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Hexamitiasis can be Whipped*

By Ethel McNeil

Department of Veterinary Science, University of California
Davis, California

In a recent issue of a farm journal I read an article which surprised me very much. It said that Hexamita is the turkey industry's greatest enemy. Seven years ago, we heard that same statement in certain areas which, by using the knowledge now available, have learned to control the disease. During the past seven years this department has published 16 papers on hexamitiasis in both the popular and scientific press and has consistently made the following recommendation: since about one third of the adult survivors of an outbreak continue to carry Hexamita in their intestines, it is obvious that the poults should be segregated in every way from the breeders.

This segregation can be accomplished in various ways: (a) separate ranches for breeders and poults; (b) separate attendants; (c) proper use of such sanitary equipment as wire platforms, sunporches, wire racks for waterers and feed hoppers; (d) use of rubbers in brooder houses; (e) separate utensils for poults; (f) no visitors allowed in the brooder houses; (g) having as few age groups as possible; and (h) early sale of breeders. The exact method to be used must vary somewhat with conditions, but the principle remains the same, -- namely to prevent droppings from the adult flock or from an infected group of poults from coming in contact with clean poults. This has meant revision of management methods in many cases, but for the past few years this has been taken as a matter of course in the areas referred to above. It has occasionally been done at a considerable sacrifice, but it is the only satisfactory way of preventing the disease, and has yielded good dividends. Since quail, peafowl, pheasants, and chukars also harbor this parasite, they should be kept away from turkey yards, and from

and from greens which may be later cut and fed to the poults.

"Ounce of Prevention"

It is no new axiom of animal husbandry that disease-prevention is the most profitable means of disease control. As our Secretary of Agriculture recently said, "Applying the results of research pays large dividends". So it is with this disease. This is a plea to use the considerable knowledge we do possess about hexamitiasis. Control depends on recognition of the fact that it is caused by a definite, known germ, not a mystery; that it is harbored in the intestine of adult carriers; and that rearing methods must and can be modified to prevent these germs from coming in contact with the poults.

"Too Little and Too Late"

The problem will not be solved by waiting for some miracle drug to rescue the grower after losses have started, --- that is the psychology of "too little and too late". This station has under controlled conditions proved that mercuric chloride, used in dilutions which are not toxic to birds, has no effect on

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and survivors of an outbreak

Hexamita. The promiscuous use of the sulfa drugs in varying amounts is to me like insulting a friend for whom we have the greatest respect and from whom we may want real help sometime. Many warnings have gone out to humans not to sensitize themselves by the promiscuous use of the sulfonamides, but to wait until they really need them for some disease where they have known value. At any rate it should be remembered that all sulfa drugs have an optimum dosage varying with the drug and with the host; below this they are valueless and above it they are toxic. At all times they should be administered by someone familiar with their use.

Certain areas, which suffered tremendous losses from this disease seven years ago, have successfully modified their rearing methods. If they can do it others can too. Let's keep the poults healthy by making use of the existing knowledge. Sanitation and proper management will prevent this disease. Sometimes this involves increased labor, but the procedure is no more expensive than the use of drugs which have not been proven of value.

Avoid flush.

Carry over from adult.