



For Immediate Release
U.S. Poultry & Egg Association

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IPE Pre-Harvest Food Safety Conference Addresses Poultry Industry Concerns

ATLANTA, GA – In her opening remarks at the *Pre-Harvest Food Safety Conference* held during the 2012 International Poultry Expo and International Feed Expo, Dr. Elisabeth Hagen, USDA Under Secretary for Food Safety, commented on the importance of pre-harvest food safety. Dr. Hagen commended the poultry industry for bringing all the stakeholders together to conduct this timely symposium.

“Poultry producers need to understand both their rights and their responsibilities, such as compliance with food safety regulations and the importance of educating consumers. One thing they cannot do is ignore pressing issues and scientific realities,” remarked Dr. Alling Yancy, vice president of food safety and production programs for the U.S. Poultry & Egg Association. Dr. Yancy was presenting on the topic of *Poultry Industry Concerns Regarding Pre-Harvest Food Safety Regulatory Initiatives*.

According to Dr. Steven Clark, senior technical services manager-poultry at Pfizer Animal Health, the interactions between animals, humans, and the environment are in the forefront as never before. In his presentation on *Current Trends in Antibiotic Usage in Food Animal Production*, Clark remarked that one of the most significant challenges is how to preserve the efficacy of antibiotics. These drugs will be needed in both humans and animals for the foreseeable future, so a framework for understanding how to use them judiciously is necessary.

“Antibiotics are important not only for human health but also for animal health. They also have implications for food safety; we can indirectly understand how healthy animals produce healthy food. In addition, there are economic benefits for everybody,” Dr. Clark commented.

Results of a pre-harvest intervention survey for best practices in pathogen control show that most breeders are taking biosecurity measures on their farms, vaccinating their birds, and conducting water and litter testing, while smaller numbers reported regularly washing vehicles, cages, crates, and other equipment.

“Much of this information is encouraging,” said Dr. Shelly McKee, an associate professor in the Poultry Products Safety and Quality Program, Department of Poultry Science, Auburn University. “But there is no silver bullet. This is risk mitigation. Someday maybe we can get to eradication; but today if we can mitigate risk during pre-harvest, the things we do at the processing plant may help control some of these pathogens better.”

U.S. Poultry & Egg Association is an all-feather organization representing the complete spectrum of today's poultry industry, with a focus on progressively serving member companies through research, education, communication, and technical assistance. Founded in 1947, U.S. Poultry & Egg Association is based in Tucker, GA.

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