USPOULTRY Approves New Board Research Initiative Grant Focused on Animal Welfare

TUCKER, Ga. – May 13, 2020 – USPOULTRY approved approximately $110,000 in funding for a new research grant addressing animal welfare in commercial broiler farms through the Board Research Initiative program. The topic and request for proposal were selected by the USPOULTRY board of directors. The Foundation Research Advisory Committee evaluated several research proposals and then recommended which proposal to fund to the board.

The research grant is as follows, and the research was made possible in part by donations to the USPOULTRY Foundation. The donations came from a wide range of poultry and egg companies, individuals and families to support the Foundation’s mission of funding industry research and recruiting students into poultry careers.

Effect of Variable Light Intensity Program on Broiler Gait Score, Stress and Central Positive Welfare in Commercial Broiler Farm
University of Arkansas (research grant made possible in part by an endowing Foundation gift from Simmons Foods)

Light intensity has been shown to affect the activity of birds, but most studies have focused on constant light intensities to determine their effect on welfare. This project will provide objective measures to evaluate the impact on broiler welfare (i.e.; lameness, stress and behavior) by light sources and intensity.

“This research will help measure bird behavioral and physiological outcomes, allowing this information to guide the industry’s efforts to continuously improve welfare for the birds entrusted to our care,” said Karen Christensen, Ph.D., senior director of animal welfare for Tyson Foods, and primary investigator for the animal welfare research.

Dr. Denise Heard, USPOULTRY director of research, commented, “This comprehensive animal welfare study will provide sound data to assist the industry with determining the optimum lighting program to improve overall broiler welfare.”

“USPOULTRY has consistently funded research projects to further advance animal care and husbandry across all sectors of our industry. This is another step in that process,” said John Starkey, USPOULTRY president.

The USPOULTRY Board Research Initiative was created by the boards of USPOULTRY and the USPOULTRY Foundation to address current issues facing the poultry industry. The USPOULTRY Board Research Initiative operates alongside the USPOULTRY comprehensive research program and augments the great success of the existing program by focusing additional resources toward defined areas of research.
USPOULTRY and its Foundation operate an extensive research program incorporating all phases of poultry and egg production and processing. Since the inception of the research program, USPOULTRY has reinvested more than $32 million dollars into the industry in the form of research grants. More than 50 universities and federal and state facilities have received grants over the years.

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U.S. Poultry & Egg Association (USPOULTRY) is the All Feather Association progressively serving its poultry and egg members through research, education, communications and technical services. Founded in 1947, USPOULTRY is based in Tucker, Georgia.