

BUCK-WHEAT BYTES



Guinea Fowl International
www.guineafowlinternational.org

A Date With Spring

In much of the U.S., it is now spring. GFIA member Dan MacNeice had these thoughts on the first day:

Miss Primavera, also known as Spring -- but decidedly "Miss" by any name -- is scheduled to look in on us today. Never known to set much store by dates, she may yet favor us with a timely appearance, showing up perhaps with frost in her hair, before shaking it out and bewitching us with a smile that thaws our wintry hearts.

She has been reminded of her appointment for quite some time now. Choruses of winter-aconite and early crocus have entreated her not to forget it and have retired exhausted from singing. The insistence of cardinals has intensified for weeks, and lawns spell out their version of her name in tentative green.

But there's no guarantee that having made it here on time she will stick around for more than a few hours. She is quite capable of storming off in a tantrum before the day is out, with a scarf of snow trailing from

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her heaving shoulders. Tomorrow, on the other hand, may see her back again as though she had never left.

Spring is the teenage daughter of the sun, whom she follows about through the year, hoping he will lead her to the easy life in a permanent home. There are places where she almost finds it and moves in, she believes permanently, only to grow bored after a ten-month stay and leave without notice to hitch a ride with the venturous winds from other regions.

Her visits here are brief and all the more treasured for that reason. Much of what passes for "spring" in these latitudes should more properly be called early summer: the onrush of heat and drought in late April or May

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Random Notes from the GFIA 2008 Conference

By Cindy Gibson

In the 2-½ days of this year's GFIA Conference, we saw many Power Point presentations and videos, received a very full folder of additional educational material, and had several hands-on exercises. Still, I found a few items mentioned randomly that I either didn't know, or which clarified something I knew a little about. You might find these "random notes" interesting, too.

We use chick-waterers for keets, not so much because of the risk of their drowning in an adult-

style waterer, but more importantly because a larger-volume waterer allows the water to stay too cold, which drops the keet's temperature. A keet that gets chilled, even from drinking cold water, may survive, but probably won't thrive.

Bedding: sawdust is a problem if it's not kiln-dried. Green hardwood bark can cause respiratory problems. The best beddings are pine shavings, rice hulls, peat moss. Never use cedar shavings; the aromatic acts as a growth retardant to poultry.

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Guinea Fowl Conference 2008

GFIA members, other poultry-keepers, USDA extension agents, and several other interested people gathered March 10-12 in Arkansas at the Heifer International Ranch to attend a Small-Scale Poultry Training conference organized by the National Center for Appropriate Technology and Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE).

Both the content and the Heifer International Ranch setting were educational and inspiring. SARE promotes sustainable (often, organic) farming practices; Heifer International helps impoverished families worldwide become more self-reliant through the gift of livestock and training in their care.



The group tours the Heifer Ranch facility.



Janis (Strutaway), Bob (Bigdog), Jeanne and Cody - under supervision of avian vet Dr. Dustan Clark, learning to do a post-mortem.



The group goes outdoors to look at various pastured poultry housing and ranging options.



In the classroom



Example of inexpensive, workable poultry housing practical in some parts of the world

Photos by Carl Schaler

Spring Worming Help

By Bob Kitchell, aka Bigdog

Spring is the time to start thinking about worming your flock. In some climates, spring and early summer are a time when parasite populations can grow exponentially and even healthy birds may succumb.

Bob Kitchell has researched the topic for us:

There are five classes of wormers. Most people rotate the first three classes. I don't know anyone who uses class IV or V.

Class I anthelmintics: Benzimidazoles and pro-benzimidazoles. These drugs exert their action on the intracellular polymerization of the tubulin molecules to microtubules. As the cellular functions are disrupted, the worms die. Examples of Class I compounds are albendazole, thiabendazole, fenbendazole, parbendazole, flubendazole, febantel, and thiophanate. Here is what to buy to use this class, Valbazen, Panacur or Safeguard. I buy the Safeguard 10% suspension from TSC (goat wormer) and use 2.5cc/gallon of drinking water. This class of anthelmintics is best for gapeworm; the other classes don't work too well for gapeworm.

Class II anthelmintics: Imidazothiazoles and tetrahydropyrimidines. These drugs act on the acetylcholine receptor in the neuromuscular system of the worms causing a persistent depolarization of muscle cells and a spastic paralysis of the worms, which are then removed by gut motility. Examples of Class II drugs are levamisole, pyrantel, and morantel. Here is what to buy to use this class wormer. TSC sells Tramisol or Levamisole in a powder. It is in a 20 oz. bottle that contains just a little powder. You are supposed to fill the bottle with water and then use the mixed concentrate to add to the drinking water. The mixed solution is good for 3 months. I wouldn't use that much concentrate in years. I use 1/4 teaspoon/gallon of drinking water for three days. The actual dosage is supposed to be closer to 1/3 of a teaspoon, but you can overdose your birds with this one. You can overdose with them all, but this one can be very dangerous.

Class III anthelmintics: Avermectins and milbimycins. The compounds act on the nervous system of the worms, causing flaccid paralysis and removal by gut motility. Class III consists of two distinct types of drugs, i.e. the erazines and the avermectins (ivermectin, doramectin, moxidectin), the latter having effects against some ectoparasites, e.g. mange mites. Most people use the ivermectin from this class. Many use the ivermectin injectable and put 5cc/gallon of water. I use Eqvalan, which is the same ingredient as the ivermectin injectable, but it is water-soluble. Same dosage, 5cc/gallon of drinking water.

Class IV anthelmintics: Salicylanilids and substituted nitrophenols. These drugs are typically used against bloodsucking parasites.

Class V anthelmintics: Acetylcholine esterase antagonists. Class V drugs are organophosphorous compounds, which are only used to a limited extent. Examples are dichlorvos and neguvon. Not many people use this class of wormer.

Rotation:

It is best to only use the exact class of anthelmintic that you need depending on the parasite you are targeting. This requires a fecal exam to determine exactly what you need to treat, and this can be done at home with a good microscope. The other method is what most people use. Worm 3-4 times per year and rotate wormers to prevent any anthelmintic resistance from building up.

(Provided with permission of Bert Young)

Chart below by Gail Damerow, courtesy of Backyard Poultry magazine, www.backyardpoultrymag.com.

Wormers					
Wormer*	Trade Name	Worms Affected			
		capillaria	cecal	roundworm	tapeworm
Albendazole	Valbazen	yes	yes	yes	yes
Fenbendazole	Safe-Guard Drench	yes	yes	yes	no
Ivermectin	Ivomec	yes	yes	yes	no
Levamisole	Prohibit Solution	yes	yes	yes	no
Oxfendazole	Synanthic	yes	yes	yes	no
Piperazine	Wazine	no	no	yes	no
*Only piperazine is approved for poultry. All others are "extra-label" requiring the approval of your veterinarian.					

As you can see, not all wormers will kill all kinds of worms. When giving wormers it is best to remove their water supply about midday the day before you are going to give it to them. The next day mix up the wormer and give it to your birds (this works best for me). That way they are thirsty and will get a good bit right off the bat.

If you are going to give orally make sure you do not drown the bird. Draw the wormer in the syringe and then draw some water to mix with it.

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destroys what the tears of spring have quickened, in some cases before we've even noticed what it was.

Any gardener can readily remember years in which she gave us a miss altogether, when the interval between winter and summer was merely a slapstick entr'acte in which daffodils, for instance, had to emerge from their frozen beds to bloom with their chins still on the ground, before being cooked to dry husks a few days later.

But in every year she leaves a token of her passing, a different one to each of us perhaps, but a definite signal that she was here. We realize at that moment she has left to change; the coy and moody Primavera is about to reappear as the sultry prima donna of summer.

Her farewell to me is always the same: a scent of ink, high in the chilly air and probably from the insignificant blossom of an unidentified tree, is a bittersweet indication that the daughter of the sun has grown. And that is so cool.

A Date With Spring, copyright Dan MacNeice 2001

Worming from page 3

I hold the bird between my legs facing outward. Open the beak and with a syringe with a 3" piece of aquarium air tubing on the end of it stick it down the throat on the right side of the trachea; then administer dosage.

How often you need to worm will depend on your individual circumstances. For most, twice a year will be fine: once in the spring before they start laying and in the fall some time before cold weather. Others will have to do it more frequently. If you don't really have a big problem with worms, then less frequently; but if you are having a problem, then

more frequently. Remember your eggs will not be fertile after you worm for about 10 days.

If you are having problems with worms, administer wormer, and then redose in 10 days.

Valbazen—1cc for peahen and 1.5cc for peacock orally one time (I would say use half for guinea) 5cc per gallon of water for 24 hours

Safe-Guard—Mix 3cc per gallon of water for 3 days

Ivomec—(Injectable)- .5cc (1/2cc) orally one time, good for 30 days

Ivomec—(water-soluble)- 5cc per gallon of water for one day. You have to get this from a vet and if you get the generic it is about 30% of the cost of Equalan.

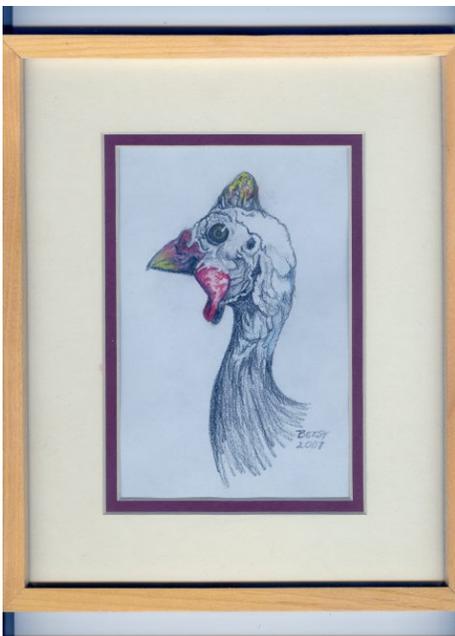
Wazine—I don't use this so just follow the directions on the bottle.

Levamisole—If you mix the whole bottle use 1oz per gallon of water. If you just use the powder use ¼ teaspoon per gallon. Use for 3 days.

Levamisole liquid Injectable 13.65%—5cc per gallon of water for 3 days

Here is a link to get a description of worms:

<http://www.msstate.edu/dept/poultry/disparas.htm>



Left, a drawing of one of Carl Schaler's guineas, done by Betsy Mahtani. The drawing was one of the auction items at the GFIA Conference this year.

Random Notes from page 1

One area of concern to those raising their birds organically is the use of treated lumber. Treated lumber is not permitted under the USDA definition of "organic," and it is not good practice for sustainable farming.

A new concept, gaining popularity, is "urban chickens," a movement to overcome resistance to and laws against poultry-keeping within city limits. www.urbanchickens.org has more information.

Ranging poultry have differing habits: birds originating from the jungle (such as chickens) prefer shelters and shaded areas; birds originating from open savanna (such as guinea fowl) prefer open areas and bright sunshine. For any type of poultry or gamebird, diverse vegetation (rather than just turf grass) is preferable.

Poultry are good at balancing their own diet if given free-choice. Offer three different mixtures in separate containers:

- Energy-rich
- Protein-rich
- Mineral-rich

Include grain (whole wheat, oats), fish/meat/bone meal, vegetables/grasses, salt and other trace minerals, shell grit and other grit. Whole-grain feeding improves gut health.

Broodiness in poultry is, in part, stimulated by the tactile experience of the eggs on the hen's skin. Her feathers will separate such that the eggs touch her bare skin. Part of her broody state involves her body temperature dropping a bit. Her own normal body temperature is too warm for incubation.

It is now believed that egg-turning during incubation serves no purpose for the last 1/3 of the incubation time; no need to keep turning eggs until 3 days prior to hatch. For guinea eggs, you can stop turning at Day 18.

If you're not a current member of Guinea Fowl International, please join! Benefits include Welcome packet, newsletter, educational materials, and you'll be supporting our work:

Supporting the responsible keeping and breeding of guinea fowl;
Educating on the care and habits of guinea fowl;
Assisting those interested in incubating, hatching, and keeping guinea fowl.

Write us at the address below; visit our website, or call 979-773-9100 for membership information.

2008 Membership Rates:

(all prices in U.S. dollars)

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