

THE CHICKEN FARMER

Bloggers go to the Farm

In late September, three well-known bloggers were invited on a tour of a chicken farm. They quickly agreed and were very interested to meet the farmer, see how chickens are raised, and ask questions throughout.

With much help and support from Chicken Farmers of Ontario, plans were made to bring the bloggers in for the tour. Tim Klompmaker was very helpful as well, providing a wealth of insight before, during and after the tour of his farm, with thought-provoking discussions which continued right through lunch.

Tim was extremely gracious, eloquent and welcoming to both the bloggers and our crew and did a simply outstanding job of answering questions, providing feedback, and offering amazing information about how chicken farming works in Canada. At all times we were careful to walk the line between providing information about the farmer and his farm, without identifying the precise location within Ontario.

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The bloggers that participated were:

PAULA SHUCK



Blog name: Thriftymamastips.com

Twitter: @inkscriblr (20,000 followers)

Based in London, Ontario, Paula is a mother of two who worked as an investigative reporter for the London Free Press and the Kitchener Record. In recent years, Paula has become a social media consultant and professional blogger at thriftymommastips.com and thriftymommastips.com and thriftymommastips.com. In the last few years Paula has appeared on radio and television. She also helps to run a non-profit named The Canadian Coalition of Adoptive Families.

CHERYL KIRKNESS



Blog name: momsandmunchkins.com

Twitter: @momandmunchkin (35,000 followers)

Living in Regina, Saskatchewan with her husband, Cheryl is a working mom of one son. She is a certified Project Management Professional where she originally intended on becoming an event or party planner, but was given an opportunity with an engineering company and stayed in the oil and gas industry 8+ years. The intention of her blog was to share that she started a moms and babies group in her city to help other moms who want to do the same. Now she writes product reviews and the trials and errors of motherhood.

JENNIFER VAN HUSS



Blog name: Oneheartonefamily.com

Twitter: @mommy_jennof3 (11,000 followers)

A working mother of three, Jennifer is based in Toronto, Ontario. She's passionate about sharing her tips and tricks for raising kids, which is where her blog came from. She enjoys sharing her mistakes, hurdles and occasional triumphs so that other moms will not feel like they are alone.

The tour showed off the high-level farming practices, animal care program, and the importance of farming, supply management (indirectly). The feedback on both Twitter and Facebook has been exceptional. The bloggers were very enthusiastic, full of questions, and truly glad to have had the chance to see a farm up close – and to be able to pose their questions directly to Tim. More often than not, they were surprised at the way chicken farming works – particularly at the protocols for biosecurity and animal care. They were significantly impressed and left their chicken lunch after the tour feeling happy and full.

Chicken Farmers of Canada live tweeted the tour, the bloggers did likewise and the hashtag #RaisedbyCDNFarmer performed well all day. Comments, questions and photos were also posted on Facebook and to other platforms.

We will continue to promote the blogger's tour and the messages that have come from it. Then, we will await the blogs. Following that, on the evening of October 15th, we will be conducting a "Post-Visit Q&A" session/Twitter Party, where the bloggers will be answering the public's questions about what they experienced on their tour.

Some of the tweets from the day:



The image shows a screenshot of three tweets from the #RaisedbyCDNfarmer hashtag. The background of the entire page is a golden wheat field under a soft, orange-tinted sky. The tweets are as follows:

- Cheryl Kirkness @momsandmunchkin · Sep 29**
The chickens have access to fresh food and water 24/7. #raisedbyCdnfarmer

3 retweets, 4 likes
- paula schuck @inkscrblr · Sep 29**
Did you know chicken is the number one meat in Canada? #raisedbyCDNfarmer
6 retweets, 3 likes
- Jenn @Mommy_Jennof3 · Sep 29**
Chicken farmers are very conscious of the health of their chicks. The suits protect them not you #RaisedbyCdnFarmer

12 retweets, 8 likes

Chicken Farmers Announce World Championship Medal Incentive Recipients

Team Canada recently won four medals at the FINA World Championships in Russia. As a result, Chicken Farmers of Canada will be providing \$18,000 to Canadian swimmers and regional food banks as part of their recently announced incentive program.

Each medal-winning swimmer, (nine in all) will be receiving \$1,000 from Chicken Farmers of Canada. In addition, each swimmer will get to choose a food bank to receive an additional \$1,000 donation on behalf of each athlete.

“We are proud to support and celebrate our swimmers’ achievements, and it’s a win-win situation as we also get to further support Canada’s food banks.” says Dave Janzen, Chair of Chicken Farmers of Canada. “We take pride in their outstanding results and are pleased to extend that support financially to both them and the food banks in their respective regions.”

Ryan Cochrane, winner of two of Canada’s medals, said the food bank aspect of the incentive was appreciated. “After a successful World Championships, it’s humbling to receive awards for our results, but just as important is our ability to give back to our communities. Thank you to Chicken Farmers of Canada for helping us to make a difference in our neighbourhoods”.

“Recognizing our athletes’ performances in this way is fantastic,” says John Atkinson, Swimming Canada High Performance Director. “The fact that Chicken Farmers of Canada has also chosen to recognize all six swimmers that won a relay bronze medal is tremendous and very much reinforces our team philosophy.”



Canada’s medal winning athletes at the FINA World Championships were:

Ryan Cochrane, Two Bronze – 400 Freestyle, 1,500 Freestyle

Emily Overholt, Bronze – 400 Individual Medley

Yuri Kisil, Bronze – 400 Mixed Freestyle Relay

Santo Condorelli, Bronze – 400 Mixed Freestyle Relay

Karl Krug, Bronze – 400 Mixed Freestyle Relay

Sandrine Mainville, Bronze – 400 Mixed Freestyle Relay

Victoria Poon, Bronze – 400 Mixed Freestyle Relay

Chantal Van Landeghem, Bronze – 400 Mixed Freestyle Relay

ABOUT SWIMMING CANADA

Swimming Canada serves as the national governing body of competitive swimming. They inspire Canadians through world leading performances to embrace a lifestyle of swimming, sport, fitness and health. The federation comprises 75,000 members and 400 swim clubs across the country. Canadians are global leaders in high performance swimming and development for both able-bodied swimmers and swimmers with a disability. 

The Newest Recommendations for Best Brooding Practices!

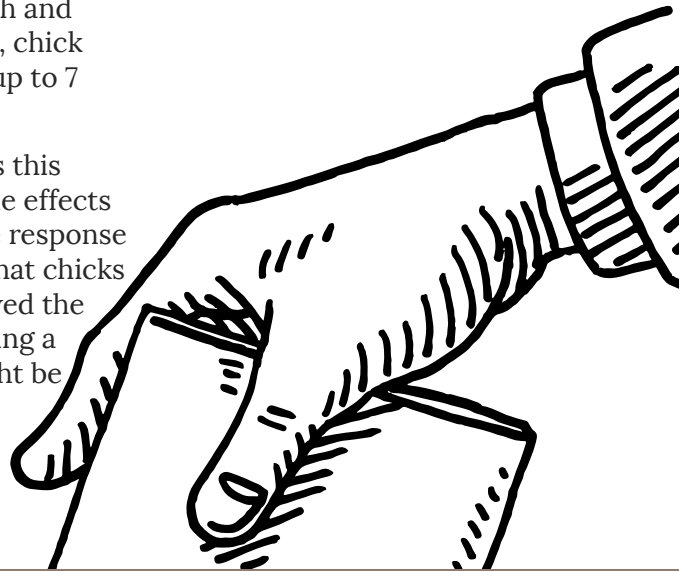
Included with this issue of the *Chicken Farmer** is 'Chick Champs'— a booklet on how to improve brooding practices on-farm for optimal chick health and welfare.

The Chick Champs booklet was developed as part of a research project on chickens raised without antibiotics by Martine Boulianne, the Poultry Research Chair at the University of Montreal.

Ensuring the best brooding conditions for chicks is essential for ensuring that chicks are given the best opportunity for growth and health. Taking these steps will help to reduce pathogen levels, chick mortality and antibiotic use, and will maximize chick weight up to 7 days of age.

A separate research project done in the Netherlands supports this concept. Researchers from Wageningen University studied the effects of early life feed, water access, and housing conditions on the response to an immune challenge at 4 weeks of age. The group found that chicks which had delayed access to feed post-hatch (72 hours), showed the strongest sickness response and poorest performance following a challenge with *E. coli*. Chicks with delayed access to feed might be more sensitive to disease pressures later in life. 

* (Please note that farmers in Quebec will have already received this directly from *Éleveurs de Volailles du Québec*)



Don't Forget to Vote on Election Day – Monday, October 19!

Polls are open for 12 hours. If you're already registered, you will get a voter information card by mail. It tells you when and where to vote. You should have received it by October 1st.

Your voter information card tells you the address of your advance polling place. Visit the Chicken Farmers of Canada Election Toolkit for information and tools that you can use at www.chickenfarmers.ca/for-farmers.

To learn more about the ways to vote, visit Elections Canada at www.elections.ca where you can find your electoral district and the nominated candidates in your riding.

Draft Code of Practice is Ready for Public Comment


Chicken Farmers of Canada has been part of a committee led by the National Farm Animal Care Council to update the Code of Practice for poultry.

Fully titled “Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Hatching Eggs, Breeders, Chickens, and Turkeys,” this new Code represents several years of work by both a Scientific Committee and the Code Development Committee.

As part of the Code’s development process, the draft Code is now available online for a 60-day public comment period. The public comment period allows for any farmer, interested group or member of the public to provide feedback on the Code content. This is an important part in keeping the Code process transparent and allows for all opinions to be heard and taken into consideration in the development of these important national standards for animal care.

The draft Code and feedback form can be accessed from NFACC’s website by going to www.nfacc.ca and clicking on ‘Chickens, Turkeys and Breeders’ under the ‘Codes of Practice’ tab. The public comment period runs from October 5th until December 4th. The Code Development Committee will consider comments and feedback received and will revise the draft Code as required. The final Code is expected to be released in the spring of 2016. It will be available electronically on the NFACC website, and all producers will receive a hard copy.

This Code addresses the welfare needs of birds raised for meat production in Canada, from breeder flocks, to hatcheries, all the way through to the farm, and ending with preparation for transport to processing. The Code represents a consensus amongst diverse stakeholder groups including farmers, veterinarians, researchers, animal welfare and enforcement agencies, governments, processors, and transporters. On the Code committee Chicken Farmers of Canada was represented by two Directors and a staff member. To determine our position on the Code content, many discussions and consultations took place with our Directors on potential changes in the Code. The Chicken Farmers of Canada Animal Care Program is based on the current Code and will be revised to be based on this updated Code.

The Code serves as our national understanding of animal care requirements and recommended practices. They are the result of a rigorous development process, taking into account the best science available, compiled through an independent peer-reviewed process, along with stakeholder input. The development process also takes into account the practical requirements necessary to promote consistent application across Canada and to ensure uptake by stakeholders resulting in beneficial animal outcomes. 

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Change in Airsacculitis Condemnation Assessments

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) is making an important change to the policy for the disposition of carcasses identified as being affected with airsacculitis at processing plants.

Airsacculitis will become a non-condemnable condition by the end of this year. This is great news for farmers knowing that this type of condition was previously responsible for the third-highest type of carcass condemnation by CFIA inspectors at the processing plant.

What is airsacculitis? Airsacculitis is the inflammation of the posterior air sacs. Inflamed air sacs are thicker than normal, and appear white and opaque rather than transparent (Poultry Industry Council). Many agents can be responsible, with serotypes of E.coli bacteria considered to be the most common cause.

With the change in the inspection policy, affected air sacs will be removed from the carcass using on-line or off-line reconditioning procedures without creating additional contamination and thus enabling the salvage of the previously unusable carcasses.

Despite this change, farmers still play an important role in reducing overall airsacculitis incidence. This condition can be reduced with proper ventilation to bring clean outdoor air into the poultry house and to reduce the bird's exposure to ammonia concentrations. Ammonia destroys cilia in the trachea, which impairs mucus flow and thickens tissue around the alveoli. 


Poultry Pro Course Available Online

An educational resource is now available online which provides a great overview and introduction to the poultry industry and to the various management considerations on farm.

Developed by the Poultry Industry Council, the four-part course is comprehensive; the course book contains over 200 pages and it can take between 10 and 25 hours to complete. While these management considerations may be all in a day's work for a Canadian chicken farmer, the course can serve as a good refresher for established farmers and an excellent resource and learning tool for those new to the industry.

Poultry Pro includes information about all poultry industries (including breeders, turkeys, and layers), but the majority of the content is still applicable to broilers. There are four parts to the course: disease management, feed and water management, breeder management, and barn management.

Registration is \$203.40, including tax. Once you register, the course notebook will be mailed to you and will include all the content covered online. In addition, there will be lots of links and videos with additional information as you work through the course. There is no time limit on completing the online modules and each section will end with a quiz. A mark of 75% or greater on each quiz is needed to complete the course.

More info on the course and how to register can be found at www.poultryindustrycouncil.ca under the 'Education, Extension and Events' tab. 



Audits to be Performed with Birds in the Barn

Last September, Chicken Farmers of Canada's Board of Directors approved a decision that all Food Safety and Animal Care audits must take place with birds present in the barn. This took effect in January of this year.

Historically, audits for the On-Farm Food Safety Assurance Program (OFFSAP) would take place when the barns were empty, allowing for a better evaluation of the cleaning routine between flocks. However, with OFFSAP and Animal Care audits occurring at the same time, it became necessary for auditors to enter the barns and directly observe the birds in order to audit for the Animal Care Program. Looking inside the barns is the only way to observe the birds and environmental conditions, an important priority for a credible program.

All Chicken Farmers of Canada auditors are trained to follow heightened biosecurity protocols due to the nature of their job. There are a number of steps that auditors take in order to ensure they minimize the risk of disease spread onto or off of farms. These may include:

- Asking farmers what their biosecurity protocols are ahead of the audit in order to ensure that these can be followed
- Parking vehicles outside of the Controlled Access Zone (CAZ) whenever possible

- Changing into clean coveralls and boots when crossing from the CAZ into the Restricted Area (RA)
- If touring the RA of more than one barn, changing boots or boot covers upon entering each new RA
- Signing the log book for each RA that is accessed
- Washing their hands at entry and upon exiting the RA, or wearing barn-specific gloves when inside the RA
- Leaving boot covers or disposable coveralls at the farm or taking precautions not to mix clean and dirty reusable coveralls
- If more than one farm is visited on the same day, not wearing the same footwear in the CAZs of the two farms

Many of these measures have always been a part of auditors' routine and are not new. It is important for farmers to communicate their biosecurity protocols with auditors ahead of their visit. In order to complete the audit properly auditors must enter at least one barn with birds present and the above measures have been put in place to help ensure that any risks are minimized. 