



**OHIO POULTRY**  
ASSOCIATION



2022

**ANNUAL  
REPORT**



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 1** 2022 Board Officers
- 3** Letter from Jim Chakeres and Sandra Lausecker
- 4** Poultry Health Programs / HPAI
- 6** Workforce Development
- 8** Youth Education
- 10** Legislative Initiatives
- 12** Programs and Strategic Partnerships
- 14** Consumer Marketing Initiatives
- 16** Looking Ahead

## 2022 BOARD OFFICERS

The 2022 leadership team included a diverse group of egg, chicken and turkey farmers, and allied industry members across Ohio. Board members serve two-year terms on the OPA board. The 2022 officers included:

**Sandra Lausecker**  
**President**

**Doug Mack**  
**Vice President**

**Jeff Cutler**  
**Secretary**

**Jeff Cutler, Chair**  
**Ohio Egg Marketing Program**

**Jay Rindler, Chair**  
**Ohio Egg Processors Association**

# A MESSAGE TO OUR MEMBERS

---

This past year has brought many unpredictable challenges to Ohio's egg, chicken and turkey farming communities. For the second time in the past decade and on the heel of the COVID-19 pandemic, Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) left a devastating impact on our industry – one that we work to avoid daily. At the end of 2022, 47 states had experienced HPAI, with a total of 57.8 million birds impacted.

But this challenge allowed our industry to show its resiliency and adaptability. Ohio egg, chicken and turkey farmers have worked together to add a layer of protection against our flocks – further strengthening our biosecurity measures, working in close collaboration with partners like the Ohio Department of Agriculture, and maintaining strong leadership and constant communication with our farmer members – which has ultimately resulted in a minimized impact within the state.

Over the course of the year, OPA also has leveraged poultry health programs, youth education and consumer marketing to advance their business and better serve our members and consumers.

Here are some of the highlights of our work:

- Established bird health programs and enhanced biosecurity to protect our flocks;
- Explored other opportunities to grow workforce development among our member groups;
- Continued evolving youth education programs, such as the Chickenology curriculum in collaboration with GrowNextGen;
- Advocated for Ohio poultry issues with the state's legislature; and
- Engaged with consumers in Ohio and nationwide through earned media, social media, blogger engagement, partnerships and sponsorships.

While we are still facing challenges with HPAI, the achievements we have made thus far could not have been made without the continued support of our farming communities. We are grateful for your support and look forward to another year of growth and progress.

Sincerely,



Jim Chakeres



Sandra Lausecker



## POULTRY HEALTH PROGRAMS

This past year proved to be stressful for Ohio's poultry producers with the ever-looming presence of HPAI. Ohio confirmed this virus in eight backyard flocks and one commercial layer flock in 2022. However, thanks to Ohio's poultry producers' prompt response and dedication to enhanced biosecurity, HPAI did not spread laterally and helped prevent cases from being much worse.

OPA serves as the official state agency for the National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP) and is responsible for administering the Initial State Response and Containment Plans for H5/H7 Avian Influenza and the Upland Game Bird surveillance programs. OPA works cooperatively with staff from the Ohio Department of Agriculture's (ODA) Division of Animal Industry, Ohio Department of Agricultural Diagnostic Laboratory, and USDA/APHIS/VS to ensure the standards of the programs are being met.

OPA would like to thank the Ohio and federal response teams along with all poultry producers for all their hard work responding to and preventing HPAI.

On December 2 during the OPA banquet and annual meeting, OPA partnered with ODA and USDA to present the timeline of response for Ohio's commercial layer case. Many discussions and meetings were had on HPAI preparedness and biosecurity plans.

OPA continued with regularly scheduled programs in 2022, such as the annual Ohio Egg Quality Assurance Program (OEQAP) training. The program outlines stringent guidelines for the production, processing and transportation of eggs. OPA in conjunction with ODA held a certification of participation and biosecurity training session in November.

POULTRY HEALTH  
**PROGRAMS**



## NATIONAL POULTRY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

In 2022, 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 NPIP. OPA also oversees the Avian Influenza Monitored Program for all NPIP Subparts.

### In 2022, OPA:

- Conducted **eight hatchery inspections**
- Qualified **27 Subpart E hatchery breeder flocks** and **2 Subpart J Upland Game Bird breeder flocks** representing over 100,000 breeders
- Managed **26 Upland Game Bird** propagators operating on a 90-day monitoring program
- Tested **253 Subpart E** (exhibition and backyard flocks) participants for Pullorum and Avian Influenza, 45 of which are AI Clean and tested twice a year
- Conducted **four slaughter plant audits** for compliance with NPIP pre-movement testing
- Submitted approximately **24,500 ELISA**, **2,250 AGID** and **1,300 PCR AI** samples in Ohio's commercial poultry production
- Submitted approximately **240 upland** and **845 backyard/exhibition PCR samples**

Minimal backyard flock testing was done for 2022 due to the halt in testing during the spring and fall HPAI outbreaks to reduce farm-to-farm movement.

OPA continued to expand education outreach to backyard flock owners on the importance of biosecurity. OPA partnered with OSU extension on new programs such as creating short biosecurity videos to be promoted via social media with the videos receiving thousands of views. At the two largest poultry shows in Ohio, the Ohio State Fair and Ohio National Poultry Show, OPA had hands-on biosecurity displays demonstrating the importance of biosecurity to youth poultry exhibitors.

A "News" section was added to the OPA Backyard Flocks landing page on OhioPoultry.org, which was periodically updated with biosecurity information and facts sheets for the public. OPA increased the distribution frequency of a Backyard Flock newsletter to once a month, which reached nearly 500 backyard flock owners and is consistently the most visited page on OhioPoultry.org.

The bird health programs manager also attended and spoke at events such as the 2023 Fair Managers Annual Convention, NPIP meeting in Dallas, TX, and Ohio's Spring Youth Poultry Clinic.





# WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

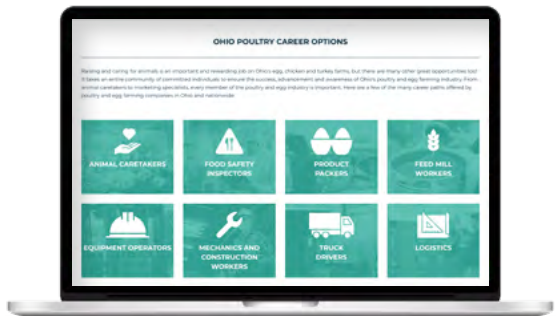
Expanding workforce development initiatives to highlight various careers within the industry continued to be a priority for OPA in 2022.

At the Ohio State Fair's Poultry Barn and the Ohio National, large displays were featured, which showcased career opportunities available to those interested in getting involved in the industry. OPA Bird Health Programs Manager Jenna Gregorich also attended the Ohio Youth Poultry Clinic, where she shared workforce development materials with approximately 250 youth who were in attendance.

Additionally, OPA hosted a booth at the FFA convention held on May 5-6 in Columbus, with staff members and HR representatives from Weaver Eggs and Cooper Farms on hand to discuss career opportunities. The FFA convention draws nearly 9,000 attendees each year.

At these events, OPA handed out stickers, cups and koozies featuring a QR code that directed attendees to the OPA Careers landing web page. The page continues to be updated with featured job postings provided by member companies.

A monthly Sub E newsletter was also distributed to approximately 475 people, which included links to the OPA Careers landing page. OPA continues to seek new and creative ways to educate Ohioans about the many career opportunities available within the industry.



# WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT





# YOUTH EDUCATION

Through innovative programming, OPA reaches today's youth to further educate them on farming and the egg, chicken and turkey industries.

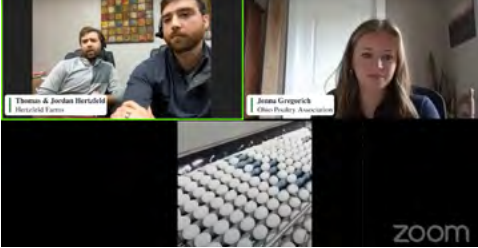
## COSI FARM DAYS

In August, OPA supported the Center of Science and Industry (COSI)'s annual Farm Days event, where 14,830 attendees learned more about the egg hatching process. The OPA Hatching Unit was on display once again this year, with over 14,830 people in attendance.



# YOUTH EDUCATION





## Additional virtual field trips hosted this past year included the following:

- Breeding the Best Flock focused on how selective breeding works, how poultry is raised, and which traits are desirable. The virtual field trip reached over 456 students in 24 classrooms during the live broadcast and was shared with an additional 49 classrooms afterward.
- A Turkey's Best Life Ever focused on ideal environments to raise turkeys, giving students an inside look at two turkey facilities. During the live broadcast, the virtual field trip reached over 460 students in 29 classrooms and was shared with an additional 55 classrooms.
- OPA hosted a virtual field trip with OPA member Hertzfeld Poultry Farms of Grand Rapids, Ohio. Thomas and Jordan Hertzfeld showed participants their fourth-generation egg farm and the process of how an egg makes its way from hen to home. Jenna Gregorich served as the moderator, with 26 classrooms and 334 students in attendance.
- OPA hosted two Chickenology Virtual Field Trips in partnership with Education Projects, GrowNexGen, Ohio Soybean Council and Virtual Farm Trips. The program allowed students to take a tour through the genetic history and potential future of poultry and food production.

The Chickenology curriculum and associated resources can be accessed through the classroom tab at [OhioPoultry.org](http://OhioPoultry.org).

## COMMUNITY EDUCATION ENGAGEMENT

OPA contributed to the Ohio Farm Bureau's annual Ag Bag Program in March, which reached over 5,000 students in several counties. OPA also honored requests from a variety of 4-H groups throughout the year with recipe cards, bird health information and youth education materials.

## CHICKENOLOGY

In 2021, OPA initiated a partnership with GrowNextGen, Ohio Soybean Council, EducationProjects.org and The Ohio State University Extension/Ohio 4-H to assemble an exciting curriculum to engage young minds on how evolution and genetics impacts the food they eat today and to get them thinking about potential poultry careers.

This STEM-based curriculum was finalized in 2022, in addition to the completion of several resources to engage teachers and students, while focusing on 8th grade Life Science standards.

### As of 2022, OPA has:

- Trained 50 teachers who throughout their careers are expected to reach 20,000 students.
- Supported these teachers with hundreds of dollars in much-needed supplies and equipment to be used in their classrooms to teach the curriculum.
- Hosted 3 virtual field trips, reaching more than 700 classrooms and over 12,000 students live, with countless more able to view on demand after the end of the livestream.
- Produced 3 additional career videos highlighting a variety of companies and careers throughout Ohio's poultry industry.
- Developed 3 e-learning courses designed to both support the curriculum and develop career awareness in the poultry industry.



## LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES

In 2021, the politics surrounding the drawing of Statehouse District Maps led to a stalemate between the Supreme Court of Ohio and the legislature, which continued into 2022. As a result, Ohio conducted two primary elections. On May 3, 2022, Ohioans voted for all statewide candidates and Congressional candidates, as well as local candidates and issues. On August 2, 2022, Ohioans voted for all the Senate and House seats in the Ohio General Assembly. Multiple elections caused Statehouse activity to virtually stop for months during the summer and into the fall.

### ELECTION RESULTS

Following months of campaigning, fundraising, targeted voter mailing pieces, and a wave of television advertising, the 2022 General Election resulted in Ohio Republicans adding to super majorities in both the Ohio House of Representatives and the Ohio Senate. In the Ohio House, Republicans ended up with a 67-32 seat advantage and the Ohio Senate Republicans hold an unprecedented 26-7 advantage for the 135th General Assembly. The Grand Old Party also swept all statewide elected offices, and Gov. Mike DeWine led the ticket with a resounding 25-point victory over his Democratic challenger, Nan Whaley. Ohio Republicans maintained control of the Ohio Supreme Court. Additionally, Republicans captured one of the most closely-watched campaigns that had national implications, with J.D. Vance taking down Democrat Tim Ryan for a U.S. Senate seat. Republican incumbents in the other four elected statewide offices each won re-election to a second four-year term over their lesser-known and often vastly underfunded opponents.

LEGISLATIVE  
INITIATIVES

## POLICY ISSUES

### This past year, OPA continued to advocate for legislative issues at the Statehouse.

OPA was successful in advocating for increased funding for the Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory (ADDL). OPA worked with the General Assembly and Governor DeWine's Administration to secure \$71M to build a new lab, which will allow for expanded operations. OPA also secured funds of roughly \$3M through the Ohio Controlling Board to help with the HPAI outbreak in the fall. Those funds were not originally allocated, but OPA worked with ODA and the DeWine Administration, and the funds were approved and released to help with the crisis.

On the tax front, HB 95 [Susan Manchester (R) & Mary Lightbody (D)] allows an income tax credit for beginning farmers/related businesses. OPA submitted a letter of support on this bill and worked with the sponsor on last minute changes and to remove threats to derail the bill from other amendments not related to the agriculture industry. The bill was signed by the Governor and became effective April 18, 2022.

OPA worked with Ohio Treasurer Robert Sprague on HB 440 to make needed changes to raise the lending cap under the Ohio Ag-LINK program. HB 440, sponsored by Representatives DJ Swearingen and Andrea White, expands the state's current efforts to provide access to low interest working capital, by partnering with local financial institutions to further utilize Ohio's current \$20 billion portfolio to assist family farms, especially young farmers continuing to take over their family's businesses. HB 440 passed both chambers and was signed by Governor DeWine.

Additionally, OPA and other commodity groups supported the Ohio Association of Foodbanks' effort to secure increased funding through ARPA funds that helped many Ohio residents gain greater access to food, including egg, chicken and turkey protein products.

Finally, OPA worked with numerous state agencies in 2022 to try to remedy supply chain issues in the industry. OPA worked with ODOT on weight limits, ODA on testing issues, and EPA on multiple issues throughout the year to ensure OPA was engaged in all aspects.

OPA continues to work with our national organization partners to monitor federal legislation and advocate for Ohio egg, turkey and chicken farms and processing, in addition to maintaining strong relationships with state and federal regulatory agencies.





# OPA PROGRAMS AND STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

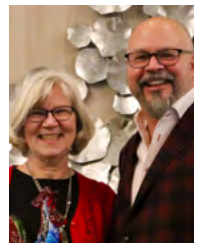
In 2022, OPA initiated several programs and partnerships to further expand upon the stories of Ohio's poultry industry.

## ANNUAL BANQUET AND GOLF OUTING

OPA held its Celebration Banquet and Annual Meeting on Friday, December 2, at the Renaissance Columbus Westerville-Polaris Hotel. Earlier that day, friends, colleagues and industry leaders also gathered for OPA's Golf Outing at TopGolf.

Two individuals and one organization were honored for their contributions to the Ohio egg and poultry industry at the awards banquet, including:

- **Golden Egg Award:** Kurt Lausecker
- **Industry Partner Award:** Capitol Advocates
- **Career Achievement Award:** Dr. Susan Skorupski



OPA PROGRAMS AND STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS



## OHIO STATE FAIR

The 167th Ohio State Fair took place July 27 to August 7, 2022. OPA returned to the Taste of Ohio Café for the first time in three years. The OPA food booth opened daily at 7 a.m. for breakfast, serving eggs and bacon (in partnership with the Ohio Pork Council) to fairgoers. Throughout the fair's duration, over 8,000 chicken, turkey and egg dishes were sold through the OPA's food booth. OPA's featured item, the Lemon Meringue Deviled Egg, was a success among exhibitors and fairgoers alike, with over 1,500 sold. The eggs also received significant media attention, including mentions on 10TV, Good Day Columbus, NBC 4 Midday, WDTN-TV, Fox 8 News and Columbus Underground.

OPA hosted two culinary competitions at the fair. 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 live competition asked participants to show off their deviled egg skills and prep 12 deviled egg halves with filling and garnishes.

To keep the conversation going about OPA's involvement at the Ohio State Fair, OPA shared a variety of content on social media throughout the fair, reaching an audience of 298,388. Additionally, OPA featured three Snapchat filters - at the Taste of Ohio Café, the poultry barn and the chick and poultry hatching unit - which garnered 28,345 views and 750 uses.

## OHIO STATE ATHLETICS

In the fall, OPA partnered with Ohio State Athletics to sponsor Ohio State sports teams. The Buckeye football season featured promotions from OPA, including advertisements in the Gridiron Guide and football program, advertisements on OhioStateBuckeyes.com, and signage inside Ohio Stadium.

Each game day throughout football season, OPA shared "Tailgate Treat" recipes on the Ohio State Buckeyes Facebook and Twitter pages.

OPA was also included in tailgate tips push notifications on the Ohio State Buckeyes app every Friday before home games.



## OHIO NATIONAL POULTRY SHOW

The Ohio National Poultry Show took place on November 12-13 at the Ohio Expo Center and State Fair, with OPA staff members serving as volunteers. Over 7,000 birds were entered in the show, attracting thousands of visitors and exhibitors from across the country.

OPA Executive Vice President Jim Chakeres served as one of the judges, and OPA staff members were on hand to share biosecurity information. This year, OPA debuted a new biosecurity display, which informed attendees on best practices to keep birds healthy at the show and at home.

# CONSUMER MARKETING

OPA has been able to further develop its digital and communications presence through multiple integrated campaign strategies, as well as through special project funding support from the American Egg Board.

## 2022 CAMPAIGN IMPACT SNAPSHOT

OPA reached **46M consumers** & **9.8M impressions** over the course of the year through integrated campaigns



OPA reached over **11.9M people** through social media content and advertising

OPA ran **NINE campaigns**, including National Nutrition Month, Summer Food Safety and Grilling, Back-to-School and Thanksgiving



**EIGHT influencer partnerships** generated numerous new recipes and reached an **audience of 630K**



OPA received **28.8K video views on YouTube**, which included videos on workforce development, egg farming and recipes



OPA distributed **FIVE consumer e-blasts** to 16K subscribers, with an average open rate of **20%**



OPA's websites generated **72.6K unique visitors**, largely supported by digital promotions and influencer partnerships



OPA secured 287 media mentions reaching an **online audience of 102.9M** through TV, radio and newspaper interviews

# CONSUMER MARKETING



## HOLIDAY MOVIE INSPIRED RECIPE CAMPAIGN

To leverage the busy holiday season and increase the demand for eggs, OPA promoted nine unique egg-themed dishes to pair well with popular holiday movies. Some of those pairings included: Fried Rice with A Christmas Story, B.E.L.T. Pizza with Home Alone, and Classic Cooked Eggnog with National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation.

The campaign was implemented through an online sweepstakes and social media campaign, which included:

- A one-month digital sweepstakes including four \$250-value holiday movie gift card packages
- A one-month social media campaign featuring holiday movie recipe pairings and a sweepstakes encouraging users to enter to win supplies for a holiday movie watch party
- Four partnerships with local influencers to highlight and amplify the holiday movie recipe pairings and encourage consumers to enter the sweepstakes
- Creation of a unique landing page on OhioEggs.com, consumer e-blast, news release, and pitches to local media

Overall, the social media advertising for this campaign earned over **1.6M impressions**, reached an audience of **745,603** and drove **37,616 engagements**.





# OHIO POULTRY ASSOCIATION

(614) 882-6111

[OhioPoultry.org](http://OhioPoultry.org)

[OhioEggs.com](http://OhioEggs.com)

## LOOKING AHEAD TO 2023

OPA anticipates 2023 to be another busy year as the organization continues to work together in support of its farmers in the fight against HPAI, as well as provide safe egg, chicken and turkey products to consumers across the country.

### **OPA will continue to focus on its priority areas, including the following:**

- Administer and coordinate poultry health programs;
- Support workforce development and recruitment;
- Advocate for poultry issues with the Ohio legislature;
- Educate students in Ohio's classrooms about the industry and career opportunities;
- Pursue new opportunities for consumer education and marketing; and
- Promote Ohio's egg, chicken and turkey farmers through creative and innovative programming.



**Below, please find the 2023 officers and contact information for OPA staff members.**

### **Ohio Poultry Association**

Sandra Lausecker, President

Jeff Cutler, Vice President

Drew Bowman, Secretary

Doug Mack, Past President

### **Ohio Egg Marketing Program**

Jeff Cutler, Chair

### **Ohio Egg Processors Association**

Jay Rindler, Chair

### **OPA Staff**

Jim Chakeres, Executive Vice President

[jchakeres@ohiopoultry.org](mailto:jchakeres@ohiopoultry.org)

Jenna Gregorich, Bird Health Programs Manager

[jgregorich@ohiopoultry.org](mailto:jgregorich@ohiopoultry.org)

Paige Kelly, Sustainability and Environmental Manager

[pkelly@ohiopoultry.org](mailto:pkelly@ohiopoultry.org)

Mandi Shirley, Promotions and Event Coordinator

[mshirley@ohiopoultry.org](mailto:mshirley@ohiopoultry.org)