



Ministry of
Agriculture
and Lands

Animal Health Centre

AAVLD - Accredited Laboratory

Ministry of Agriculture and Lands

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Final Report AHC Case: 10-2575

Last Updated: 06/25/10 11:55 AM

Pathologist: Ann Britton, DVM, MSc, PhD

Received Date: 06/24/10

Collected Date:

Client Ref No:

Veterinarian:

Clinic:

Phone:

Fax:

Submitter: Andrea Gilgan

Phone:

Fax:

Owner: Gilgan, Andrea

Phone:

Fax:

Animal Data

Species: Domestic Chicken

Breed:

Sex: F

Age: 8 Months

Premise ID:

Case History

Type of bird(s) Submitted: layer	<input type="checkbox"/> Domestic <input type="checkbox"/> Pet <input type="checkbox"/> Wild <input type="checkbox"/> Other
Flock Size: 4	Feed Source: Layer Mash Canadian Organic Feed

Age: 8 months (d, w, m, y) Sex: ☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Mixed male and female ☐ Unknown

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Total
No. (or %) Dead						1									
No. (or %) Sick			1	1	1										
%Egg Production															

Vaccinated?: ☐ No ☐ Unknown ☐ Yes

Person to contact to confirm vaccination details: Vicky Baker bakervicky@shaw.ca

Euthanized?: ☐ yes Specify Method:

Stopped laying for a few days, developed clumps of dirt/feces on bum, no other obvious signs. Energy high, eating with others. Possible diarrhea. Died 2 or 3 days after developing dirty bum (discovered dead in the morning) on June 18. The bird was frozen.

Final Diagnosis

Final diagnosis:

Cannibalism

Comment:

Cannibalism is a behavioural problem of chickens defined as pecking, tearing and consuming skin or organs of flock mates. Outbreaks of this behavior can occur in any type of housing situation and among many different types of poultry. Causes of cannibalism most often involve crowding and feed restriction but can also occur in association with injured birds left in the flock, bright lighting, salt deficiency and keeping diseased or low body weight birds in the flock. At the Animal Health Centre, we have also associated cannibalism with obesity in birds which leads to a greater incidence of rectal and oviductal prolapse, inciting cannibalistic behavior.

Prevention is key with this syndrome and includes providing a complete ration appropriate for the age and type of birds and adequate feeder and nesting space. Beak trimming and dim lighting, if the birds are kept housed, can be helpful. Additionally with layers, dark nest boxes to prevent exposure of the everted cloaca to flock mates during egg laying can also prove helpful. Chickens naturally spend a great part of their day pecking and searching for food. Providing an environment which encourages foraging behavior, such as adding straw, green leafy vegetables or grass clippings to the enclosure, may redirect pecking from flock mates to the environment.

Necropsy

One 1.2 kg black hen was submitted for necropsy. The hen had dried blood around the vent associated with lacerations of the cloaca and prolapse of torn intestinal loops with prolapse and hemorrhage of the oviduct. Internally, the intestinal tract was missing except for the duodenum which ended abruptly in a hemorrhagic tear at the duodenojejunal junction. The abdomen contained watery blood. The hen was in production.



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These results relate only to the animals or items tested.

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END OF REPORT