Pilgrim’s gifts $1 million towards feed mill modernization

Pilgrim’s, the second largest poultry company in the U.S. and headquartered in Greeley, Colo., has given the Department of Poultry Science $1 million to establish the Poultry Science Feed Mill Support Fund.

The Department of Poultry Science will use this gift to renovate and enhance the current feed mill located at the Poultry Science Research, Teaching and Extension Center. This gift, established through the Texas A&M Foundation, is the largest single gift ever given to the Department.

The feed mill renovations will benefit the Department’s research capacities by increasing the amount of feed the mill can produce. The pelletizing of feed, particularly for broilers and turkeys, is an essential part of the feed manufacturing process. The current pellet mill, a 1963 California Pellet Mill system, was refurbished and installed in 1986. In peak condition, the feed mill could process two tons of feed per hour; but now it operates at half-speed, producing one ton per hour. While the current system does produce quality feed, the reduced capacity does not meet the feed quantity demands of the Department’s expanding research programs. The new facility and equipment will increase pelleted feed production from one ton per hour to approximately five to seven tons per hour.

“This agreement between Pilgrim’s Corporation and the Texas A&M University represents a significant milestone for the Department of Poultry Science and the entire College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, as it will enable us to better serve our research and teaching missions and continue to be a leader in the poultry industry.”

Bill Lovette, Pilgrim’s Chief Executive Officer, Dr. David Caldwell, Poultry Science Department Head and Professor, and Dr. Mark Hussey, Vice Chancellor and Dean, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences.

(See PILGRIM’S on page 5.)
Howdy! Welcome to the Spring 2017 edition of the Texas Aggie Poultry. We’ve had a very exciting 2017 so far, and we hope you enjoy reading about the accomplishments of our faculty, staff and students.

For the past several years, we have been working to acquire funding to modernize our currently outdated feed mill at the Poultry Science Teaching, Research, and Extension Center. Our feed manufacturing capacity is limiting our ability to expand many of our programs. Earlier this Spring, Pilgrim’s contributed $1 million to the department to establish the Poultry Science Feed Mill Support Fund, which will enable us to proceed with the much-needed renovation. We are very grateful for their support.

Two new undergraduate departmental scholarships were established this year. Two years ago, we lost former student and dear friend, Dr. Samantha Pohl, just as she completed the Masters of Avian Medicine Program at the University of Georgia and was beginning her career as a poultry veterinarian. We made plans to develop a memorial scholarship in her honor. With tremendous support from the commercial and allied industries, as well as Sam’s family, friends, and professional colleagues, we were able to develop the Samantha K. Pohl ’08 Memorial Scholarship. We awarded this scholarship for the first time in April.

We were also fortunate to receive a new scholarship established by Henry (’53) and Jean Prochazka, longtime supporters of poultry science undergraduate students. The Jean and Henry Prochazka Endowed Undergraduate Scholarship is the second scholarship endowed by the Prochazka family, and was awarded earlier this spring for the first time.

The Poultry Science Association Annual Meeting will be held in July in Orlando, Fla. The department will be represented by 13 faculty members and 31 students, who will be delivering scientific presentations related to their undergraduate and graduate research projects. In addition, Dr. Jason Lee will be recognized as the 2017 recipient of the National Chicken Council Broiler Research Award.

We look forward to the Fall 2017 semester with anticipation of a significant increase in student enrollment. Our expected undergraduate enrollment will grow to 140 students and our graduate enrollment will increase to 63 students. For the first time in more than 10 years, our total student enrollment will reach more than 200 students. A huge thank you to our academic advisors, faculty, staff, and students who work tirelessly to recruit outstanding students.

Our department has many thing for which to be proud. In this edition of Texas Aggie Poultry, you will have the opportunity to read about several of our successful programs. Please reach out to me directly if I can be of assistance in any way.
Family Weekend (formerly known as Parents’ Weekend) was held April 8-9, 2017. The Department of Poultry Science held its Poultry Science Banquet to welcome parents and guests, and to celebrate scholarship and award presentations. Several poultry science students also were recognized during the College of Agriculture and Life Science’s Ag Convocation.

### Scholarships by the number

80 TOTAL SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED = $126,550

- **28** Department of Poultry Science
  - Scholarships in the amount of $56,550

- **18** Texas Allied Poultry Assoc.
  - Scholarships in the amount of $36,000

- **34** Texas Broiler Council
  - Scholarships in the amount of $34,000

An increase of 18 scholarships & $37,000 since 2016.

### Awards by the name

**Senior Merit Award**
*The highest award given to undergraduates in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences.*
- Alyssa Nakamura
- Lacee Popham
- Jill Wright

**Quisenberry Award**
*Awarded to the most outstanding Poultry Science student as voted on by Poultry Science faculty, staff and students.*
- Jill Wright

### Graduation by the number

- **Fall 2016 Poultry Science Graduates**
  - 12 bachelor of science
  - 5 master of science

- **Spring 2017 Poultry Science Graduates**
  - 19 bachelor of science
  - 1 master of science
  - 1 master of agriculture
The Samantha K. Pohl ’08 Memorial Scholarship was awarded for the first time this spring to Poultry Science junior Nikolas Faust. This scholarship was established in honor of former student Samantha Pohl who passed away from cancer in 2015.

This scholarship is given to poultry science undergraduate students at Texas A&M who, like Samantha, wish to become a poultry veterinarian. Funding for the scholarship was made possible by the generosity of industry leaders Merck Animal Health, Cobb-Vantress, Aviagen, Pecking Around Consulting, and Ceva Animal Health, along with professional colleagues, family and friends.

“This scholarship is important to us because Sam touched so many lives within the department,” said David Caldwell, Poultry Science department head. “We really owe a lot to the members of the industry who helped make this endowed scholarship possible.”

Samantha graduated with a bachelor’s in Poultry Science in 2008, a master’s in Poultry Science in 2010, and a doctorate in veterinary medicine in 2014, all from Texas A&M. She received a Master of Avian Medicine in 2015 at the University of Georgia. While at Texas A&M, Sam was actively involved in the department and served as Poultry Science Club President and Aggie Leadership Council Representative.

Memorial scholarship established, presented in memory of former student Samantha Pohl

In 2016, the Texas Allied Poultry Association (TAPA) established a new named scholarship on behalf of the generosity and support of Nutra Blend, LLC. Nutra Blend is a vitamin premix and feed additives company based in Neosho, Mo.

For the past two years, Nutra Blend has donated an all-inclusive vacation package to the live scholarship auction at the Texas Poultry Federation Annual Convention. Last year, the proceeds raised by the Nutra Blend vacation package resulted in two $3,000 scholarships being awarded to Poultry Science undergraduate students Heidi Ritter, pictured above, and Katie Burt.

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Prochazkaz endow second scholarship

Longtime supporters of undergraduate Poultry Science students Henry and Jean Prochazka, of New Braunfels, Texas, have endowed a second scholarship in the Department of Poultry Science. The Jean and Henry (’53) Prochazka Endowed Undergraduate Scholarship was established to help an incoming freshman or transfer Poultry Science student with educational expenses.

This scholarship was awarded for the first time in April to incoming freshman Madison Gibson, of Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

In 1997, the Prochazkas endowed their first scholarship, the Henry (’53)
A&M Foundation represents a coordinated effort to enhance the research, outreach, and educational capacity of the Department of Poultry Science at Texas A&M University for the benefit of the commercial poultry industry and the field of Poultry Science,” said Dr. David Caldwell, department head for poultry science.

Faculty and graduate student researchers will use the facility to investigate ways to maximize poultry nutrient utilization and feed manufacturing practices for the commercial poultry industry. Since feed costs represent the majority of the costs of producing poultry products, developing ways to feed poultry with maximum efficiency is essential to the sustainability of the poultry industry.

“The research provided by Texas A&M is invaluable to the poultry industry and we believe that this investment supports the long-term viability of our industry as we meet the challenges of feeding the world’s growing population,” said Bill Lovette, Pilgrim’s CEO. “We are confident that Texas A&M will continue to be a leader in agricultural education, embracing our history while encouraging growth and sustainable innovations.”

Texas A&M Poultry Judging Teams Compete

FALL 2016
The Texas A&M University Poultry Judging Team won 3rd place overall team at the 2016 National Collegiate Poultry Judging Contest held Nov. 7-8 in Fayetteville, Ark. Nine teams from across the nation competed in the two day competition which was hosted by the University of Arkansas. The team placed 3rd in the breed selection and 3rd in production. The team consisted of Micah Osburn, high point overall individual, Sarah Kruse, Jacob Leopold, Kate Wright and Leesa Bushard, alternate. The team is coached by Dr. Jason Lee and assistant coach Katie Bennett.

SPRING 2017
The Texas A&M University Poultry Judging Team competed in the 2017 US Poultry & Egg National Collegiate Poultry Judging Contest on April 6-7 in Baton Rouge, La. Texas A&M finished 3rd place overall. The team placed 4th in breed selection, 2nd in market products, and 2nd in production. Eleven teams from across the nation competed in the two day competition which was hosted by the Louisiana State University. The team consisted of Sarah Kruse, 2nd overall individual, Leesa Bushard, Nickolas Faust, Jacob Leopold and Halei Williams, alternate.

Carey receives Lamplighter Award
Dr. John Carey, professor in the Department of Poultry Science, was presented the U.S. Poultry & Egg Association’s annual Lamplighter Award at the International Poultry Expo, part of the 2017 International Production & Processing Expo.

The Lamplighter Award pays tribute to individuals for sustained and exemplary service to the poultry and egg industry. Carey was one of three individuals to receive this honor.

Carey has also served as an extension program leader and department head in the Department of Poultry Science. He was named a Fellow of the Poultry Science Association in 2014 for a career devoted to poultry research, teaching, extension, administration or the poultry industry. He also is a past president of the Poultry Science Association.
Thornberry selected as COALS Outstanding Alumni

Dr. Fred Thornberry, retired professor in the Department of Poultry Science, was chosen as a Texas A&M University College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Outstanding Alumni in October 2016.

This award recognizes and honors graduates for their outstanding leadership and significant contributions in agriculture, natural resources, life sciences or related areas.

Huffman named Texas A&M Distinguished Alumnus

William “Bill” Huffman ’53, a longtime lawyer and former chair of the city commission of Marshall, received the 2017 Texas A&M University Distinguished Alumnus Award in June. This award is the highest honor bestowed upon a former student of Texas A&M.

Huffman received his bachelors degree in Poultry Science. After service in the U.S. Army, he earned the highest grade on the March 1959 Texas Bar Exam and went into private practice.

Huffman’s service to Aggies includes mentoring students, making generous contributions to numerous Texas A&M programs and scholarships, sponsoring Association gifts for hundreds of students, and compiling a directory of the Class of 1953.

Berghman receives Patent Award

Dr. Luc Berghman, professor in Poultry Science, received a Patent Award from Texas A&M Technology Commercialization (TTC) during the organization’s Patent and Innovation 2017 Awards Luncheon held in College Station in May.

The Patent Award is presented to individuals whose inventions were granted patent protection by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office during 2016.

The patent for which Dr. Berghman was a co-inventor describes compositions and methods of enhancing immune responses against Influenza A and methods of reducing morbidity associated with an Influenza A infection in chickens.

Pillai presents TEDxTAMU talk

Dr. Suresh Pillai, professor in Poultry Science, presented “Are Microbes Responsible for Criminal Behavior?” during the 2017 TEDx TAMU Conference held in College Station in April. His presentation can be viewed at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y1ldMa9vpQM.

TED is an organization passionate about ideas worth spreading. TED has created a program called TEDx which enables organizations like Texas A&M to put on independent TED-like conferences. TEDxTAMU seeks to spread insightful, perspective-gaining, and deeper ideas to the community of Texas A&M University.

Former student Behl wins research award

Michelle Behl was awarded the B. S. Pomeroy Award for Avian Diseases Research at the 2017 North Central Avian Disease Conference (NCADC) held in conjunction with the Midwest Poultry Federation Convention in St. Paul, MN, in March. She presented her doctoral dissertation entitled, “Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza H5N2 in Naturally Infected Turkey Breeder Hens: Virus Distribution, Histopathology, and Host Immune Gene Expression.”

Michelle completed her doctorate under the direction of Dr. Mike Kugut and Dr. David Caldwell. She graduated in August 2016 and is currently employed by Select Genetics.
Youth Institute welcomes high schoolers

The 2017 Poultry Institute for Youth was held June 11-13 and gave high school juniors and seniors the opportunity to experience Texas A&M University and the Department of Poultry Science. The department welcomed 32 participants from Texas, Alabama and Arkansas. Information was presented on egg quality, anatomy and physiology, processing, embryology and poultry judging. This program offers high school students a chance to learn about the poultry industry and the department through hands-on activities.

Krueger Memorial Judging Contest held

The Department of Poultry Science welcomed 365 youth from across Texas to participate in the W.F. Krueger Memorial Judging Contest on March 4. Dr. W.F. “Doc” Krueger was a professor in the Department of Poultry Science for 53 years, during which time he coached the Poultry Judging Team to numerous championships. This year’s winning team was East Central FFA from San Antonio.

Students visit Pilgrim’s headquarters

In April, 10 undergraduate student members of the Department of Poultry Science Aggie Leadership Council (ALC) traveled with advisor Dr. Morgan Farnell and Department Head Dr. David Caldwell to Greeley, Colo. to Pilgrim’s headquarters for a leadership retreat. The day was spent with Pilgrim’s Chief Executive Officer Bill Lovette ’82 and his senior administrative team. This retreat was rewarding for both students and faculty, as details of business operations and corporate vision and strategy were discussed.

EXTENSION NEWS

Texas Commercial Egg Clinic

The Texas Commercial Egg Clinic was held May 3 in Bryan. Members of the Texas commercial egg industry heard invited speaker presentations about pullet management, water line and cool pad maintenance, dietary formulation, FDA Salmonella programs, avian influenza and biosecurity, and USDA rules for indemnification. The event was attended by approximately 90 people consisting of flock managers, allied industry, academia, and government agency personnel.

Market Poultry Workshop

The Market Poultry Production and Selection Workshop was held May 20 in College Station and welcomed 128 youth, parents and adult leaders. This program provides information about how to raise poultry for youth livestock shows in Texas. Topics discussed included housing, ventilation, lighting, feeding, and culling and selection of birds for the show.

McElroy rejoins department

Dr. Audrey McElroy rejoined the Poultry Science Extension Unit on March 1 as Professor and Extension Specialist. McElroy served in this same role from 2014 to 2015. She will serve as the lead organizer for the 2017 Texas Broiler Symposium set for Sept. 12-13 in Tyler.

Show broiler publication updated

The educational publication “How to Produce Broilers and Roast- ers for Show” was recently updated and is available for download at http://aglifesciences.tamu.edu/posc/wp-content/uploads/sites/20/2012/08/EPS012-How-to-Produce-Broilers-and-Roasters-for-Show-1.pdf.
THANK YOU TO THE 2016 POULTRY SCIENCE WEEKEND SPONSORS:

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- Texas Egg Council
- Texas Poultry Federation
- Texas Poultry Improvement Association
- Texas Turkey Federation