

# Missouri Ag News

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## Managing the Family Chicken Flock

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Engineering	Livestock
Forestry	Other



Chick day is an annual event at most feed stores in the area and a great way for families to start their own chicken flock. However, there are many important things to remember in caring for the young chicks.

**Litter:** Litter should be clean, mold free and dry, but not dusty. Any absorbent material that reduces moisture in the poultry house such as pine shavings, rice hulls, peanut shells and ground corn cobs are all good products to use. If litter becomes wet stir it to keep it from packing and move feeders and waterers to different places often.

**Feed and Water:** Commercially prepared rations will ensure your birds are receiving a balanced diet for the right age. There are specific types of rations for different age groups and one type should not be fed to another group. For example, starter rations for young chicks should not be fed to layers. Be sure to always follow the instructions provided by the manufacturer on the bag. If you do provide birds

with table scraps such as stale bread and peelings do not feed more than what birds will eat within 10 to 20 minutes. Too much of these "treats" will decrease the amount of commercial feed they consume causing them to be without essential nutrients it provides. Typically a mature layer will eat about ¼ of a pound of feed a day, which will calculate to 85-100 lbs. of feed per year. Medicated feeds can be beneficial for young birds, especially those that control coccidiosis. Older birds build up immunity to most diseases and therefore do not need medicated feeds. Water is the most important nutrient for any animal and should be clean, fresh, and abundant. 100 six week-old chicks should be provided with 3 gallons of water daily and moved up to 8 gallons per day for mature layers. More water may be needed when temperatures exceed 80 degrees.

**Diseases and Other Problems:** Diseases can be very detrimental to a chicken flock but are controlled easily. Cleaning waterers and

## Managing the Family Chicken Flock

feeders regularly with a bleach solution can eliminate many diseases that spread throughout the flock. Keeping the house and litter clean, dry, ventilated, and free from wild birds or animals greatly reduces disease problems. A vaccination program will also help to guard chickens from most diseases. Do note that most poultry vaccines come in 1000 bird dosages because they are made for commercial producers. Examples of vaccines that are used regularly are Newcastle,

infectious bronchitis and fowl pox vaccines (in southern regions). If ordering from a hatchery, ask for chicks that are vaccinated for Marek's disease. Consult your veterinarian before you begin a vaccination program to ensure the use of the correct vaccines for your flock or area. Picking or cannibalism occurs frequently in chicken flocks during periods of stress, when birds run out of feed or water, or when temperatures become cold. The best treatment for cannibalism is prevention by

having low-light conditions, providing lots of room, and trimming the beaks on all birds.

By following these simple management tips you can help your chicken flock stay healthy and provide lots of eggs or meat for your family. For more information about managing a family chicken flock contact your local extension office and ask for MU Guide G8350.

Kendra Graham, Livestock Specialist, University of Missouri Extension, Greenville, MO.

## Annual Hazmat Refresher

The Missouri Department of Natural Resources in conjunction with the Poplar Bluff City Fire Department and Sikeston Department of Public Safety

April 17<sup>th</sup> at the Black River Coliseum in Poplar Bluff

April 18<sup>th</sup> at the Clinton Building in Sikeston

8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Individuals must have completed a 40 hour Hazmat Operations training. Contact Josh Wilkerson with the Missouri Department of Natural Resources with questions and to register at (573) 840-9276, Email: [josh.wilkerson@dnr.mo.gov](mailto:josh.wilkerson@dnr.mo.gov)

# Mercury Collection Program

The Missouri Department of Natural Resources is conducting a Mercury Collection Program that allows any private citizen or nonprofit agency to drop off any mercury-containing instruments, like thermometers, blood pressure cuffs, thermostats or switches.

The program does not include compact fluorescent bulbs. A fact sheet detailing the proper disposal of CFLs is available on the department's website: [dnr.mo.gov/pubs/pub2273.pdf](http://dnr.mo.gov/pubs/pub2273.pdf).

The department is asking that anyone seeking to dispose of items at these sites first secure the item in two zip top bags and then place in a sealed container (such as a coffee can or plastic margarine tub). The extra packaging is required to prevent the release of mercury if the item breaks while being transported.

The Department of Natural Resources will collect the dropped off items at the end of May and transport them to Jefferson City. They will be picked up by a state contractor, who will recycle what can be

recycled and properly dispose of the rest.

Anyone who is uncomfortable with transporting mercury instruments, or who has large quantities of mercury, can contact the spill line at 573-634-2436 to arrange to have items picked up.

The list of drop off sites in southeast Missouri and their business hours are included in an attachment. Please call the site before taking mercury instruments for disposal, and never leave items if the facility is closed.

Additional information on mercury, including health effects and how to clean up a small mercury spill, is available on the department's website: <http://www.dnr.mo.gov/env/mercury.htm>.

If you or any other agency/school has any questions regarding the program, please contact any of the participating agencies, myself (contact info below), Seth Norcross (573-778-2422), or the Spill Line as listed above.

Josh Wilkerson, Missouri Department of Natural Resources, Poplar Bluff, MO.

**“...first secure the item in two zip top bags and then placed in a sealed container ...”**

## Spray Program for Powdery Mildew in Melon

Each year watermelon growers put together their spray programs in preparation for the onset of diseases that will come. Prevention of disease is the best strategy to a high yield. The most important spray of the year is the first spray which occurs when the vines start to run, before the male flowers bloom.

Following is an example of a spray program that uses both contact and systemic fungicides. Rotation of the fungicide type will help to prevent the development of resistance.

For more ideas on spray programs see the Midwest Vegetable Production Guide for Commercial Growers at <http://btny.purdue.edu/Pubs/ID/ID-56>.

To control gummy stem blight, powdery mildew and anthracnose try the following program:

Spray	Fungicide - contact or <i>systemic</i>
1 (vine run)	chlorothalonil
2	<i>tebuconazole</i> (+ copper for bacterial fruit blotch)
3	chlorothalonil
4	<i>Inspire Super</i>
5	mancozeb + Quintec
6	<i>Switch</i> (or <i>tebuconazole</i> )
7	mancozeb + Cabrio
8	mancozeb + Procure

Sarah Denkler, Horticulture Specialist,  
University of Missouri Extension, Poplar Bluff,  
MO.

## Missouri's Complex Fence Law

Wednesday, March 21

Three Rivers College RM 203

6:30 to 9:00 p.m.

**Must register to attend—call 686-8064**

**Seating is limited**

**\$20 per person/\$25 per couple**

## Cotton Planting Intentions for 2012

U.S. cotton producers intend to plant 13.63 million acres of cotton this spring, down 7.5 percent from 2011, according to the National Cotton Council's 29th Annual Early Season Planting Intentions Survey.

While the 2012 Cotton Planting Intentions for the Mid-south is projected to be down by 6.9 percent, Missouri is the only state in the region with a projected increase of 2.3 percent. Our projected acreage for 2012 is 384,000 acres. It is a miracle that we reached the level we did last year due to excessive rainfall and flooding. For producers to increase their acreage, they have to be optimistic about this year's crop. It is expected that the gain in acreage would come from both soybean and corn acreage.

Missouri is blessed with good alluvial soils and we have excellent irrigation potential. While cotton is only grown in a relatively small area in Southeast Missouri, our large field size and generally favorable growing conditions are an asset. Even with a near record drought two years ago, we had very good yields because of our high number of heat units. We have had a very mild winter and we have no drought issues at the present time. Weather is a challenge during most years. However, the Climate Prediction Center shows a higher probability for warmer than normal temperatures and above average precipitation, February through April.

Mike Milam, Agriculture Specialist, University of Missouri Extension, Kennett, MO.

## National Small Food Manufacturer Conference

**April 2-3, 2012** in **Omaha Nebraska**

**This conference is designed specifically for small food manufacturers throughout the nation.** Attendees will:

- Learn from national industry respected, knowledgeable speakers
- Learn how to expand and grow their businesses
- Participate in interactive sessions
- Network with peers and industry experts

**For more information please visit the conference website: [fpc.unl.edu/nsfmc](http://fpc.unl.edu/nsfmc) To have a brochure mailed or to request an electronic brochure please contact Jill Gifford at 402-472-2819 or [jgifford1@unl.edu](mailto:jgifford1@unl.edu) or go to: <http://fpc.unl.edu/web/food-processing-center/nsfmc>. Sponsored By: Nebraska Manufacturing Extension Partnership.**

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If you are interested in receiving this publication via e-mail or being removed from the email list please send a request to denklers@missouri.edu.

## Future Meetings & Events -

High Tunnel Innovators Meeting March 8, 2012 from 10:00 to 11:00 am at SEMO/ Sikeston Campus in Sikeston, MO. Contact David Speidel at 573-545-3593 to register.

Missouri's Complex Fence Law - March 21, 2012 from 6:30 to 9:00 pm at Three Rivers Community College ITV Room. Contact Butler County University of Missouri Extension Center to register 573-686-8064.

Commercial Pesticide Applicator Testing - March 27, 2012 at the Delta Center in Portageville. Contact the Missouri Department of Agriculture to register 573-751-5504.

Hazmat Refresher - April 17-18 in Poplar Bluff and Sikeston. Contact Josh Wilkerson with MoDNR to register (573) 840-9276.