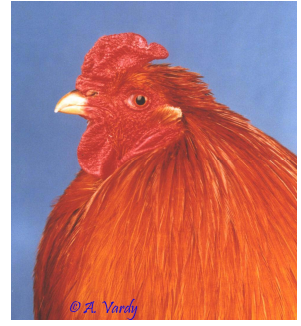




Dubbo Poultry Club

Newsletter

October 2009



Annual General Meeting

The Dubbo Poultry Club held its 2009 AGM on Monday 7 September at the Mission Australia office. This was somewhat more comfortable than the pavilion where we hold our monthly meetings providing all that was required for a relaxing supper following the formal proceedings. Thank you Mark Xuereb for arranging this venue.

The meeting saw a change in club's executive committee for the coming year with neither the outgoing President (Ryan Harris) nor the outgoing Secretary (Keith Stewart) re-nominating for these positions.

The new club committee consists of President Robert Stanley; Secretary David Geering; Keith Stewart remaining as Treasurer; and dual Vice Presidents Mark Xuereb and Sandra Ferguson. Bob Stanley remains Chief Steward.

A number of honorary positions were also decided upon with David Geering continuing as Publicity Officer. Sandra Ferguson put her hand up and was duly appointed to the new position of "Sponsorship Officer". Mark Xuereb also offered to coordinate the clubs on-going program of working bees.

With the election of the new committee club members acknowledged the strong position that the club finds itself in courtesy of the previous committee lead my Ryan and Keith. Not only is the club in a strong financial position but there have been substantial improvements in the pavilion. The club has also hosted several very successful national Breed Club shows over the last couple of years. These shows have showcased our pavilion and reflected very favourably on the club and Dubbo generally as a destination

Yard Visit

Despite a decidedly cool change in the weather the yard visit hosted by Kaye Primmer was an great success. The small number of members that were able to attend, plus the Geering "rent a

crowd", enjoyed the BBQ fare in the very comfortable Primmer living room.

Members that were able to stay after the BBQ had the opportunity to look over Kaye's breeding pens of Sebrights and Wyandottes.

One thing that was evidently clear was that these informal get-togethers was something that we should be doing more of and we should be aiming to hold another, perhaps some time after the heat of the coming summer months.



Club members enjoying the fare at Kaye Primmer's yard visit (just what is Sandra doing that has everyone so riveted?).

Christmas Party

While it may well alarm some people, November is only a matter of weeks away and that means the start of the "Silly Season" and Christmas parties. Details have yet to be finalised regarding the Poultry Club function but rest assured that if you are not at a meeting when this important decision is made you will be advised either by e-mail (if you have advised the club secretary of your e-mail address) or by post.

If you are interested in hosting the clubs 2009 Christmas party please feel free to contact the secretary directly.

Feed, protein and feather growth

There are at least 60 or so known Amino Acids, that make up parts of the body and feathers of a fowl. Essential Amino Acids include Histidine, Leucine, Isoleucine, Lysine, Methionine, Threonine, Valine and Treptohan while desiable Amino Acids include Arginene, Cystine, Glycine, and Tryosine.

Access to Amino Acids are probably more important at *REARING* and *MOULTING* than at any other time of the fowl's life. It is therefore important that a breeder should try and get a good understanding of the feeds and grains that contain these Amino Acids and how to balance them in the yearly cycle of your bird's life.

A good place to begin is to know the Amino Acid composition of feathers: Arginine 8.0%, Gistine 8.7%, Histidine 0.4%, Luecine 8.5%, Isoleucine 6.4%, Lysine 1.4%, Methionine 0.5%, Phenylatanine 5.5%, Threonine 4.7%, Tryetophan-Tyrosine 2.3% and Valine 8.9.

While this might seem daunting suffice to say that growing feathers use a lot of energy and creates stress on the bird's system, leaving it in a suspect state and giving disease and parasites a chance of getting a strong toe-hold on the health of the bird. This is when feed containing the required amounts of nutrients need to be supplied to assist the growth of the feathers and take some of the stress off the birds system.

Most grains and leafy-green vegetables contain some amino acids, but the most benefit can be obtained by increasing feed high in most or all of the ones that are in higher demand and therefore are needed at this time of the bird's development.

Barley, Lupins, Peas, Lucerne, Lucerne Chaff, Milk (full cream), are probably the best, as most of these contain all or nearly all of the necessary Amino Acids, and most contain all of the essential Amino Acids.

Up to 20% protein is required to help develop a chicken. This means that all the food taken into the chicken in the growing stage is going to be utilised and processed into feathers and tissue. Any deficiency is going to put stress on the bird giving opportunistic parasites and disease a window of opportunity to break down the resistance of the chicken exposing the flock to possible disease.

The Amino Acid percentage for a growing chicken is approximately Argenine 1.2%, Histidine 0.15%, Leucine 1.4%, Isolucine 0.72%, Methionine 0.7%, Theonine 0.6%, Phenacanine 1.3%, Valine 0.8% and Glycine 1.5%. This is well below the feather requirements given above and why the increase in food rich in Amino Acids at this time will be beneficial to the development of young birds.

If this sounds a bit much and a little too hard, use cracked, gristed or rolled barley and damp Lucerne chaff with the introduction of full milk Soy Meal and most bases will be covered.

It is important to mention that whilst Amino Acids are body building proteins this note is to assist with the specific idea of feather growth. The protein level to grow a chicken overall is 20% of the total feed ration, decreasing to 16% at the time they leave the brooder, and 14.5% to maintain the adult (non laying) fowl. For laying hens 16% is good, so a layer pellet designed for this purpose will help. A guide to the makeup of vitamins and minerals is on the label of this product as well. Good nutrient balance, vitamins and minerals will help reduce the likelihood of disruptions in the growth and health that can create 'fret marks' on feathers that cause unsightly blemishes on the growing feather due to restricted nutrient supply at a crucial stage of feather growth. We have to remember that developing chicks are very active and any deficiency will greatly affect their rapid development and cause lethargy and possibly retard the growth of the chick. To ensure a correct start for a young chicken this feed system should be started 1 week before mating, it will improve the hatchability of eggs, strength of chick at hatching and maximizing chick's food supply from the yolk. The nutrients available also maintain the health of the hen whilst laying, helping her in this stressful time.

I hope this is of some use to breeders and good luck.

Dan McDonogh