New Partners by Beth Nelson, President, Midwest Poultry Consortium

Midwest Poultry Consortium

The Midwest Poultry Consortium (MPC) is pleased to have the North American Gamebird Association (NAGA) as a sponsor. NAGA joins more than 100 other sponsors in supporting the MPC mission—“adding value to the poultry industry through research, education, and employee recruitment.”

The hallmark program of the MPC is the Center of Excellence Scholarship/Internship Program which gives students the opportunity to earn up to 18 credits over two summer sessions. Credits transfer to the student’s home university and are accepted toward graduation requirements. Tuition, housing, and other program expenses are funded by the MPC through industry sponsorships such as NAGA’s.

The COE began in the mid ’90s in response to land grant universities consolidating departments in an effort to cut costs. These actions resulted in the loss of all poultry science departments in our member states diminishing the emphasis on poultry science educational opportunities. Students were not exposed to the classes needed to realize the benefits and career opportunities within the poultry industry.

Recognizing the implications of these actions, the poultry industry created the Midwest Poultry Consortium specifically to ensure a well-qualified pool of prospective candidates for future employment. Thus, the Center of Excellence Scholarship Program was born and to-date over 370 students have received poultry science education through the program.

Over the past 20 years, the COE has evolved into a model program viewed as filling a unique niche in the poultry industry—providing students the opportunity to earn an emphasis in poultry science and serving as a conduit for those students to enter the poultry industry through company-sponsored internships and job opportunities.

The COE adapts to meet the needs of its members. For example, the MPC intensified its outreach to students interested in gamebird production by collaborating with Thomas Warner, Program Director of Kansas State University’s Wildlife and Outdoor Enterprise Management major. He arranged for MPC to give a presentation to students enrolled in the Gamebird Production and Management class to introduce them to the opportunity to apply for a COE scholarship.

MPC was also successful in establishing the Midwest Poultry Research Program (MPRP), a public/private research program created to address the research needs of the poultry industry through a competitive process designed to increase the efficiency and sustainability of the industry through integrated, collaborative research. While the funding source for this research program is no longer available, MPC continues to seek revived funding for this program. The MPRP contributed more than $6 million to poultry research, including projects aimed at issues related specifically to gamebirds such as Coccidiosis in Game Birds; Growth and Development of the Commercial Pheasant Reared Under Different Environmental Conditions; and Impact of Stocking Density on Growth and Yield of Commercial Pheasants. Reports for these projects...
minerals (Zinc, Copper, Manganese, Iodine, and Selenium). Trace minerals play an especially important role in the bird by supporting a variety of biological functions including bone development, immunity, skin and feather development. These trace minerals typically originate from an inorganic (mined) source such as zinc sulfate or manganese oxide. However these sources vary significantly in bioavailability, how much the bird can absorb. There has been recent interest in feeding chelated or organic trace minerals with higher bioavailability which the bird will be able to better absorb and utilize compared to inorganic sources. When fed to game birds, chelated trace minerals can improve feathering condition, bone development, as well as provide support to a healthy immune and reproductive system.

Summary
Kalmbach Feeds is committed to staying on the cutting edge of nutrition, providing the highest quality feeds that deliver improved bird performance and greater profitability for today’s game bird producers. Nutrition has significant impact on the birds overall performance, and with more new and exciting products coming to market more than ever before, only those companies dedicated to doing the research will have the products that game bird producers need for tomorrow.★

Anthony Quant is a Poultry Nutritionist with Kalmbach Feeds in Upper Sandusky, OH. Raised in Kentucky, he attended college at the University of Kentucky where he received a Ph.D. in Poultry Nutrition. Anthony grew up with a love for the outdoors and enjoys hunting and fishing in his free time.”