For Immediate Release
U.S. Poultry & Egg Association

Contact: Gwen Venable, 678.514.1971, gvenable@uspoultry.org
Abby Hopkins, 770.635.9057, ahopkins@uspoultry.org

2019 USPOULTRY Human Resources Seminar: Reputation and Retention Matter Most

Tucker, Ga., May 2, 2019 – In an increasingly digital world, human resources professionals must keep up with current trends in order to bolster recruitment efforts and develop a reputable brand for their company. The 2019 USPOULTRY Human Resources Seminar addressed a variety of topics impacting human resources professionals in today’s environment. This year’s seminar was held at the Hilton Sandestin Beach Golf Resort & Spa.

As always, the seminar offered regulatory updates concerning the industry, and many of the sessions focused on recruiting and retaining employees. Phil Stroud, vice president of people services at Tip Top Poultry, Inc., discussed recruiting strategies in a rapidly changing job market. Throughout his presentation, he emphasized the need for a hiring process that is both compatible with the digital age and creates a career path for potential employees, making the poultry industry a promising career choice. “Make this their best chance, not their last chance,” encouraged Stroud. “Allow them to get their foot in the door, step up and start a career – not a job, but a career. That’s what we want to be offering.”

A panel discussion on attendance policies echoed similar sentiments regarding the relationship between promotional opportunities and employee retention, featuring Pat Allen, senior director of human resources at Pilgrim’s, Patrick Townsend, director of human resources at Mountaire Corporation, and Kerry Roemer, human resources director at Peco Foods. The panel discussion centered on giving employees opportunities to develop careers instead of simply offering “jobs.” Roemer’s presentation showed a high correlation between an employee’s attendance and the career opportunities available to their position, suggesting that the creation of financial and promotional incentives could encourage employees to maintain good attendance records.

The program also included a session surrounding the reputation of the poultry industry, focusing on the difficulty of working with an often mis-informed public. This panel featured Christa Leupen, public relations manager at Butterball LLC, Matt Spencer, director of human resources and safety programs at USPOULTRY, and Paul Bredwell, vice president of environmental programs at USPOULTRY. Each of their presentations stressed the importance of shifting public perception through transparency and constant improvement. Leupen pointed out that a company’s reputation is its first impression to the public, and a good reputation is therefore critical for employee recruitment and company growth. “You want to protect and promote your company’s reputation the same way you would your own,” Leupen remarked. “Reputation is all you have.”

In addition to the speakers and panels, this year’s seminar included time for networking, roundtables for focused topics and opportunities to ask questions of HR law professionals.
U.S. Poultry & Egg Association (USPOULTRY) is the all-feather organization representing the complete spectrum of today’s poultry industry, whose mission is to progressively serve member companies through research, education, communications and technical assistance. Founded in 1947, USPOULTRY is based in Tucker, Georgia.

Photo caption: Phil Stroud, vice president of people services at Tip Top Poultry, Inc., speaking at the 2019 USPOULTRY Human Resources Seminar
Photo caption (from left): Speakers Matt Spencer, director of human resources and safety programs at USPOULTRY, Christa Leupen, public relations manager at Butterball LLC, and Paul Bredwell, vice president of environmental programs at USPOULTRY, at the 2019 USPOULTRY Human Resources Seminar