba

### MPS Egg Farms

Naturally Recycled Proteins  
Nebraska Poultry Industries  
Nelson Poultry Farms  
North American Gamebird Assn.  
Nova-Tech Engineering  
Novus International  
Ohio Poultry Association

### Opal Foods

Organic Valley  
Oskaloosa Food Products

### Pilgrim's

Rembrandt Foods  
Ridley Feed Ingredients  
River View Farms

### Rose Acre Farms

SANOVO Technology USA  
Select Genetics  
Sietsema Farms

### Sonstegard Foods

South Dakota Poultry Ind. Assn.  
StoneX Group

### Summit

Sunrise Acres Egg Farms  
Sure Conveyors  
Tigges, Kent

### Trillium Farm Holdings

Turkey Valley Farms

### United Egg Producers

### University of Florida

### University of Minnesota

University of Nebraska-Lincoln  
VAL-CO

VALO BioMedia North America  
Vaxxinova

Vencomatic North America  
VSI

Wabash Valley Produce

Weaver Brothers

West Liberty Foods

Wilson Veterinary Co.

Wisconsin Poultry & Egg Ind. Assn.  
Xgenex

Zoetis

**\$5,000+ • \$10,000+**

**\$20,000+ • \$25,000+**

## Board of Directors

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Rose Acre Farms

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Alltech

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H&N North America

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Sonstegard Foods

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Opal Foods

## STAFF

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**Jon Dockter**

Associate Director

**Chelsea Russell**

COE Student Director

**Katie Hammitt**

Office Manager

**Hally Frandrup**

COE Student Recruiter

**Sherry Liu**

IT Director

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## RECRUITMENT ACTIVITIES FOR THE 2026 COE CLASS

Recruitment activities for the 2026 COE class consisted of career fairs, classroom presentations, panels, and poultry club meetings, as well as providing students and faculty with digital materials. To expand the student outreach, COE was also promoted at FFA and 4-H events.

**Career Fairs.** MPC participated in nine careers fairs at member schools. Career fairs are done in conjunction with classroom visits, helping MPC build student awareness and share poultry-based career information in a one-on-one setting. Past COE student Zenzil  Skinner (*COE 2025*) assisted in a career fair.

**Classroom Visits.** To maintain visibility directly in classes, MPC gave 37 classroom presentations across our member universities talking about the COE program and jobs and internships in the poultry industry. In addition to Chelsea Russell (*COE Student Director*) and Hally Frandrup (*COE Student Recruiter*), past COE students Breven Stark (*COE 2025*); Briana Bernath (*COE 2025*); Molly Brown (*COE 2024/2025*); and Emily Smith (*COE 2025*) assisted in presentations.

**Poultry Clubs.** MPC participated in eight poultry club meetings at member schools. In addition to MPC staff, several past students assisted in the club presentations by sharing their COE experiences, including Elizabeth Lott (*COE 2024*); Olivia McGrath (*COE 2025*); Kaitlyn Mossett (*COE 2024*); Regina Hoefer (*COE 2025*); Kaden de Jong (*COE 2023/2024*); Emily Smith (*COE 2025*); Daniel Rosendo (*COE 2025*); and Sadie Stark (*COE 2025*). MPC also coordinated the participation of Paige Williams (*COE 2021/2022*) with Rose Acre Farms; Ryan Dedloff (*COE 2007*) with Cal-Maine Foods; and Kevin Gast (*COE 2011/2012*) with Daybreak Foods to share their career path and job experiences at poultry club meetings.

**Poultry Panels.** MPC coordinated two in-person poultry panels which were held at NDSU and SDSU. Panelists spoke on areas of live production, processing, nutrition, sales, and veterinary medicine. They gave tips on what experiences college students should seek to be successful in the poultry industry and shared information on what their jobs entail. Animal science departments support the panels by offering student credit for attendance.

Over 100 students attended the NDSU panel. Minnesota Turkey Growers Association (MTGA) sponsored the meal. Panelists included: Adriana Behl (*NDSU; COE 2025*); Miranda Painter (*Hendrix Genetics; COE 2018/2019*); Brandon Severns (*MTGA*); and Jeff Jaderborg (*McFleeg*). Hally Frandrup (*COE Student Recruiter*) moderated.

The SDSU panel had over 60 people in attendance. The South Dakota Poultry Industries Association sponsored the meal. Panelists included: Brandon Berg (*Rembrandt Foods*); Jorge Perez Palencia (*CBS Bioplatforms*); Zachary Simons (*Adisseo; COE 2016/2017*); and Miranda Painter (*Hendrix Genetics; COE 2018/2019*). Hally Frandrup (*COE Student Recruiter*) moderated.

**COE Alumni Features.** MPC publishes stories with updates from past COE students, offering a look at their career progression and poultry volunteer work, while also serving as inspiration for prospective students. The stories are published in the Feathered Pen, shared on our social media pages, and sent as reference material to 2026 COE applicants. Past COE students featured in 2024/2025: Rachel Klein (*University of Missouri*) and Zachary Simons (*Adisseo*).

Internships were featured from: Adriana Behl (*Select Genetics*); Hayden Cornwall (*Sonstegard Foods*); Emma Dixson (*Rose Acre Farms*); Kiana Dotson (*Pilgrim's*); Melody McGranahan (*Center Fresh Group*); Zenzil  Samuels-Skinner (*Michael Foods*); and Emily Smith (*Cal-Maine Foods*).

Additional updates of COE alumni engagement and recognition at PEAK and IPPE, as well as from MPC campus visits, were shared in the Feathered Pen and on MPC's social media pages.

**FFA and 4-H Events.** MPC continued efforts to build awareness of the COE program among high school students through engagement with FFA and 4-H poultry events. COE alumni distributed program materials at state and national events, helping introduce students to poultry science education and career opportunities. At the National 4-H Poultry and Egg Conference, MPC was represented at the careers workshop, where Brian Joyer (*H&N North America; COE 1999/2000*) connected with more than 100 students and advisors to share information about COE. Additional outreach included participation in Minnesota State Fair 4-H and FFA poultry events, where materials were provided to students exploring future involvement in the poultry industry.



Purdue poultry club meeting.



The Ohio State University poultry club meeting.



University of Wisconsin-Madison poultry club meeting.