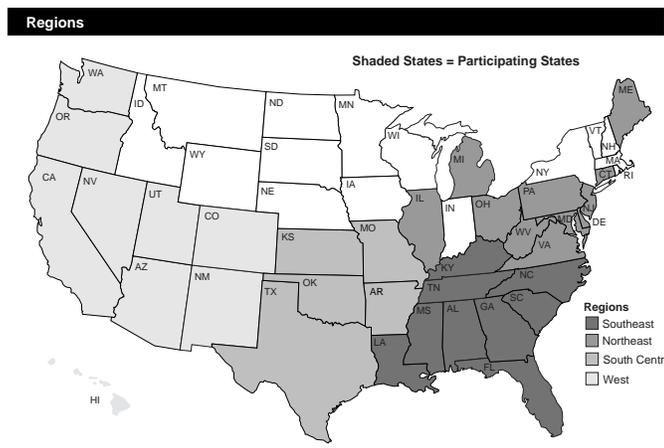


Highlights of Part II: Reference of Health and Management of Gamefowl Breeder Flocks in the United States, 2004

Poultry '04 is the National Animal Health Monitoring System's (NAHMS) second study of the U.S. poultry industry. Layers '99 was the first national study on poultry baseline health and management. Layers '99 estimated the prevalence and associated risk factors of *Salmonella enterica* enteritidis in U.S. layer flocks. For Poultry '04 NAHMS conducted a thorough assessment to determine the information needs of the poultry industry, researchers, and Federal and State governments. This needs assessment indicated a need for information regarding bird health, bird movement, and biosecurity practices of backyard flocks, gamefowl, and live poultry markets.

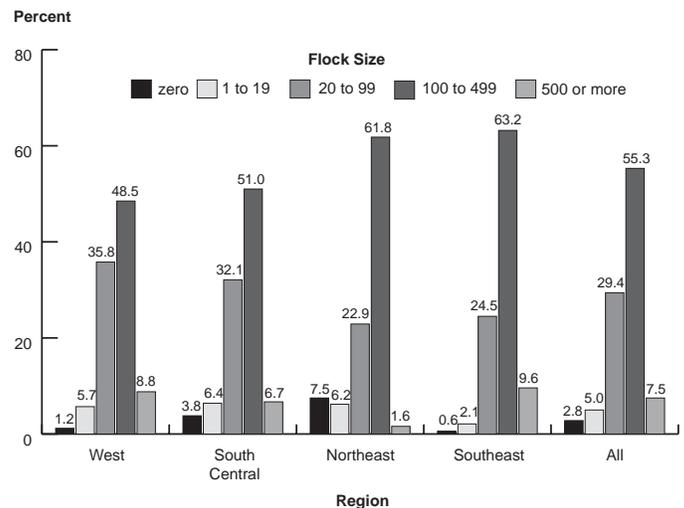
Data for Part II of Poultry '04 were collected via a questionnaire mailed to members of United Gamefowl Breeders Association (UGBA) State affiliates and to members of State associations not affiliated with UGBA. Population estimates were created for four regions (see map below).



Premises

Over half of premises (55.3 percent) had between 100 and 499 birds, and 7.5 percent had 500 or more birds (figure 1). Over half of all premises (57.0 percent) had birds that were able to leave the property.

Figure 1. Percentage of Premises by Number of Birds on the Premises and by Region



Health care

Overall, 18.2 percent of premises had used the services of a veterinarian in the previous 12 months. For large flocks, more than 4 out of 10 premises (42.0 percent) used the services of a veterinarian in the previous 12 months.

Nearly all premises (91.6 percent) obtained some medication in the previous 12 months. The most common source of medication was farm or feed store, followed by mail order or Internet.

Use of injectable vitamins ranged from 46.5 percent of premises in the Northeast region to 83.1 percent of premises in the West region. Over half of all premises (58.6 percent) vaccinated birds, ranging from 44.8 percent of premises in the Northeast region to 68.0 percent in the West region. Over three-fourths of large premises (78.3 percent) vaccinated birds.

About half of premises (47.1 percent) reported problems in their flocks with external parasites, and about one in four (23.9 percent) reported respiratory problems. The majority of premises reported that veterinary care, vaccinations, and medications were readily available.

Bird movement

Just over half of premises (51.5 percent) introduced new birds into the flock one or more times during the previous 12 months, and 9.8 percent introduced new birds five or more times. For premises that introduced new birds in the previous 12 months, 58.5 percent obtained new birds from within their county, and 53.4 percent obtained new birds outside their county but within their State. Very few premises with new birds (1.2 percent) obtained the birds from outside the United States.

Overall, 70.9 percent of premises had sold or gave away live birds in the previous 12 months. For premises that sold or gave away any live birds in the previous 12 months, 74.8 percent did so within their county, and 56.8 percent did so outside their own county but within their State. Interstate sales occurred on one-third of premises (33.7 percent). Although obtaining birds from outside the United States was very rare, international sales occurred on 14.3 percent of premises that sold birds.

Two-thirds of premises (69.9 percent) took birds to locations where other birds were present and returned them to the flock in the previous 12 months. Nearly half of premises (44.4 percent) did so five or more times. For premises that moved birds, two-thirds of premises (66.1 percent) moved birds to another State and returned them to the flock. International movement was rare (1.6 percent of premises).

Most premises (85.4 percent) transported birds by vehicle at some time during the previous 12 months. Nearly all premises that transported birds by vehicle used wooden or fine-screen containers (92.0 percent), either exclusively (68.3 percent of premises) or in addition to special recyclable containers with airflow cardboard (23.7 percent of premises). Transportation by air was uncommon (15.1 percent of premises, overall), although over half of large flocks (56.2 percent) had transported birds by air in the previous 12 months.

Mortality

Overall, 8.6 percent of birds died in the previous 12 months (excluding birds slaughtered for human consumption). The percentage of birds that died decreased as flock size increased.

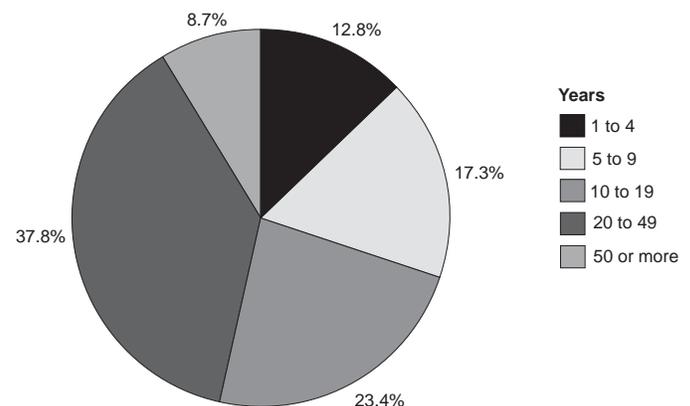
Incineration was the most common method of dead bird disposal (43.5 percent of premises), ranging from 32.3 percent of premises in the Southeast region to 51.7 percent of premises in the South Central region. Burial on the premises was the most common method used in the Southeast region (37.8 percent).

Producer characteristics

The most common reason for having birds was for fun/hobby, which ranked very high for 75.9 percent of premises. In addition, 65.3 percent of premises ranked family tradition and lifestyle as very high reasons for having birds.

Birds had been family-raised on the premises for 20 or more years on 46.5 percent of premises and for 50 or more years on 8.7 percent of premises, indicating a long tradition of having birds in these families.

Figure 2. Percentage of Premises by Number of Years Birds had been Raised by the Family on that Premises



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