

New Year, New Innovations



At the 2020 International Production & Processing Expo (IPPE), Life-Science Innovations (LSI) leadership learned about new equipment and practices in the broiler industry from The Netherlands company, HatchTech. HatchTech's equipment, HatchCare, provided chicks with primary resources (feed, water, light, and optimal air environment) immediately after hatching, which has never been seen or done in the turkey industry. The equipment's success in the broiler industry, prompted LSI leadership to find a way to offer something similar for turkeys. A partnership between the two companies was quickly formed with LSI leading the charge for researching and developing equipment to better both the welfare and growth of poults.

Soon after IPPE, LSI started updating one of their facilities in Willmar to host the research. Not only did remodeling the facility need to happen before research could start, but the equipment needed to be modified to meet the needs of poults. This process held its fair share of challenges, with the COVID-19 pandemic constricting many critical functions of a business trying to launch a new product in partnership with companies overseas.

Despite the challenges, a small LSI team worked continuously to validate the core concept and install the equipment. After several months of construction and installation, large-scale research trials were set to begin.

Research Findings

HatchCare for turkeys provides poults with optimum temperature conditions, light, feed, and water as soon as they hatch. The idea behind providing instant access to resources was to encourage stronger and healthier poults, and LSI was interested to see if this was a viable option for turkeys.

Over the next two years, research was collected from dozens of small and medium-scale trials focused on everything from concept validation to basket design. The centerpiece of the trial work was three multi-pen trials of toms, following the birds from hatching to market age. These trials not only resulted in larger birds on less feed and improved poult survival rates, but HatchCare for turkeys dramatically enhances the immediate animal welfare of each poult.



Research continued to prove that turkeys hatched in this unique environment not only were larger and healthier in the first few days of life, but they were significantly larger when it came time to market the birds. The body weights of poults were 20-40% higher by the end of the first week, and turkeys under the new system weighed 400 grams more at 140 days of growth as well as five points better in terms of feed conversion.



After continuing to collect positive results, LSI took the next steps toward opening the Next Nest Hatching facility in Willmar.

Next Steps for Next Nest

In October 2022, a contract was signed for production of a larger facility in the Willmar area. Dubbed “Nest One”, this 100,000 sqft building will be the first turkey hatchery that exclusively hatches poults with immediate access to feed and water. The facility is currently under construction with a commitment to be fully operational by early 2024. Once the facility is finished, it will be capable of hatching 31 million poults per year (with planned expansion potential waiting for the future).

LSI is excited to share the success of Next Nest’s innovations and has seen positive interest from the industry already – the initial facility volume is already contracted out. Moving forward, Next Nest will build and operate Nest One, continue research and development to better understand and enhance the impact of resources at hatch for poults, and sell or lease Turkey HatchCare equipment to hatcheries around the world.

The team is excited to continue promoting this revolutionary hatching solution for stronger, healthier poults. Questions regarding Next Nest can be directed to Peter Gruhl, Director of Sales (548-255-4778 or Peter.Gruhl@nnhatching.com) or Jonathan Huisinga, General Manager (320-222-9762 or Jonathan.Huisinga@nnhatching.com).

MTGA is looking forward to following the progress of Next Nest Hatching and providing updates to members with additional news.

