

1983 REPORT

AAAP Mycoplasmosis Committee

I. Advisory Meetings.

The Committee, with some reservations, is in favor of soliciting federal and/or other financial support for a proposed series of high-level advisory meetings to fully explore current weaknesses in the detection and control of avian mycoplasmosis, and to develop specific workable recommendations for improvement. A properly financed series of meetings was viewed as positive step that would provide the travel expenses, organization and direction such an endeavor needs. Further, it would give the problem the priority it deserves.

A. Points Suggested for Exploration.

1. Lagging participation of multiplier breeders in NPIP Mycoplasma classification programs. Movement of unclassified hatching eggs, chicks and pullets to clean hatcheries or farms. Unsanitary, low security live pullet haul.
2. Recognition, definition, and appropriate disposition of varying strains of MG, MS and MM occurring in the field with apparent differences in transmissibility, pathogenicity, and effect on egg production. Availability of reagents and standard procedures for FA and ELISA tests for MG, MS, and MM.
3. State-federal funding priorities for field and laboratory aspects of mycoplasma control. Clean-up of multiple-age laying complexes. Expanded support for additional in-depth Veterinary Services, APHIS epizootiologic investigations of mycoplasma problems in the field.
4. Uniformity between rating agencies and testing laboratories. National certification of laboratories testing flocks for official mycoplasma classifications.

B. Reservations.

1. USDA may not be in a position to provide financial support of official advisory meetings.
2. The initiative might better arise from industry.
3. Would recommendations developed be followed? Is this the wisest strategy for AAAP?

C. Follow Through.

The Committee will continue to assess the pros and cons and potential goals and scope of the proposal. Comments from the general membership are encouraged and should be directed to Bill Chase or Ed Mallinson.

II. Subcommittee Reports.

A. Prevalence of Atypical Mycoplasmas (Johnson, Yoder, et al).

1. *Slow MS.* Surveys of laboratories revealed confirmed "slow MS" infection has replaced "slow MG" as a serious problem in several locations in both egg- and meat-type breeding chickens and turkeys. Slow MS is extremely difficult to culture, usually only 1 in 20 tracheas yielding the organism. HI's are characteristically inconclusive.
2. *A word of caution.* Breeders and laboratories must be careful not to blame all mild (slow) MG and/or MS plate reactions on killed bacterins. Persistent plate reactivity of 2-3 months duration is always a strong indication of a mycoplasma break.
3. *Comment on pathogenicity* (Mallinson). Halverson and others have indicated that some strains of MS cause depressed egg production, while in other separate reports, both Brandt and Landers have associated slow MS with airsacculitis in broilers.

B. Documentation of Successful Eradication in Laying Complexes (Halverson et al)

Refer to attached report presented at 1983 New Hampshire Poultry Health Conference.

C. Research Priorities (Kleven et al).

1. *Multiple-age laying complexes.* Well controlled studies comparing mycoplasma bacterins versus live vaccine in regards to egg production rate and protection against field challenge.
2. *Turkeys.* Use of mycoplasma bacterins to control outbreaks in production turkeys.
3. *Diagnostics.* ELISA technology adapted for broad, routine use for MG, MS and MM. Extended rotation/reading times for plate tests. Consistency of plate test sensitivity and specificity. Mycoplasma isolation and typing. Growth inhibition techniques to retard non-pathogenic "fast-growers" and favor the recovery of "slower-growing" pathogens.

III. Guide to NPIP Testing Requirements for Suspect Breeders.

Refer to attached abstract of NPIP requirements for chickens and turkeys. The guide has been developed in consultation with NPIP and members of the AAAP Mycoplasmosis Committee.

Respectfully submitted,

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