

# Unit C: Poultry Management

## Lesson 3: Poultry Health Management

# Terms

- **All-in, all-out**
- **Intranasal vaccination**
- **Intraocular vaccination**
- **Wing web vaccination**



I. Whether a poultry flock is housed inside or allowed to roam free range, their health is still a concern and must be managed.

A. If poultry are kept in houses a procedure should be followed after removing those birds and introducing a new flock.

1. Remove all equipment from the house and thoroughly wash it.

- a. Remove all manure and wash with a disinfectant.

- b. Expose the equipment to sunlight to aid in removal of harmful bacteria.



2. Remove all litter and manure from the house.
  - a. This might include scraping and brushing the floor clean.
  - b. Dispose of the manure by spreading it thinly on land that is not used by other poultry.
    - i. Poultry should not be placed on this land for at least 4 years.
3. Sweep the walls and ceilings.
4. Using high pressure, hose down and scrub the inside of the house.



@poultrykeeper.com





5. Spray the inside of the house with an approved disinfectant.
  - a. Spray should be applied to all surfaces.
  - b. Avoid getting disinfectant in the waterers and feeders.
6. Place new, clean, dry litter in the house.
7. Leave the house empty for at least two weeks to break any disease cycles that could be present.
8. Eliminate places for pests such as flies to breed.

B. Whenever possible, do not allow visitors to enter the house.

1. Visitors could bring potential bacteria and viruses into the house and cause an outbreak of disease.

C. If birds should die while in the house remove them as soon as they are discovered.

1. They should be disposed of far away from the current poultry operation by placing in a pit or incinerating.
  - a. Do not consume these birds since the cause of death cannot be determined.
  - b. Some avian diseases are transmittable to humans.



II. Sanitation is the most important poultry health management procedure, but there are other practices used in health management.

- A. Begin a disease free operation by purchasing birds that are proven disease free.
1. Many poultry producers that sell live birds will test their poultry for diseases.
  2. Ask the producer if they have any documentation showing the vaccination and management practices.

B. Keep birds of only one age on the farm.

1. This can be done by using an **all-in, all-out** procedure.
2. All-in, all-out means all the birds are brought onto the farm at one time and removed at the same time.
3. If birds of different ages are present on the same farm, separate them by at least 40 feet.

C. Separate breeder flocks from the other poultry.

1. Preferably, no other poultry should be kept on the farm if a breeder flock is kept.

- D. Keep other flying birds out of the house or away from the flock.
- E. Provide proper ventilation to birds in houses.
- F. Keep rodents from entering the house.
- G. Feed balanced rations to prevent nutritional diseases.
  - 1. Also provide plenty of clean, fresh water.
- H. Keep records of all the birds so that you know when the birds were vaccinated, what disease problems existed and what medicines were used.

III. Depending upon the size of the flock and species of bird, vaccination may be necessary to prevent major disease outbreaks.

A. Vaccination is not a substitute for proper health management, but rather it is helpful in controlling diseases.

1. Vaccines are available for a wide variety of poultry diseases including infectious bronchitis, fowl pox, fowl cholera, and others.

- B. Vaccines should only be used in areas where the disease is known to exist.
1. Over-vaccination or improper vaccination could result in diseases resistant to the specific vaccine.
  2. A vaccination program should be planned to the specific operation and locality.
  3. Contact your local Extension Agent for specific details on vaccination.
- C. Vaccination can cause stress on poultry so they should only be vaccinated when healthy.



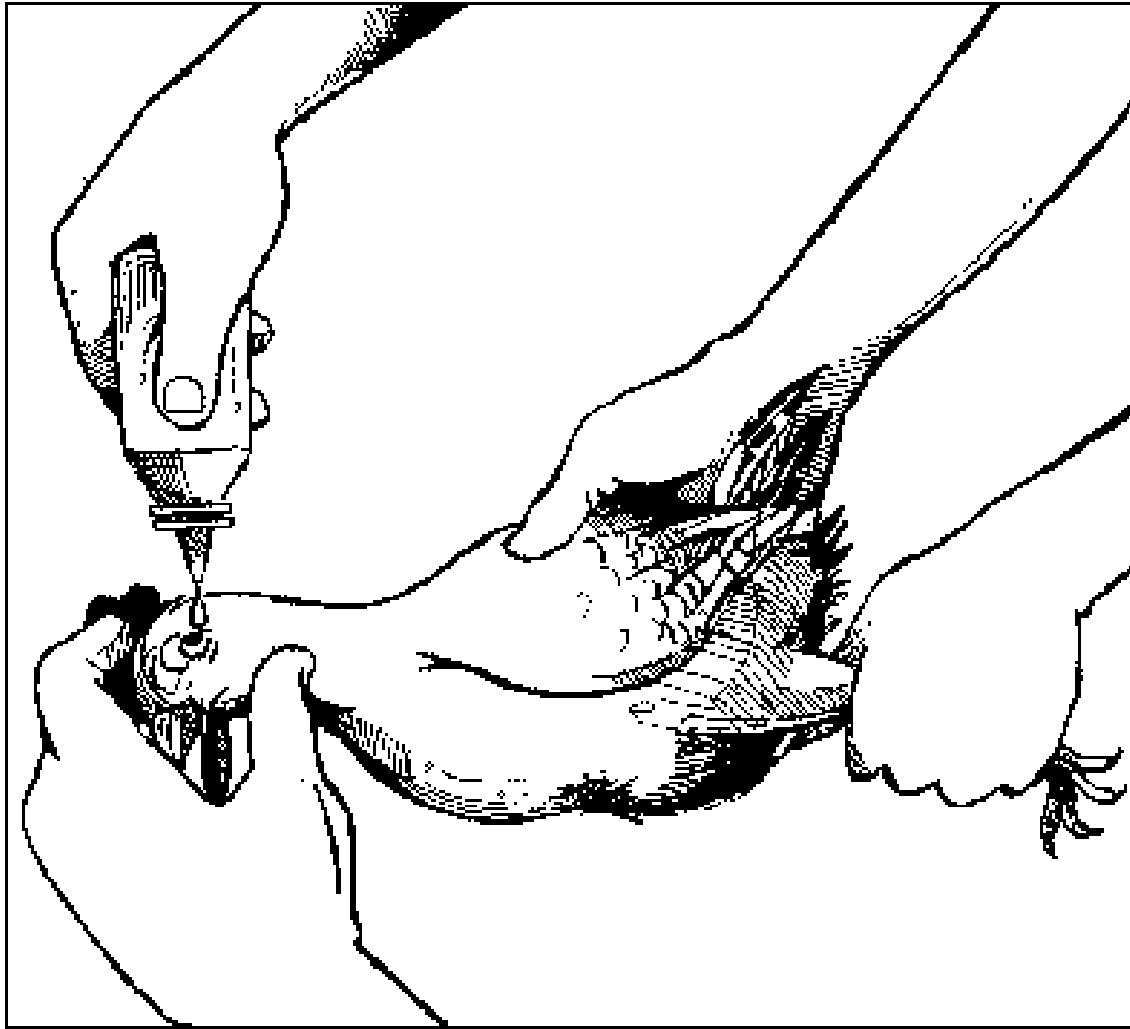
D. There are various methods used to administer vaccines.

1. Individually, birds are given injections, intranasally, intraocularly, or through the wing web.

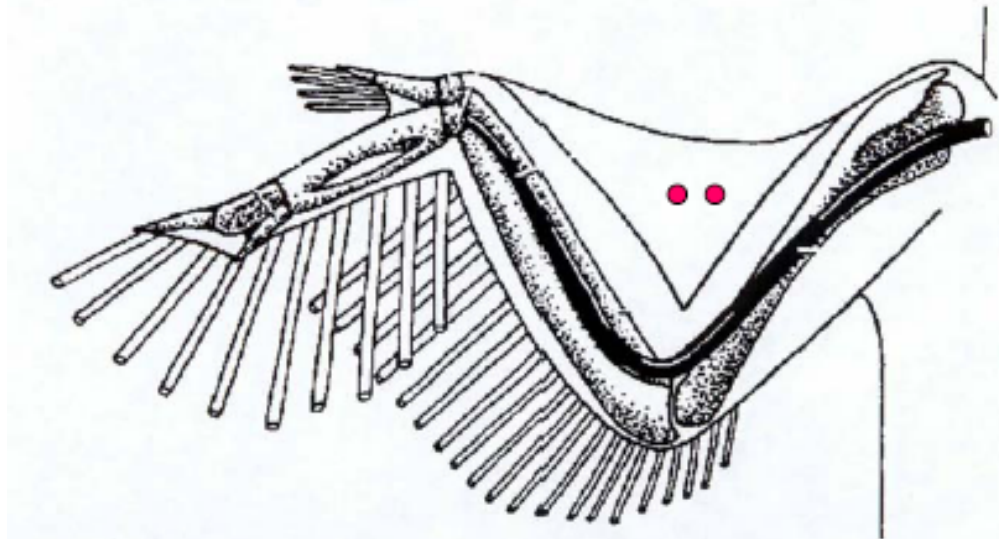
a. **Intranasal vaccination** is placement of the vaccine directly into the nose opening.



**b. Intraocular vaccination is placement of the vaccine directly into the eye.**



c. **Wing web vaccination** is the process of injecting the vaccine into the skin on the underside of the wing web at the elbow.



2. Vaccines given to an entire flock are given in the water, by spray, or by dust.

a. The method used depends on the disease to be controlled.

E. Individual vaccinations causes more stress on birds than flock treatments.



F. Preventing a disease is easier than controlling it.

1. The poultry flock should be checked daily for signs of disease.
2. Sudden drops in feed and water consumption are signs of health problems.
3. If more than 1% of the flock is sick there is probably a disease present.

4. Death rate is another common sign of disease.
  - a. The normal death rate for chicks is about 2% in the first three weeks.
    - i. Turkeys usually experience 3%.
  - b. After three weeks of age, the death rate should not be more than 1% per month.
  - c. A sudden increase in this rate is a sign of disease.



5. Some diseases can only be accurately diagnosed in a laboratory and very few can actually be diagnosed on the farm.
  - a. Contact a local veterinarian or Extension Office for advice on disease diagnosis.
  - b. Each laboratory will have different requirements for sample collection.

## Review/Summary

1. What are the sanitation practices for poultry?
2. What health management practices are used in poultry?
3. What is the proper way to vaccinate poultry?