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DR. EGON VIELITZ

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*About the cover*

**DR. EGON VIELITZ (1932–2021)**

Egon Vielitz was born on a farm located in a small town north of Berlin, Germany. His early years were dominated first by Hitler's Germany and then by Russian occupation. But in 1953 as the family farm was being expropriated by the communists he escaped with his family to West Berlin and studied at the Free University of Berlin and subsequently at the Veterinary College in Hannover where he received his veterinary degree in 1958.

After a year of internship in internal medicine in Hannover, he joined the Lohmann Company in Cuxhaven in 1959 to work on poultry diseases and was immediately beset with Newcastle disease and avian encephalomyelitis problems. This led to productive relationships with Lohmann consultants Don Zander and Roy Luginbuhl and many others. His willingness to reach out to expert collaborators characterized his career and was instrumental in its success.

He established regular meetings with poultry veterinarians in France and Belgium which became in 1965 the Poultry Veterinary Study Group and now includes more than 80 veterinarians representing every European country. He was instrumental in Lohmann's development of TAD, a separate vaccine and veterinary services company, as well as VALO, a specific-pathogen-free (SPF) egg company.

Egon enjoyed a rare degree of academic freedom for an industry veterinarian and published or presented company data frequently, often with his Lohmann colleague, Helga Landgraf. Prior to his retirement in 1997 he dealt with virtually every important disease of poultry, from mycoplasmosis to infectious bursal disease to Marek's disease and beyond, and in many cases introduced control strategies or vaccines to Europe for the first time.

He was especially proud of his work with Vicco von Bülow on chicken anemia virus (CAV) detection, its removal from Lohmann's SPF flocks and the development of the first CAV vaccine. His key role in the success of the Lohmann poultry-related businesses over the years has been generally acknowledged.

He was an honorary life member of the World Veterinary Poultry Association and also of the Poultry Veterinary Study Group. Egon was an early adopter, an innovator, and a respected colleague and friend of scientists around the world.

Prepared by Dr. Richard L. Witter