

ANIMAL HEALTH TECHNICIAN I (POULTRY)

Work in this class involves the inspection of poultry flocks for conformance to the rules, laws and regulations of the State of North Carolina and the National Poultry Improvement Plan. Employees schedule and conduct inspections of poultry farms to ensure proper sanitation and proper disposal of dead poultry. Employees determine whether poultry breeding stock and hatchery products are free from hatchery-disseminated diseases and recommend corrective treatment when necessary. Work may involve the inspection of turkeys, chickens, and exotic birds to diagnose disorders or diseases; inspection of hatchery premises, incubators, and other equipment for proper operation and maintenance; and the collection of blood samples for various tests. Responsibilities include issuance of quarantines and shipping permits, tracing diseased livestock back to the farm of origin, and providing assistance to veterinarians involved in field regulatory activities. Work is performed under the general supervision of an Animal Health Technician II (Poultry) and the technical supervision of a field veterinarian and may include other duties as assigned.

I. DIFFICULTY OF WORK:

Complexity - Work requires the detection of any disease or abnormality in a variety of poultry flocks that could infect flocks or harm the wholesomeness of poultry products. When a problem is detected, the employees must quarantine flocks and monitor the disposition of the flock; the movement of feed trucks and live haul trucks; and the disposition of eggs, baby poultry, dead birds and litter. Employees determine when appropriate cleaning and disinfecting warrants quarantine removal and what steps must be taken prior to removal. Employees must be able to recognize a variety of poultry disease symptoms and parasites and be able to prescribe management methods to control or eradicate the condition at fairs, poultry shows and pet shops.

Guidelines - State and Federal guidelines as well as the provisions of the National Poultry Improvement Plan are specific to the work being performed and can usually be applied to most situations.

II. RESPONSIBILITY:

Accountability - Employees must make decisions in the field as to issuing quarantines prior to receiving laboratory analysis confirming their suspected diagnosis. Proper procedure for collecting, storing, and transporting samples, as well as the inclusion of all information pertaining to flocks is essential to ensure valid analysis and interpretation.

Consequence of Action - Failure to enforce rules and regulations could result in the spread of disease to many flocks or many generations. The erroneous enforcement of quarantines could lead to severe financial hardship for poultry producers. Inaccurate blood collection or testing methods could result in delayed diagnosis preventing management from taking necessary corrective actions promptly.

Review - Work is reviewed by a superior through the analysis of written reports which indicate the extent of service and testing work performed and through the periodic observation of work in the field for proper methods and application of standards.

III. INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS:

Subject Matter - Employees provide technical instruction to industry personnel on the proper way to collect samples. Advice is given to flock owners on improving management practices. Employees must be able to confront management with inspection results requiring quarantine of birds and proper disposal.

Purpose - Communications are primarily with flock owners for the purpose of explaining and ensuring adherence to established rules and regulations, and for gaining information necessary in the epidemiological investigation following a disease outbreak. Employees must be able to persuade management that taking the legal action required is in their best interest even though it may cause them severe economic loss initially.

IV. OTHER WORK DEMANDS:

Nature of Working Conditions - Work is performed in poultry houses of all types where employees are constantly exposed to very bad odors, blood, carcasses, noise and extreme temperature variances and a great deal of dust.

Nature and Potential of Personnel Hazards - Employees are exposed to sharp instruments including scalpels and needles and possibly to diseases which might be transmittable to humans.

V. JOB REQUIREMENTS:

Knowledges, Skills and Abilities - Working knowledge of the principles and practices of poultry management, particularly as these relate to the selecting, breeding, feeding, and housing of chickens and turkeys. Ability to read, comprehend, explain, and apply regulations. Ability to instruct flock owners, hatchery operators and other groups in the techniques of proper poultry management. Ability to vaccinate and draw blood samples and read blood tests from poultry. Ability to identify a variety of poultry diseases and disorders and to recommend appropriate treatment or management methods which will control or eradicate the condition. Ability to prepare routine reports which indicate the nature and extent of work performed. Ability to communicate effectively. Ability to maintain effective working relationships with plant management and employees. Ability to work independently. Ability to successfully complete poultry inspection training programs.

Minimum Education and Experience - Graduation from high school and three years experience in the production, management or sale of poultry; or an equivalent combination of education and experience.

Special Note: This is a generalized representation of positions in this class and is not intended to identify essential functions per ADA. Examples of work are primarily essential functions of the majority of positions in this class, but may not be applicable to all positions.