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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Avian Influenza: Ready for the Challenge

Rheems, PA (April 10, 2015) - Avian influenza (AI), a devastating and lethal poultry respiratory disease, has been infecting mostly turkey flocks on the west coast and the central part of the US since December of last year. Pennsylvania has a history with the disease and suffered its greatest poultry mortality and dollar losses in the 1983-84 outbreak. Jim Adams, Chief Executive Officer at Wenger Feeds, notes, "Many of us have lived through several AI outbreaks and we do not want to repeat that experience again."

Today poultry companies and feed suppliers are better prepared than we were in the past. At Wenger Feeds, we have equipped all of our feed and egg delivery trucks with on-board disinfecting units. The storage tank is filled with disinfecting solution approved by poultry and swine veterinarians as the most effective against AI and Porcine Epidemic Diarrhea virus (PEDv), a swine disease that can cause up to 100% mortality in baby pigs. Each set of tires on the delivery unit has a nozzle above it to spray the disinfectant solution on them as the wheels turn.

At the beginning of each shift, our drivers check the tank for adequate disinfectant level and nozzles for proper operating condition. When deliveries are made, the driver will begin spraying the tires approximately one-half mile before arriving at the farm lane and again for the same distance when they leave the farm.

For known infected flocks, the driver performs our Red Alert Disinfecting procedures and will also wear disposable boots and coveralls while on the farm and disinfect the entire truck and trailer before returning to the mill and delivering to another farm. All team members at Wenger Feeds have been alerted to the threat of Avian influenza and communication with our egg producers and pullet growers has emphasized their role in protecting their flocks. Other poultry companies are taking similar steps.

Although there are no guarantees when it comes to fighting diseases, we feel these efforts will help reduce the spread of many viruses from one farm to the next. "Disease prevention and swift action by the whole poultry industry will reduce the bird loss, lost production, and financial impact," Adams said.
