



OHIO POULTRY  
ASSOCIATION



# 2023

ANNUAL REPORT

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1</b> .....	A Message to Our Members
<b>2</b> .....	Poultry Health Programs
<b>3</b> .....	Legislative Initiatives
<b>4</b> .....	Youth Education and Workforce Development
<b>5-7</b> .....	Producer/Association Programs and Events
<b>8-10</b> .....	Marketing and Promotions

## 2023 BOARD OFFICERS

The 2023 leadership team included a diverse group of egg and poultry farmers and allied industry members across the state. Board members serve two-year terms on the OPA board. The 2023 officers included:

**PRESIDENT** Sandra Lausecker

**VICE PRESIDENT** Jeff Cutler

**SECRETARY** Drew Bowman

**OHIO EGG MARKETING PROGRAM CHAIR** Jeff Cutler

**OHIO EGG PROCESSORS ASSOCIATION CHAIR** Jay Rindler





# A MESSAGE TO OUR MEMBERS

As we reflect on the challenges and successes that came with 2023, we're reminded that our accomplishments are made possible through our strong partnerships with our members, allied industry affiliates and friends.

In 2023, OPA led the charge to continue an industry-wide effort to prevent highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) and stop the spread of Coryza. We continue to work together with state and federal agencies to ensure disease prevention standards are met. While we have worked to strengthen biosecurity protocols and protect our livelihood, our work is ongoing, and this remains a key priority.

Additionally, OPA led several notable initiatives in 2023 related to promoting career opportunities available in our industry, advocating for Ohio poultry issues at the state's legislature, and driving demand for egg, chicken and turkey products with consumers.

OPA is always seeking new and unique opportunities to promote our industry to Ohioans. At this year's Ohio State Fair, our team launched an all-new food stand, Devilishly Good, which exclusively featured 13 flavors of deviled eggs - from cotton candy to lemon meringue and maple bacon jalapeño, among others. The deviled eggs were a media sensation creating conversations locally and across the nation with media coverage reaching an audience of more than 260 million individuals.

Our team also continues to connect with young consumers to educate them about our industry. Through the Chickenology program, OPA led multiple virtual field trips, making it possible for students to get an inside look at Ohio poultry production and learn more about future career opportunities.

We encourage you to read through this report to learn more about our 2023 programs and initiatives. These accomplishments could not have been achieved without your forward-thinking leadership, your contributions and shared vision for advancing our Ohio egg, chicken and turkey farming communities. We are grateful for your continued support and look forward to sharing more success with you in 2024.

Sincerely,



Jim Chakeres  
OPA Executive Vice President



Sandra Lausecker  
OPA Board President



# POULTRY HEALTH PROGRAMS

The past year brought many challenges to our state with several detections of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI). Thanks to the hard work and cooperation of Ohio's poultry producers, Ohio Department of Agriculture and USDA, the response was quick and efficient. We are also grateful for Ohio poultry farmers' dedication to ongoing enhanced biosecurity practices.

## NATIONAL POULTRY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

OPA serves as the official state agency (OSA) for the National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP). In 2023, OPA continued to work cooperatively with the ODA Division of Animal Industry and USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service Veterinary Services (APHIS VS) as the Ohio administering state agency for the National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP). OPA also oversees the Avian Influenza Monitored Program for all NPIP Subparts.

OPA was proud to host the National NPIP office staff and other OSA representatives in June for the biannual meeting. The time was spent building cooperation among fellow OSAs and networking at a dinner held at the OPA office.

### IN 2023, OPA:

- Conducted **8 hatchery inspections**.
- Qualified 31 Subpart E hatchery breeder flocks and 2 Subpart J Upland Game Bird breeder flocks representing over **100,000 breeders**.
- Managed **29 Upland Game Bird propagators** operating on a 90-day monitoring program.
- Conducted **4 slaughter plant audits** for compliance with NPIP pre-movement testing.
- Completed **15 biosecurity audits** out of the total 42 audits completed every two years.
- OPA's Authorized Agents **tested 270 Subpart E (exhibition and backyard flocks) participants** for Pullorum and Avian Influenza, 43 of which are AI Clean and tested twice a year.
- Submitted approximately **212 upland and 804 backyard/exhibition PCR samples**.



New outlets for backyard flock outreach and education were utilized to spread awareness about HPAI and biosecurity best practices. During active HPAI control zones, OPA's three authorized agents who test the backyard NPIP participants were pulled out of the field for biosecurity reasons. Communication with participants was increased via phone and email. The NPIP backyard newsletter recipients' list was updated to more than 600 contacts with multiple newsletters being sent, achieving an average open rate of 50%.



# LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES

When the 135th edition of the Ohio General Assembly began in early January, many thought that the election results from November 2022, which provided Republicans with overwhelming majorities in the Ohio Senate and Ohio House and a sweep of all statewide offices (including the reelection of Governor Mike DeWine), would create a “non-dramatic” landscape at the Ohio Statehouse. Within the first week of the new legislative session, hope for that peaceful working environment quickly became an afterthought.

## UPHEAVAL IN THE OHIO HOUSE

With Republican Senate President Matt Huffman firmly in charge of a 26-7 Republican supermajority in the Ohio Senate, House Republicans also enjoyed a supermajority at a 67-32 seat advantage. However, even with a supermajority, House Republicans threw the operations of the House into dysfunction early in the session over the election of a new House Speaker. With outgoing Republican Speaker Bob Cupp being term-limited, Representatives Jason Stephens, Derick Merrin and Phil Plummer emerged as the leading candidates for House Speaker.

Representative Merrin was elected the new Speaker in an informal, Republican-only caucus poll. However, between Merrin’s non-binding selection by Republican caucus members, and the official House Speaker election in the first week of January, Stephens and his supporters reached a coalition deal with the 32 House Democrats that ultimately gave Stephens the Speaker’s gavel, creating hard feelings between the two camps. Challenges to routine procedures, lawsuits over campaign funds and other maturations between the two camps have made navigating the House exceedingly difficult for associations and groups such as OPA.

## POLICY

OPA was very involved in policy at the Ohio Statehouse and had a successful year for the industry. Despite the division in the Ohio House and the squabbles that developed between the House and Senate, the main policy objective for the new General Assembly was to formulate and pass a biennial budget bill by June 30, as required by the Ohio Constitution. After much negotiation between both chambers, House Bill 33 passed by both the House and Senate on June 30. OPA worked to support, and was ultimately successful, in helping to secure over \$10 million for the Multispecies Animal Learning Center at The Ohio State University. The new Learning Center will provide numerous benefits not only to the industry, but all Ohioans, through activities to promote research involving animal welfare and food production.

The disarray in the House, as well as the acrimonious relationship between legislative chambers, has resulted in a limited committee and session schedule. Legislation has been slow-moving, but OPA continues to monitor and review any new bill introductions as well as ODA and EPA rules and regulations that are considered or introduced.

## BALLOT ISSUES

In the last half of 2023, Ohio voters faced an August special election that would have raised the threshold to approve an amendment to Ohio’s constitution. The August special election was a proposal to change the voter approval level of any amendment to Ohio’s constitution from a simple majority (50% plus one vote) to 60%.

Proponents of this proposal said a change in the voting threshold was needed to stop the influx of “outside and special interests” from putting repeated issues before Ohioans to easily change our constitution. The proponents claimed that Ohio’s process to amend the constitution was too easy compared to other states and amending the constitution should be done rarely and deserved a higher level of distinction. The proponents also included in this language a requirement that any proposed ballot measure to amend the Ohio Constitution had to achieve a certain mandated level of signature in each of Ohio’s 88 counties (the current standard is 44 counties) to qualify to be placed on the ballot.

For a special election in August, turnout was especially high and Issue One was soundly defeated by Ohio voters by 57%-43%.



# YOUTH EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

In 2023, OPA staff attended a variety of events to educate students on the poultry and egg industry and to promote workforce development.

OPA has partnered with Educationprojects.org and OSU/4-H to facilitate multiple Chickenology workshops and virtual field trips geared toward school classrooms. Chickenology is presented by GrowNextGen and funded by the Ohio Poultry Association and the Ohio Soybean Council and offers STEM-based poultry curriculum through immersive-learning experiences.

The STEM-based poultry curriculum is focused on 8th grade Life Science standards and provides immersive experiences and real-time learning through scientific theory and methodology, data collection, introductory genetics, research and exploration and evidence-based solutions.

Additionally, OPA participated in the Ohio FFA Convention held in May at the Ohio State Fair & Expo Center. At the convention, OPA staff networked with FFA members to provide information on Ohio egg farming. The bird health team partnered with COSI to develop an exciting new interactive and educational game that was deployed at many events across the state, including the convention. Competition was fierce to see how fast one could reach the end before breaking all their eggs!

Throughout the year, OPA also attended multiple JA Inspire® career fairs across Ohio to reach students. This program allows high school students to explore a variety of career paths and connect with professionals. In 2023, OPA was able to connect with students in Mansfield, Canton, Wooster, Cincinnati, Dayton and Columbus areas to discuss the opportunities and education pathways within the industry.





# PRODUCER/ASSOCIATION PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

## OHIO STATE FAIR


### Food Stands

**TAKEOUT** NEWS EXCLUSIVES FAST FOOD RESTAURANTS GROCERY

### The Ohio State Fair Debuts A Baffling Dessert

*This is the oddest version of deviled eggs we've seen yet.*

By Dennis Lee · July 25, 2023 12:30 pm EST



**[614]**

Chocolate deviled eggs, Flaming Hot Cheetos burger highlight list of wild new Ohio State Fair foods

**MORNING AgClips**  
AMERICA'S #1 AG NEWS SOURCE


### Ohio Poultry Association Announces New Food Stand at 2023 Ohio State Fair

All-new Devilishly Good Food Stand will feature Cotton Candy Deviled Eggs and daily flavors throughout this year's fair

PUBLISHED ON JULY 20, 2023

EXCLUSIVES > REVIEWS

### We Made Chocolate Deviled Eggs. They Tasted Exactly Like You Would Expect



All Lifestyle Stories > Travel

### Devilishly Delicious: Ohio Poultry Assoc. serving up a unique 'eggs-perience' at this year's State Fair!

*The Ohio Poultry Association debuted more than a dozen unique deviled egg flavors at this year's State Fair!*

This year, in addition to the traditional food stand in the Taste of Ohio Café, the OPA team launched an all-new food stand, **Devilishly Good**, which exclusively featured **13 flavors of deviled eggs**, including the 2023 Ohio State Fair flavor, Cotton Candy.

OPA saw great success from both food stands. **Devilishly Good** received significant media attention, and OPA was featured on numerous TV segments filmed at the fair.

Overall, media coverage reached an audience of more than

**260 million individuals.**







## OPA Culinary Contests

The Egg-citing & Devilishly Good and Egg-stra, Egg-stra! culinary competitions took place on July 29. Egg-stra, Egg-stra!, where participants were asked to show off their creative egg dishes, presented two first place winners, one in the savory category and one in the sweet category. The Egg-citing & Devilishly Good competition asked participants to show off their deviled egg skills and prep 12 deviled egg halves with filling and garnishes.

## Sale of Champions

The annual Sale of Champions was held August 6. The Grand Champion Market Turkey, exhibited by Maria Henderson of Logan County, sold to Mark and Megan Kvamme and Family and Bernie Moreno, a candidate for U.S. Senate, for a bid of \$45,000 – a new record. The Grand Champion Meat Chickens, exhibited by Lily Conrad of Hancock County, were purchased by The Kroger Co., Gerber Poultry and Ohio Harness Horseman's Association for \$40,000 – a new record. The Reserve Champion Meat Chickens, exhibited by Natalie Fitzgerald of Cuyahoga County, were sold to Meijer, Inc. for \$33,000 – also a new record.

During the Sale of Champions Reception, OPA served a variety of hors d'oeuvres, and and took part in a celebration to honor retiring Ohio State Fair & Expo Center General Manager Virgil Strickler, alongside leaders of Ohio's commodity groups.





## Annual Banquet and Industry Celebration

On September 7, OPA hosted their Annual Celebration Banquet at the Renaissance Columbus Westerville-Polaris Hotel. Earlier in the day, friends, colleagues and industry leaders also gathered for OPA's Golf Outing at Topgolf.

At the event, OPA's inaugural Green Feather Award was presented to two organizations, Trillium Farms of Hartford, Ohio, and Cooper Farms of Fort Recovery, Ohio. Both farms have implemented innovative sustainable practices and prioritized environmental responsibility within their communities.

Additionally, Jim Chakeres was recognized for his 20 years of exemplary leadership as the association's executive vice president.



## Ohio National

The 2023 Ohio National Poultry Show was held in November at the Ohio Expo Center in Columbus. This year's Ohio National Poultry Show commemorated the 150th anniversary of the American Poultry Association and featured nearly 11,000 entries, including ducks, geese, turkeys, bantams and large fowl.

OPA collaborated with the Ohio Poultry Breeders Association, USDA, and Ohio Department of Agriculture to introduce enhanced biosecurity measures at the Ohio National. New signage, highlighting critical biosecurity and HPAI information, was strategically positioned across the event area, including high-traffic zones such as restroom areas, entry points, meeting rooms and the cafeteria. Each paid attendee also received informative handouts upon arrival.

# MARKETING & PROMOTIONS

In 2023, OPA executed integrated communications campaigns to promote Ohio's egg, chicken and turkey farming communities during key times of the year.



**HEALTHY NEW YEAR:** OPA ran a social media advertising campaign to emphasize the value and nutrition of eggs.



**REACH**  
465,049



**LINK CLICKS**  
12,510

**HALF A DOZEN WAYS  
TO MAKE THE MOST  
OF HARD-BOILED  
EASTER EGGS**

**EASTER:** Easter-themed posts included half a dozen ways to use hard-boiled Easter eggs and recipes to celebrate the holiday, which were promoted through a robust social media advertising campaign, including a sweepstakes.



**REACH**  
1,136,589



**LINK CLICKS**  
22,385



**SWEEPSTAKES  
ENTRIES** 640



**NATIONAL EGG MONTH:** OPA ran a social media advertising campaign to promote recipes, egg nutrition and the farmers who produce the products.



**REACH**  
339,533



**LINK CLICKS**  
4,936



**FOR THE LOVE OF EGGS:** A digital campaign that encouraged Gen Z and Millennial audiences to purchase eggs and positioned eggs as convenient and affordable.



**REACH**  
828,034



**LINK CLICKS**  
4,537





**BACK-TO-SCHOOL:** OPA executed a back-to-school dinner refresh blogger workshop, a robust social media advertising campaign, a consumer e-blast sent to 16,000 subscribers, and a printable first-day-of-school poster for families to use.



**REACH**  
394,235



**LINK CLICKS**  
8,697



**THANKSGIVING:** Outreach included media relations, blogger partnership, enter-to-win sweepstakes, and social media promotions. As part of the social media campaign, OPA developed video content featuring Drew Bowman of Bowman & Landes and Cole Cooper of Cooper Farms.



**REACH**  
498,122



**LINK CLICKS**  
16,769



**SWEEPSTAKES  
ENTRIES** 756



**HOLIDAY:** Promoted family-friendly recipes, including breakfast, brunch and dessert dishes on social media and through email marketing.



**REACH**  
603,007



**LINK CLICKS**  
17,039

## WORLD EGG DAY

On October 13, World Egg Day, First Lady Dr. Jill Biden visited Outward Farms in Raymond, Ohio, as part of the Biden administration's Investing in America Workforce Hub program. Sandra Lausecker, founder and CEO of Outward Farms and OPA president, showed Dr. Biden the organic egg process through an immersive farm tour. Emily Metz, president and CEO of the American Egg Board, and Jim Chakeres, executive vice president of OPA, were also in attendance at the event.



## BLOGGER/INFLUENCER ENGAGEMENT

In 2023, OPA continued to strengthen its partnerships with prominent bloggers and influencers to promote and increase demand for eggs and poultry products. In addition to recipe development, OPA hosted three influencer workshop events.



**OUTDOOR ENTERTAINING:** In honor of Turkey Lovers' Month and the summer grilling season, OPA hosted five influencers for an Outdoor Entertaining Workshop at the OPA office in June.



**NUMBER OF INFLUENCER FOLLOWERS:** 73,600



**REACH**  
10,579



**DINNER REFRESH:** Four influencers learned about the different types of eggs and hen housing and got inspiration for new back-to-school dinner recipes in September.



**NUMBER OF INFLUENCER FOLLOWERS:** 46,580



**REACH**  
8,000



**THANKSGIVING:** OPA hosted four influencers in November in honor of National Deviled Egg Day and the upcoming Thanksgiving holiday.



**NUMBER OF INFLUENCER FOLLOWERS:** 383,501



**REACH**  
59,568

OPA was proud to work on behalf of members to lead many successful initiatives, educate consumers and advocate for Ohio's poultry farming community in 2023, and looks forward to continued success in the future.

For more information about this report or specific initiatives, contact OPA at:  
(614) 882-6111 [www.OhioPoultry.org](http://www.OhioPoultry.org) [www.OhioEggs.com](http://www.OhioEggs.com)

