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An ACPV Workshop

# OPTIMIZING POULTRY HEALTH FROM THE HATCHERY TO THE FIELD: A HOLISTIC APPROACH

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**Sunday  
March 15<sup>th</sup>,  
2026**

**San Diego,  
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**Thank You!**

Dear Colleagues,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the American College of Poultry Veterinarians (ACPV) workshop, “Optimizing Poultry Health from the Hatchery to the Field: A Holistic Approach,” hosted this year in San Diego, California. We are excited to have you join us as we explore practical strategies, emerging challenges, and forward-looking solutions that continue to shape the future of poultry health. It is an honor to host this gathering of dedicated professionals who generously share their knowledge, experiences, and unique perspectives.

This year, thanks to the generous support of our sponsors, we are fortunate to feature an exceptional group of speakers and panelists representing production, academia, and allied industry. We trust they will provide valuable insights that will benefit both our attendees and our industry as a whole. My sincere gratitude goes to them, as well as to my co-chairs, collaborators, sponsors, and to you, our participants, whose engagement and support make events like this possible. As our predecessors have emphasized, it is through the exchange of ideas and our shared commitment that we create meaningful and lasting progress.

Thank you for being part of this year’s workshop. Your expertise, collaboration, and active participation are essential to advancing poultry health from hatchery to field. We hope you find the sessions insightful, the discussions productive, and the connections rewarding.

Kind regards,

Alexandra, Gigi, Ivan and Dulmelis  
Program Co-chairs, ACPV Workshop (2026)

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Start Time	Event	Speaker
<b>Section 1: From Hatchery to the Field: Fundamentals</b>		
8:00 AM	Introduction	Dr. Alexandra Mendoza-Reilley
8:05 AM	The journey of a fertile egg: critical steps from the farm to the setter	Dr. Jeanna Wilson
8:40 AM	Understanding how incubation manages embryo development and organ maturation	Dr. Mike Wineland
9:20 AM	Compatibility and efficacy of disinfectants and antimicrobial components for sanitation in livestock	Dr. Rebecca Lister, PhD
9:50 AM	Panel Q & A	Dr. Jeanna Wilson Dr. Mike Wineland Dr. Rebecca Lister PhD
10:05 AM	Coffee Break	
<b>Section 2: Ensuring Disease Prevention through Proper Vaccination</b>		
10:20 AM	Mitigating immunosuppressive factors to enhance bird health and vaccination response	Dr. Guillermo Zavala
11:00 AM	Understanding Hatchery Vaccination for Improved Outcomes	Dr. Rodrigo Gallardo
11:35 AM	Avian Metapneumovirus: An overview of risk factors in poultry and prevention	Dr. Silke Rautenschlein

12:10 PM	Panel Q & A	Dr. Guillermo Zavala Dr. Rodrigo Gallardo Dr. Silke Rautenschlein
12:25 PM	Lunch Break (included with registration)	

### **Section 3: Allied Industry: Advances in Research and Innovation: An Open Panel**

1:30 PM	An interactive session spotlighting what's new and what's next across the different areas (nutrition, biologics, pharmaceuticals, technology, including open Q&A on implementation strategies and measurable outcomes.	Dr. Dulmelis DG Sandu Dr. Eliza Ripplinger Dr. Ivan Alvarado Ceva – TBD Zoetis – TBD Vaxxinova – TBD Boeringer Ingelheim – TBD
2:30 PM	Coffee Break	

### **Section 4: Best Practices in Brooding an Early Growth**

3:00 PM	Turkey Industry	Dr. Marie Severyn Dr. Becky Tilley Dr. David Hermes
3:30 PM	Broilers and Broiler Breeders	Dr. Rick Sharpton Dr. Brandon Armwood TBD
4:15 PM	Layer Industry	Dr. Marie Severyn Dr. Joe Sullivan TBD
4:50 PM	Closure and Remarks	Dr. Alexandra Mendoza-Reilley

## **The journey of a fertile egg: critical steps from the farm to the setter**

**8:05 AM – 8:40 AM: Dr. Jeanna Wilson**



*Superior Hatch, LLC*

### **Biography:**

Dr. Wilson is an Emeritus Professor in the Poultry Science Department at the University of Georgia. Jeanna received her B.S. and M.S. in poultry science from Virginia Tech and graduated from Auburn University with a Ph.D. in avian physiology. Her work focuses on reproductive performance of meat type breeders and the incubation requirements of these strains. She works closely with the poultry industry to improve fertility and hatchability and is seeking innovative feed ingredients and feeding methods to improve breeder performance and welfare.

### **Abstract:**

Fertile chicken eggs are not usually washed so the environment the egg is laid in and how the eggs are treated is important in maximizing hatchability. Hen house environment can positively or negatively impact fertile eggs. If the litter floor and slats are wet from loose feces, hens will track the feces into the nest contaminating eggs or the hen will lay the egg outside the nest in wet feces and contaminate the eggs. Keeping the lay houses dry and encouraging nest laying through training the hens to go to the nests to lay are practical methods of reducing egg contamination. Bacteria on the shell can get pulled into the eggshell pores and dramatically increase contaminated eggs. Having sufficient nest space that is easy access encourages nest laying. Automated nest closure systems reduce fecal contamination of nests and are a win-win as the farmer will spend less time cleaning the eggs. Egg pick-up or removal from the house should start in early morning and continue mid-morning through late afternoon to make sure that all eggs are retrieved from the chicken house to prevent pre-incubation, contamination and breakage. As farms have gotten larger, egg pick-up is down to once, maybe twice per day. Egg numbers are reduced by fewer

pick-ups and dirty egg numbers increase. Many integrators have approved the use of automated egg packers to try to get the eggs out of the house faster and deal with the general lack of labor across the industry. While the packers do help the farmer deal with these larger farms, eggs collected with packers do tend to have more cracked eggs. In addition, the packers must be cleaned on a daily basis to prevent being a source of egg contamination. Poor hen health can lead to reduced feed and water intake particularly with respiratory virus infection, which leads to lower egg production, poor chick quality and more fragile eggshells. Low flock fertility contributes to a greater production of chicks with poorly healed navels and bruised hocks, not to mention, can come to the farm covered in egg material as the eggs/chicks go through the separator with a high number of infertile eggs. Storage on the farm and at the hatchery should have a consistent temperature around 65 F and allow at least 24 hours before putting eggs in the incubator for best hatch results. As a higher percentage of the eggs are classified as dirty, integrators are discussing washing and sanitizing eggs prior to incubation. Generally, the greatest challenge today is reducing fertile egg contamination given the changes in the hen, bird health challenges, farm size and the use of more automation.

### **Understanding how incubation manages embryo development and organ maturation**

**8:40 AM – 9:20 AM: Dr. Mike Wineland**



*Hatchery Consult LLC*

#### **Biography:**

Mike graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Madison with his PhD where he studied reproductive physiology of poultry. Mike was a faculty member at West Virginia University for 3 years and at North Carolina State University for 30 plus years before retiring. Mike conducted research and educational programs related to broiler breeder and hatchery management while at NC

State University. Since retiring, Mike continues to be involved in hatchery and breeder related matters by providing educational programing and problem solving around the world.

**Abstract:**

Unincubated fertile eggs already have 60,000 to 80,000 cells when egg is laid. Most of the nutrients the embryo needs to grow, and hatch were placed in the egg by the hen. The hatchery supplies the remaining nutrient of oxygen by managing the incubator and hallways of the hatchery. The four parameters of incubation, temperature, ventilation, humidity and turning are each important to have a successful hatch as the nutrient utilization by the developing embryo is impacted by how these parameters are managed.

The extraembryonic membranes each have a function and are influenced by incubation management. When incubation begins there is movement of water from the albumen into the yolk forming the sub embryonic fluid. The yolk sac which becomes vascular acts as the initial respiratory surface as well as supplying primarily yolk lipids to the embryo to act as an energy source for growth, maintenance and the energy intensive action of hatching. The amnion is a clear sac that surrounds the growing embryo which helps protect the embryo from shocks, bacterial infection and is a receptacle for receiving the albumen which is located to the small end of the egg and transported to the amnion through the sero-amniotic duct which allows the embryo will swallow the albumen nutrients. The allantois has multiple functions inside the developing egg serving as location for deposition of waste from the embryonic kidney, a reservoir for water to prevent dehydration of the embryo and when in contact with the chorion, a circulatory system develops and becomes the primary respiratory surface for the embryo. The chorio-allantoic membrane (CAM) lining the inner surface of the shell membrane will carry oxygen that has diffused through the eggshell pores and carried to the embryo to assist with growth and metabolism. The CAM also will carry metabolic waste (carbon dioxide and excess metabolic heat) from the embryo to the inner surface of the shell to diffuse from the egg and oxygen into the egg which passively diffuses through the pores. Each parameter of incubation can have a dramatic effect upon proper development of the extra-embryonic membranes. How you manage the incubation parameters influence the proper development of the extra-embryonic membranes which provide for proper development and maturation of the organ systems which in turn will impact how the hatchling performs in the field.

The consumption of oxygen shows a linear increase until about day 14 of incubation when the embryo enters the plateau stage of oxygen consumption and becomes slightly hypoxic until the embryo internally pips. During this time embryo temperature and access to oxygen are very important to organ

development such as muscle development, immune function, digestive tract, thyroid maturation, cardiac function, and bone cell maturation have been shown to be affected by embryo temperature. The embryos and chicks can exhibit abnormalities and malpositions (Are they really?) because of improper incubation parameters being used but when understood the incubational processes can be altered.

There is considerable work utilizing thermal manipulation at certain stages of development to alter some organ system functions. Little of this work has been applied commercially yet but offers potential for improving performance of the broiler in the future.

**Compatibility and efficacy of disinfectants and antimicrobial components for sanitation in livestock**  
**9:20 AM – 9:50 AM: Dr. Rebecca Lister**



*RL Secure Consulting*

**Biography:**

Dr. Rebecca Lister received a PhD from Missouri University of Science and Technology in Polymer Chemistry and a B.S. from Missouri Western State University in Chemistry. Since 1996 she has worked to formulate and develop coatings and functional coatings for the architecture, agriculture, and landscape industries. In 2019 her expertise was used to research and develop an antimicrobial coating. This antimicrobial coating was evaluated in multiple industries, livestock and horticulture included. Antimicrobial product development gave way to learning and understanding the surface disinfectant market. This understanding allowed for the integration of antimicrobial coatings into existing biosecurity measures. Rebecca started consulting in 2024 and started her own consulting business in 2025. She helps customers to

optimize sanitation protocols and integrate new chemistries into existing or new protocols to help strengthen biosecurity measures.

**Abstract:**

Biosecurity is crucial for maintaining the health and productivity of livestock populations. This presentation explores the importance of effective sanitation practices by analyzing the compatibility and efficacy of various disinfectants and antimicrobial components used in the livestock industry. The most common sanitizing chemistries, along with emerging alternatives to mainstream agents, are examined for their effectiveness. Additionally, the interactions (compatible or interfering) between different disinfectants and/or antimicrobial agents are analyzed to optimize combination strategies. The efficacy of disinfectants and antimicrobials against key pathogens of concern is assessed, highlighting the importance of selecting appropriate agents for pathogen protection. Finally, considerations for establishing robust cleaning and sanitizing protocols are discussed, emphasizing factors such as pathogen types, disinfectant compatibility, and application to enhance biosecurity measures.

**Mitigating immunosuppressive factors to enhance bird health and vaccination response**

**10:20 AM – 11:00 AM: Dr. Guillermo Zavala**



*Avian Health International, LLC*

**Biography:**

Dr. Guillermo Zavala obtained a DVM and Specialty in Poultry Production and Pathology from the National Autonomous University of Mexico. He also holds a Master of Avian Medicine, Master of Science, and Doctoral Degrees (MAM, MSc, and PhD, respectively) from the University of Georgia (UGA). Dr. Zavala performed postdoctoral research at UGA and the University of Melbourne.

Dr. Zavala has worked for a broiler production company; two vaccine manufacturing companies; one primary breeder operation; two diagnostic laboratories; and worked for 11 years as faculty at UGA doing research on viral pathogenesis, clinical veterinary extension, and teaching at the veterinary and post-veterinary levels. Dr. Zavala has approximately 40 publications in refereed journals and has also collaborated in 4 reference books on avian diseases. Dr. Zavala is the author of the book *Basic and Applied Avian Medicine for Field Veterinarians*. Dr. Zavala has presented multiple conferences and lectures in numerous countries, and for several consecutive years he has provided an annual post-veterinary training course for poultry veterinarians of Central and Southeast Asia, China, South Korea and Japan. He is currently the owner and founder at Avian Health International, LLC, a poultry consulting business doing veterinary work in nearly 50 countries. He remains as an adjunct professor at UGA, where he continues to be involved in teaching avian virology, and poultry diseases and husbandry.

Dr. Zavala is married to Louise Dufour-Zavala and has three children, Guillermo, Paloma and Marcelle. He competed for Mexico as a swimmer in the 1976 and 1980 Olympic Games.

### **Abstract:**

Immunosuppression is difficult to document under field conditions. Field veterinarians and diagnosticians may consider possible immunosuppression based on organ and tissue morphometrics and/or the presence of unexplained viral, bacterial, fungal or parasitic infections. Routine postmortem examinations should include a visual assessment of primary and secondary organs or tissues of the immune system. Gross bursal surveys may be accomplished using bursameters, calipers, or calculations of bursa-to-body weight ratios. Gross observations may be complemented by microscopic examination and scoring of the same tissues. Any indication of organ atrophy or alteration, and microscopic evidence of lymphocytic depletion in the bursa and thymus, loss of cellularity in the bone marrow or fibrinoid necrosis of the spleen are strong indicators of possible immunosuppression. However, such morphologic changes are not necessarily equivalent to loss of function. It is critical to couple gross and microscopic observations to flock performance and overall health indicators.

Several disease agents may exert a negative impact on the immunocompetence of birds, some by directly inducing lymphocellular degeneration, necrosis or apoptosis; and others by altering the expression and function of important soluble factors and cell surface molecules responsible for the proper coordination of immune responses. Some viruses are lymphotropic and can cause significant destruction of cells of the immune system, albeit they are not

necessarily considered immunosuppressive but respiratory or systemic instead. Besides their main sites of infection and replication, avian Orthoreoviruses may replicate in the bursa of Fabricius causing bursal lymphocytic depletion; avian influenza virus and Newcastle disease virus are lymphotropic in addition to their primary sites of infection and replication; Fowl adenoviruses may inhibit cytotoxic T cells and the production of antibodies by plasma cells (FAdV-1), or they may inhibit the function of the bursa of Fabricius and Th1 (cellular) immune responses (FAdV-4; FAdV-8); avian leukosis viruses may inhibit the function of monocytes and mature macrophages, as well as cells of the lymphocytic lineage; fowlpox virus inhibits type I IFN (IFN-alpha/beta) pathways and uses decoy proteins that reduce immune cell recruitment; fowlpox viruses also prevent apoptosis, thereby preventing cell death and extending the time required to replicate in infected cells; in addition, fowlpox viruses may interfere with antigen presentation, can modulate host cell signaling, and may evade NK-cell responses. Reticuloendotheliosis virus is regarded primarily as an oncogenic agent, albeit it can cause a severe disruption of the cytokine-based coordination of immune responses.

Three viruses that are paramount primary immunosuppressive agents are Marek's disease virus, infectious bursal disease virus and chicken infectious anemia virus. All three of such viruses can be controlled by a combination of vaccination and field interventions. All broiler chickens, breeders and commercial layers are vaccinated against Marek's disease in the United States. Broilers are not vaccinated in some geographical areas outside the United States. Outbreaks of clinical Marek's disease are uncommon in long lived chickens, and more often they are associated with vaccination failures rather than vaccine failures. Leukosis condemnations attributable to Marek's disease are mostly under control. Most broiler breeders are vaccinated with a combination of serotype 1 and serotype 3 Marek's disease vaccines (GaHV-2 and MeHV-1, respectively) given in ovo and subcutaneously at hatch. Commercial layer chickens are typically vaccinated with any combination of serotypes 1, 2 and 3, always including serotype 1 vaccines. Broiler chickens receive usually fractionated doses of serotype 3 (herpesvirus of turkey, HVT) and serotype 2 (SB-1). Heavy or slow-growing broilers may also be vaccinated with serotype 1 vaccines, mostly CVI/988. A growing number of long-lived chickens are vaccinated with chimeric serotype 1 MD vaccines.

With very few exceptions, all chickens are vaccinated against infectious bursal disease (IBD) at the hatchery and/or at an early age. The tools for immunization against IBD include recombinant vaccines, live attenuated vaccines, and inactivated federally licensed or autogenous IBD vaccines. There have been limited attempts to immunize chickens using IBD virus-like particles.

Most broiler breeders are vaccinated against chicken infectious anemia, with only a fraction of industry still relying on natural exposure. For the most part, one or two vaccinations against chicken infectious anemia are sufficient to induce significant seroconversion in at least 95% of the vaccinated chickens.

Amongst the infectious causes of immunosuppression, it is possible to prevent and control Marek's disease, infectious bursal disease and chicken infectious anemia by proper vaccination to maintain a robust immune system that can cope with most ordinary field challenges. This presentation summarizes some of the most relevant infectious and non-infectious causes of immunosuppression and strategies to mitigate them.

### **Understanding Hatchery Vaccination for Improved Outcomes**

**11:00 AM – 11:35 AM: Dr. Rodrigo Gallardo**



*University of California, Davis*

#### **Biography:**

Poultry veterinarian with experience in poultry production, management and health. I obtained my DVM degree from the University of Chile and a PhD from Auburn University in avian molecular virology. I am board certified by the American College of Poultry Veterinarians (ACPV). I worked for several years in a layer breeder company in charge of reproduction and hatchery for Hy-line international. I have worked as an assistant veterinarian in diagnostic laboratories using serological, virological and molecular methods for detection of viral diseases affecting the poultry industry including Newcastle disease (NDV), avian influenza (AI), infectious bronchitis (IBV), avian reoviruses (ARV), infectious coryza (IC), etc. I have been involved in manufacturing NDV and IBV biological products both live attenuated and inactivated. In research, I have worked on characterizing viral pathogens and the immune responses they elicit in chickens. During my career I have been working with RNA viruses,

particularly corona and reoviruses, trying to understand their variability and evolution in immunocompetent and immunodeficient hosts. Currently, I am the head of the Poultry Medicine Program at the University of California in Davis where I teach, perform research and outreach. My passion is to help the poultry industry translating research into practical actions. I currently collaborate with the broiler and layer industry in California in the surveillance and prevention of Newcastle disease, avian influenza reoviruses, IBV and infectious coryza. I also provide support in poultry medicine and disease prevention to poultry companies in the Caribbean, North, Central and South America. I am part of the board of directors of the American Association of Avian Pathologists (AAAP), the editorial board of Avian Diseases and Avian Pathology and I am the CEO of the Western Poultry Disease Conference Foundation.

I come from a family of poultry veterinarians. My grandfather was one of the founders of the poultry medicine laboratory at the University of Chile and trained several veterinarians in the field in south and Central America. One of the poultry vets he trained was my dad. He was also a veterinarian and researcher that dedicated his life to understand infectious bronchitis and its prevention. I was trained by him since I was in middle school, covering for people that took vacations during summer. I met Gigi (my wife) In veterinary school, after graduation we both practiced some years, me in a poultry farm while she worked in reproduction of thoroughbreds until we decided to get married (2006) and migrate to the U.S. for a PhD and a clinical residency, respectively, at Auburn University in AL. After 4 years we obtained our degrees, and both took jobs at the University of California. We have two kids Matias and Emma and our dog Tito. We love nature in particular Lake Tahoe which we consider our happy place.

### **Abstract:**

Hatchery vaccination is one of the most critical management practices in early broiler and layer production. Its importance stems not only from the need to protect immunologically immature birds but also from the fact that incorrect vaccine application can lead to serious consequences.

This presentation will review and provide insights into early chick immune responses to help calibrate expectations and guide effective vaccine use. We will also explore current knowledge—and gaps—regarding interactions among live respiratory vaccines, and the role maternal antibodies may or may not play in enhancing active chick vaccination programs.

Key topics will include vaccine take and its significance, the pros and cons of different mass vaccination strategies, novel vaccination interventions, and the

value of designing an original, evidence-based vaccination strategy—rather than relying on generic, copy-paste protocols.

## **Avian Metapneumovirus: An overview of risk factors in poultry and prevention**

**11:35 AM – 12:10 PM: Silke Rautenschlein**



*University of Veterinary Medicine, Hanover*

### **Biography:**

Dr. Silke Rautenschlein serves as Director of the Clinic for Poultry at the University of Veterinary Medicine Foundation in Hannover, Germany, where she has led clinical and research initiatives since 2011. A Full Professor since 2007, Dr. Rautenschlein is internationally recognized for her expertise in avian immunology, respiratory diseases, and innovative vaccination strategies.

She earned her veterinary degree and doctorate from the Veterinary School Hannover, followed by a Ph.D. in Veterinary Pathobiology from the University of Minnesota. Her specialist credentials include certifications in Microbiology and Poultry Medicine, a Habilitation in Poultry Diseases, and Diplomate status with the European College of Poultry Veterinary Science.

Dr. Rautenschlein's research spans immunosuppressive and respiratory diseases in poultry, animal welfare, and infectious diseases in homing pigeons. Her work continues to shape best practices in poultry health and disease prevention worldwide.

### **Abstract:**

Avian Metapneumovirus (AMPV; species *Metapneumovirus avis*) together with the closely related human Metapneumovirus (HMPV) is grouped within the genus *Metapneumovirus*, family *Pneumoviridae*. AMPV induces respiratory and

reproductive disease in chickens, turkeys and ducks. Other avian species may also get infected, and wild birds can be considered as a natural reservoir. Various subtypes circulate in different countries throughout the world, and it can be speculated that new subtypes may be identified in the future. Although AMPV was already identified in South Africa at the end of the 1970<sup>th</sup>, the USA was considered AMPV-free for many years. Subtype C emerged in 1996 first in Colorado in turkeys, from where it spread especially to the midwestern states, and was subsequently controlled by vaccination. At the end of 2023 and beginning of 2024 subtypes A and B also appeared, respectively. It was suggested that subtype A came from Mexico, while subtype B may have been introduced with wild birds, possibly from Eastern Asia. Sequencing analysis of circulating viruses suggests a clonal expansion event for AMPV within the country. As the viruses were introduced to a naïve population, and no vaccine was licensed at that time, the clinical and subsequent economic burden on poultry production was significant. By now the import of AMPV live vaccines to the USA is approved, which should lead to a reduction of AMPV-induced clinical signs and virus shedding in the field and may help to control the disease. But it has to be considered that live AMPV vaccines may persist in the environment with a risk of reversion to more virulent forms.

Despite the rather mild clinical picture after primary AMPV infection and the short duration of the disease, the AMPV-induced lesions in the upper respiratory tract associate with a compromised mucociliary clearance allowing secondary pathogens to invade and to exacerbate the clinical picture.

Frequently observed secondary pathogens include *Escherichia coli*, *Ornithobacterium rhinotracheale*, and *Mycoplasma gallisepticum*. But co-infections with other viral pathogens may also impact the defense against AMPV, including chicken infectious bronchitis virus or Newcastle disease virus, which may modify the local mucosal defense mechanism of the host and therefore impact AMPV control at the epithelial barrier. Ongoing immunosuppression due to infectious and non-infectious insults may affect local innate and acquired immune mechanisms such as T cell activity and IgA-concentrations in the mucus, and subsequently reduces the ability of the host to clear AMPV infection.

To control AMPV infection in the field a bundle of measures has to be implemented. General hygiene and biosecurity are important not only to control primary AMPV but also secondary invading pathogens. The reduction of dust and ammonia will help to improve respiratory health. In addition, the overall vaccination program should be critically evaluated and besides the application of AMPV-specific vaccines also the control of immunosuppressive and other respiratory pathogens may have to be adjusted to improve flock health in the context of high AMPV field pressure.

## **Workshop Notes**



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We are always looking for ways to improve, so we kindly ask that you please complete this brief survey to let us know how we can do even better next year! Scan the QR code below to begin the survey.



## Future Meeting



**2027 ACPV Workshop  
March 24<sup>th</sup> & March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2027  
The Westin Denver Downtown  
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### **ACPV Vision**

The vision of the American College of Poultry Veterinarians is to define and set the gold standard in the veterinary specialty of poultry health and well-being.

### **ACPV Mission**

The mission of the American College of Poultry Veterinarians is to establish standards and implement the specialty certification of veterinarians who attend to poultry health and well-being by oversight of training programs and credentials, preparation and administration of the certification exam, and support of continuing education for recertification, with accountability to the American Board of Veterinary Specialties

### **FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

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