

Biosecurity and Best Management Practices for Broiler Breeder Chickens

Mark Martin, Longenecker's Hatchery

Introduction

Longenecker's Hatchery has established a Farm audit program to improve compliance with our Biosecurity guidelines and Best Management Practices. Our goal has been to reduce the likelihood of disease infection, promote excellent animal husbandry, and improve productivity.

Methods

Longenecker's has a primary audit person and several service technicians who are also auditors. We audit our farms twice each year against an audit form specific to either pullet or layer farms. The biosecurity and animal husbandry audit points are the same for pullets and layers. There are different audit forms for the layers and pullets because each has specific housing, equipment types, and job systems for the birds. One of the biannual audits is paired with the NPIP (National Poultry Improvement Plan) audit performed by a regional PA State Veterinarian. This NPIP audit is primarily a biosecurity audit for the prevention of infectious chicken diseases such as Avian Influenza, Mycoplasma, Infectious Bronchitis, and Laryngotracheitis among others. All audit results are reviewed with the serviceperson and the farmer.

The audit requirements are scored and totaled for a final audit percentage score. The audit percentage score is used as a multiplier for a bonus paid at the end of the flock when it finishes and "settles." The bonus value is derived by multiplying the total number of chicks hatched per hen by a determined potential bonus amount multiplied by the average of the years BMP audit scores.

Results and Discussion

The audits have helped identify the most frequently neglected tasks such as bait box station filling, prompt mortality pickup, composting, general cleaning, and record keeping. Following a typical audit a conversation occurs with the auditor and the farmer and service technician with a goal of providing a corrective action for missed audit points. Discussions with the farmer

include a timeline for the corrective action/changes for the time period before the next audit. A written report is left with the farmer.

Ongoing discussions occur within our company that focus on changes to the audit forms that might address or create different point weighting values to frequently missed or ignored audit requirements. Some challenges have been described by the auditor. There are logistics involved in scheduling all parties with farm responsibilities to be at the farm for the audit. Discussions have been made with farmers to engage them on the current disease challenges in Pennsylvania and opportunities for positive changes to improve biosecurity. Some specific topics for improvement at the farms include bait station filling methods, inside footwear use, documentation, mortality pickup timetables. It has been noted that it is difficult to apply consistent BMP and biosecurity protocols across all regions and farms. More detail is needed in some of the audit areas such as feeding and ventilation categories. Overall the audits have made the Farmers, Service Technicians, and Auditors focus on more details of flock disease protection and Breeder chicken management.



LONGENECKER'S HATCHERY, INC.

Best Management and Biosecurity Procedures-BREEDER PULLET

Pullet Farm: _____

Date: _____

Chicken Husbandry

Description	Point Value	Comments
Starting Setup	_____	
Timely and Accurate Feed and Water	_____	
Mortality Pick Up	_____	
Litter Quality and Maintenance	_____	
Cull Bird Removal	_____	
	0	

Chicken House Systems- Operation and Maintenance

Description	Point Value	Comments
Ventilation	_____	
Feed (males)	_____	
Feed (females)	_____	
Water Systems	_____	
Generator Testing (Quarterly)	_____	
Heating Systems- Heaters Working	_____	
	0	

Recordkeeping, Organization, and Housekeeping

Description	Point Value	Comments
Mortality Records Kept Daily	_____	
Organization and Housekeeping	_____	
	0	

Biosecurity and Disease Control

Description	Point Value	Comments
Doors Locked	_____	
Changing Shoes at Entry Door	_____	
Workroom Clean and Disinfected	_____	
Rodent Stations Clean with Fresh Bait	_____	
1ft area around house vegetation free	_____	
Chickens properly disposed of per state regulations	_____	
Compost Area- Clean, Dry, Birds Covered	_____	
	0	

Total Point Score _____

Possible 100 Total Score

Score

%

Auditor: _____



LONGENECKER'S HATCHERY, INC.

Best Management and Biosecurity Procedures-BREEDER LAYER

Breeder Farm: _____ Date: _____
Flock Number: _____

Chicken Husbandry

Description	Point Value	Comments
Timely and Accurate Feed and Water	_____	
Mortality Pickup	_____	
Litter Quality and Maintenance	_____	
Cull Bird Removal	_____	
	0	

Chicken House Systems- Operation and Maintenance

Description	Point Value	Comments
Ventilation (Check settings, all fans operate, vents work and are not damaged)	_____	
Male Feed (Dispersing Evenly Every Day)	_____	
Female Feed (Dispersing Evenly Every Day, Not Spilling from the Troughs)	_____	
Water Systems	_____	
Generator Testing (under a full load once every Quarter)	_____	
Generator Testing logged	_____	
Egg Cooler (67-70 degrees)	_____	
	0	

Egg Packing

Description	Point Value	Comments
Egg Pack- Points Down and Clean Eggs	_____	
Egg Pack Frequency (at least 3 times a day)	_____	
Egg Pack Area Cleanliness (egg tables and area around)	_____	
Egg Racks Properly Identified (Dated with Marker)	_____	
Proper Disposal of Non-hatching Eggs	_____	
	0	

Recordkeeping, Organization, and Housekeeping

Description	Point Value	Comments
Production and Mortality Records Kept Daily	_____	
Organization and Housekeeping (Work Room is Clean and Tidy, Not being used as a storage area)	_____	
Driveway Maintenance	_____	
Egg Dock or Pad Free of Debris, Snow/Ice	_____	
	0	

Biosecurity and Disease Control

Description	Point Value	Comments
Changing Shoes at Entry Door	_____	
Doors locked	_____	
Rodent Stations Clean with Fresh Bait	_____	
Rodent Bait Changes are Documented	_____	
1ft area Around House Free of Rodent Harborage (Vegetation or Debris)	_____	
Chickens Disposed of per State Regulations	_____	
Disposal Method Correctly Administered Example: Compost Area- Clean, Dry, Birds Covered	_____	
	0	

Total Point Score _____
Possible 125 Total Score

Score %

Auditor: _____