



AgSpeak™

Vol. 1, No. 1



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Welcome to the inaugural publication of AgSpeak™. Within its covers we will address industry topics ranging from biosecurity to animal health and everything in between. You will be updated on our newest products, introduced to our employees, and invited to training opportunities.

VAL-CO's Mission is "Helping Animal Agriculture Feed a Hungry World." Each of us takes this mission seriously and we take great satisfaction in our contribution to feeding the world. Fulfilling our mission means that our success is tied directly to your success. And that is our motivation for continually improving our products and services – we want to help you succeed!

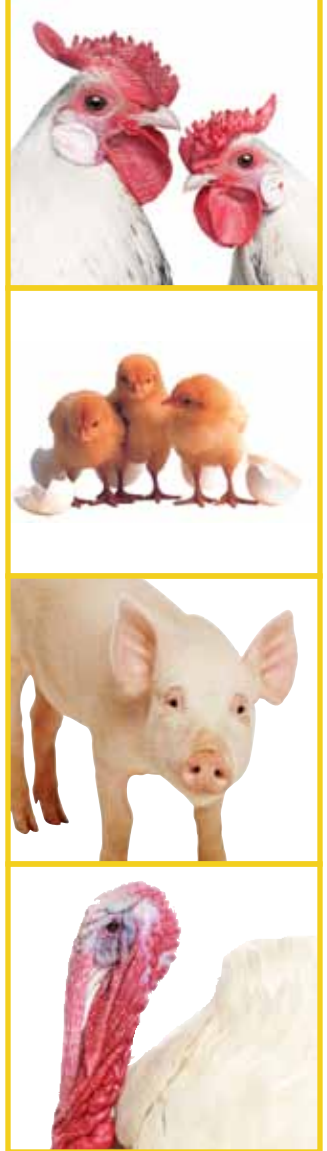
Providing you with this publication allows us to share information about industry trends and latest practices. We hope that you will take advantage of the opportunity to provide us feedback on your experiences and the challenges that you face as you do the honorable work of this industry. You can reach out to us with comments, questions, or suggestions at marcom@val-co.com.

Thank you for reading AgSpeak and for your partnership with VAL-CO!

Phil Risser

President & CEO

Valco Companies, Inc.





Improving Cleanliness and Reducing Contaminants is Key

by Darryl Moore

The movement towards “No Antibiotics Ever” (NAE) for animal and poultry husbandry seems inevitable. With more customers demanding antibiotic free poultry products, more grocers and restaurants are making commitments to source antibiotic free chicken. Integrators, then, must tackle how to produce healthy, safe, affordable birds and maintain profitability.

All broiler meat production starts on breeder farms, farms that produce eggs that get sent to broiler hatcheries to become chicks for the broiler, roaster, and large debone operations. These breeder farms are central to economical production of meat. If the animals are to be raised

without receiving antibiotics at any point in their life, they need to avoid contaminants from the very start of production – as eggs. Being able to collect eggs so that the egg is cleaner, and thereby less contaminated with foreign matter, brings NAE a step closer to being a management practice that can actually work.

Breeder farms use nest systems to help collect the eggs. Eggs come into contact with foreign matter when being laid, and also when left to sit in the nesting system too long. The foreign matter that is most concerning is fecal coliforms, but also dirt, dust, and feathers. Farm managers have focused their management practice on reducing the contact time between the egg



and the nesting site: the obvious low-hanging fruit of collecting eggs more often has been used and determined helpful.

I’ve seen people collecting eggs and using Lysol wipes to wipe off feces, feathers, and debris from the eggs. This can be quite successful in

removing surface dirt, but despite removing the 'filth' from the surface of the eggs, the contaminate that was drawn in to the shell as the pores dried after lay is still present and can cause a real problem in hatcheries. These contaminated eggs, that look clean, can grow the bacteria inside the shell. The bacteria will cause the egg to pop, or explode (called poppers by hatchery personnel), inside the setters at the hatchery and can ultimately contaminate all the eggs surrounding it in the incubator.

In order to reduce contamination throughout the product line it is imperative that there is a strong focus on reducing contamination from the very beginning. Some integrators are changing egg belts after every flock to reduce egg contamination. New fabric belts can be installed before a new flock of breeders is moved in, but this is costly. Instead, using a belt that can more easily be cleaned and disinfected is a more sustainable option.

VAL-CO has developed innovative product features to help control egg contamination:

1. Use of a plastic or Mylar type of belt that will not be as permeable to bacteria and will be less likely to hold manure, dirt, feathers, etc. Currently being tested in several field observations.
2. Use of nest pads in the nest (the new NXT pad) that allows for more air movement and quicker

drying of contaminants in the nest area.

- a. Contaminates dry out quicker due to increased air movement via bigger holes in the pad and the birds scratching around helps clean the pad.

3. Nest closers on both side belt and center belt nest systems.

- a. Closing the nest off as a Best Management Practice is drawing a huge following and is another way of keeping birds out of the nest when it's not needed. This improves cleanliness

and reduces contaminants within the nest and, therefore, the likelihood that the environment will cause impurities to be accessible as the egg passes.

The old mantra is 'Necessity is the mother of invention' and there are a number of people looking for the solutions they need for making the changing world a little easier. People are frantically looking for solutions and as we at VAL-CO continue to innovate and lead, we will have an impact on the world around us in many ways people never even think about.



Eggs

The Modern Hen: A Look at Cage-free Housing Solutions & Practices for a Changing Market

by Ericka Mongeau

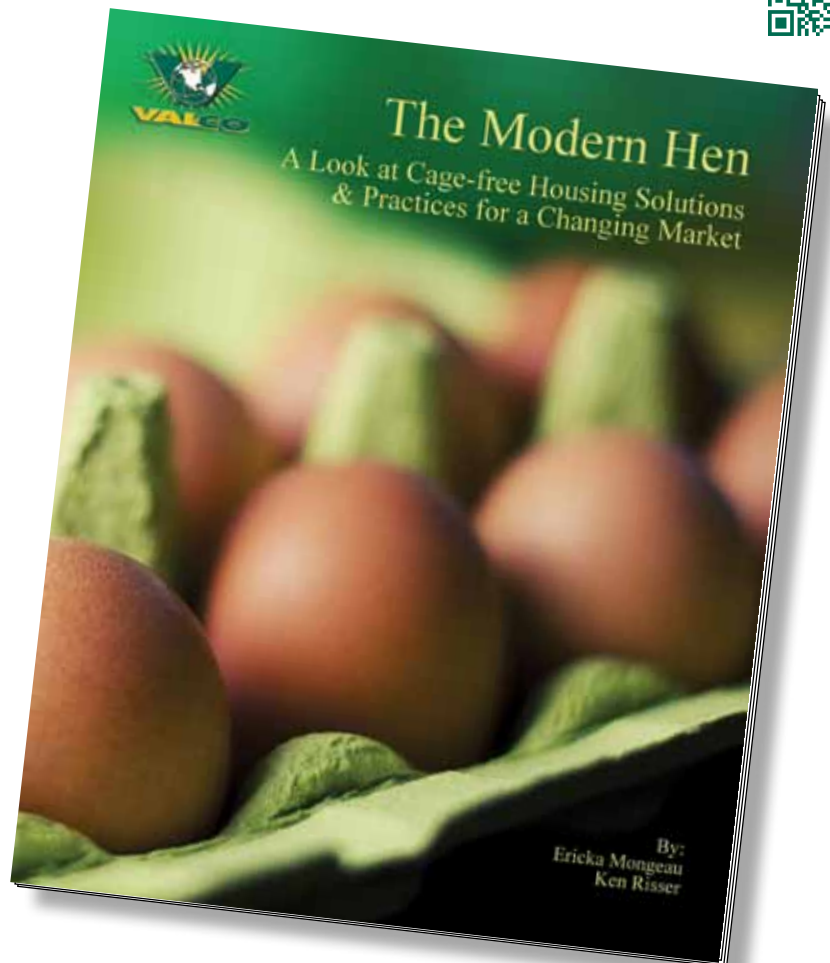
Egg farmers started bringing chickens indoors in the 1940s and 1950s in order to keep them safe from diseases and predators. And now, animal right's activists and consumers are fighting to bring the birds back out of their cages. With no unified set of guidelines that define what "cage-free" laying hen housing looks like, farmers are stuck in a grey area, unclear about how to switch to cage-free housing, what housing system to switch to, and how to effectively manage a cage-free facility to maintain optimal production.

VAL-CO's White Paper, The Modern Hen: A Look at Cage-free Housing Solutions & Practices for a Changing Market addressed the issues that farmers are facing in an attempt to outline the best practices for managing a cage-free facility. The debate is still open on what cage-free system is best: aviary systems, enriched or convertible cage systems, or floor housing, therefore, we address cage-free housing in terms of what the three primary certification labels have defined as necessary for animal welfare in a cage-free housing

system. Each organization has strict rules that must be adhered to in order to be certified under their label. These rules range from how much space each bird should have to move around and perform natural activities such as perching and dust bathing to regulations on air quality and light intensity throughout the day.

It is ultimately up to the farmer to decide what system will work best for his farm. Cage-free birds come with a new set of needs that farmers must learn to properly care for and this will become easier with time as the industry, hen breeds, and information evolve to paint a more complete picture of what it really means to be cage-free.

Scan the QR Code or visit goo.gl/IPNWGN to download the complete White Paper.



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Trade Show Reviews

by the VAL-CO Marketing Department

So far this year, VAL-CO has exhibited in 3 major shows on US soil: IPPE, Midwest Poultry Federation Convention and World Pork Expo. We had the opportunity to meet with current clients and future prospects and share with them some of our newest products. The displays featured our new “Freedom” Community Nest, our new 54” Fiberglass Fan and our Sentry Disinfectant Delivery System. The latter two were at all three shows, as they apply to all industries we serve.

This year was our 62nd year showing at the IPPE in Atlanta, Georgia. The show featured over 1,300 exhibitors and 30,000 visitors at the Georgia

World Congress Center, with the 2016 show being the largest on record.

The Midwest Poultry Federation Convention, currently held in St. Paul, Minnesota, is the largest regional poultry show in the US and drew over 3100 participants this year.



The “Freedom” Community nest on display at the Midwest Poultry Show



A feed bin and our new 54” Fiberglass Fan on display at the World Pork Expo

The turnout at the World Pork Expo was great and our hospitality tent had the most visitors since we started doing it in 2012.

We look forward to seeing you at:

- **IPPE 2017** in Atlanta, GA – Jan. 31 - Feb. 2
- **Midwest Poultry Federation 2017** in St. Paul, MN – March 15 - 16

Pigs



PQA Plus and You

by Matt Joyce

Growing up on a farm in southwest Missouri there was plenty of work to go around. My Dad and Grandpa instilled in me hard work and follow-through, expecting me to finish my job every day. My job was to care for the pigs, which included watering, feeding and making sure the environment was right.

I always took special care of the piglets after they were born – making sure the right injections were given and that they were processed (castrated and vaccinated) correctly. We worked with our local veterinarian and learned about all of the best practices to use.

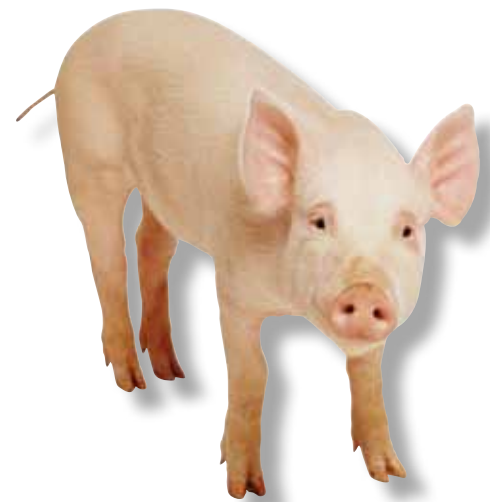
Today, the pork industry uses the PQA (Pork Quality Assurance) Plus program to teach best practices to

farmers through their certification program which lasts for 3 years. The PQA program, started in 1989, is a voluntary program that certifies Producers, Care Takers, FFA and 4H individuals on ways to reduce the risk of violative animal health product residues in pork. In 2007, the PQA Program was enhanced to become the PQA Plus Program, which works to ensure that US pork products are of the highest quality and animal health and well-being are a top priority.

The updated PQA Revisions to the PQA Plus 3.0 were announced during the World Pork Expo in Des Moines, Iowa in June.

The updated program, effective June 8, 2016, reflects pork producers' commitment to

continuous improvement and more fully incorporates the six “We Care” ethical principles and the role of site managers.



These are the six Principles:

1. Produce safe food.
2. Protect and promote animal well-being.

3. Ensure practices to protect public health.
4. Safeguard natural resources in all of our practices.
5. Provide a work environment that is safe and consistent with our ethical principles.
6. Contribute to a better quality of life in our communities.
6. Online training in 14 individual modules.
7. Aid in preparing for implementation of Food and Drug Administration Guidance #209 and #213 on Jan. 1, 2017; a new 12-page “*Responsible Antibiotics Use Guide*” accompanies the new version of PQA Plus.

Research information has been incorporated to increase the program’s effectiveness and to help ensure its validity with customers and consumers. Pork producers maintain a commitment to providing a safe, high-quality product while promoting animal well-being, environmental stewardship, and public health.

PQA Plus is a great program that educates not only producers, but it shows the public that the pork industry is serious in doing what is right every day.

The PQA Plus program includes:

1. The six We Care ethical principles.
2. The 10 Good Production Practices.
3. Caretaker’s daily flow of responsibilities.
4. On farm site assessment.
5. Flexibility in the program allows for customization of SOP’s.

you have a 4000 head wean to finish site or you have four show pigs for the local fair, hold each other accountable for doing what is right.

Today, farming is a lot different than it was 40 years ago, with science and technology leading the way, but as a producer, it comes back to doing the right thing for the animals you care for.

God has blessed us with taking care of the animals and the environment and it is our job to be as responsible as we can.





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VALCO
Performance You Can Count On

Book Club Book Review

by the VAL-CO Marketing Department

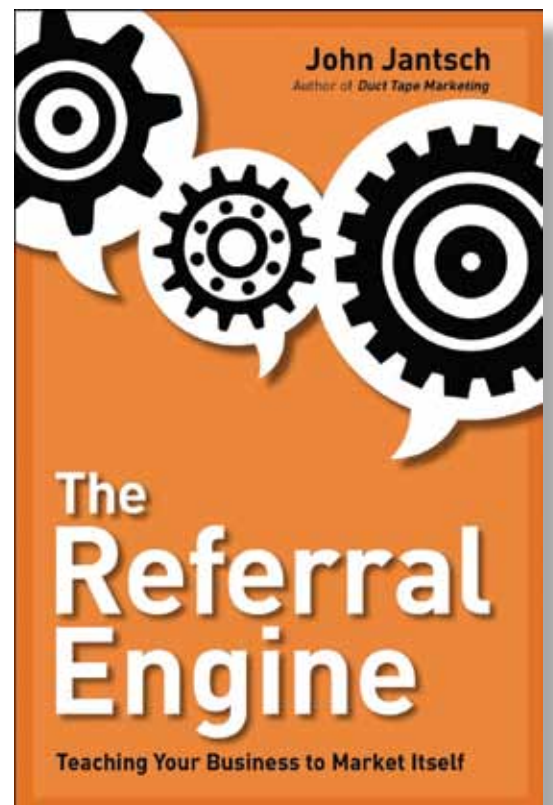
We think that education is key to providing you with the best possible experience with us, so we're always reading, analyzing, and discussing new topics to help us improve our business.

The Referral Engine by John Jantsch

Word-of-mouth referrals have always been the best marketing tool, and *The Referral Engine* is chock-full of great ideas on how to make your customers happy and generate buzz around your business. The book is an easy read, accompanied

by online tools and worksheets to help you develop the best referral marketing plan for your company. We're beyond excited to start incorporating some of our ideas into our business practice and look forward to sharing our experience with you.

If you do decide to read this book, we'd like to hear from you. Please send us an email at marcom@val-co.com and let us know what you think.



Broilers

FUZE® ProLine Feeder Trial

by *Ericka Mongeau*

Feed accounts for 75% of the total cost of raising birds, so getting the best feed conversion rate is necessary for a profitable operation. To test the performance of a variety of feed pan choices, one of the top U.S. Integrators invited VAL-CO to participate in a head-to-head feeding trial against three other internationally recognized manufacturers of broiler feeders. The tests were conducted in modern 46-

foot wide by 500-foot long houses with solid side wall construction and tunnel ventilation. Each manufacturer was given two houses of an eight house farm for the trial, and three flocks were tested. All variables were consistent between the houses, with the exception of the feed pans. The performance results are documented below.

In both the spring flock and the fall flock, VAL-CO Fuze ProLine feeders performed with the best feed conversion rates and the best feed cost to weight ratios. So, what about the Fuze ProLine feeder made it shine above the rest?

Flock 1	COMPETITOR 1	VAL-CO	COMPETITOR 2	COMPETITOR 3
AVG WEIGHT	8.57	8.63	8.58	8.62
TOTAL LBS FEED	810,016	791,664	83,360	791,930
FEED CONVERSION	2.001	1.965	2.003	1.971
FEED COST/NET POUND	0.3741	0.3671	0.3745	0.3689
Flock 2				
AVG WEIGHT	8.96	9.09	8.77	8.85
TOTAL LBS FEED	838,710	850,610	824,050	823,150
FEED CONVERSION	2.011	2.001	2.018	1.999
FEED COST/NET POUND	0.3701	0.3684	0.3733	0.3686
Flock 3				
AVG WEIGHT	9.41	9.26	9.07	9.31
TOTAL LBS FEED	874,240	850,280	835,300	868,030
FEED CONVERSION	1.972	1.949	1.957	1.980
FEED COST/NET POUND	0.3627	0.3585	0.3610	0.3642

The 14-inch diameter pan (larger than the 12- and 13-inch pans prevalent in the market) are more ergonomically in tune with today's birds that are being bred with larger breast areas. The grill spacing is wider to allow baby chicks to enter and exit the feeder without getting caught in the pan. The "center feeding" pan design, along with the pan lip and grill, help to keep the feed in the pan. Fins on the adjustment tower help prevent birds from billing feed out of the pan. Feed is distributed evenly across the pan through large feed windows when the pan is in "flood" mode, and the full range of

positive tower adjustments allows for optimization of feed depths, depending on the type of feed.

The Fuze ProLine family of pan feeders gives you options to find the best fit for your house. Pans come in standard and shallow depths, a 13-inch or 14-in diameter, and a variety of grills so that you can choose the best option for the bird you're growing and your geographical location.

Scan the QR Code or visit goo.gl/V398XT to get more info on the FUZE ProLine Feeders.



Biosecurity Practices on Farms

by *Ericka Mongeau*

Biosecurity has been at the forefront of every farmer's mind since the outbreak of Avian Influenza in 2015, but poultry farmers shouldn't be the only ones developing, implementing, and maintaining strict biosecurity protocols. Swine farmers are faced with a myriad of highly contagious and potentially economically disastrous diseases that can be controlled with the help of proper and deliberate biosecurity.

Generally, biosecurity is the protection of health through avoidance of disease. But more broadly, this includes the implementation of measures that reduce the risk of the introduction and spread of disease agents and this requires a set of attitudes and behaviors by people to reduce risk in all areas of production.

Biosecurity comes in two different forms, bio-exclusion and bio-containment. Bio-exclusion is external biosecurity that combines all activities that prevent the introduction of disease to a farm, whereas bio-containment is internal biosecurity comprised of efforts to prevent the spread of a disease within the farm and to other

farms. All biosecurity has three main goals, isolation, sanitation, and traffic control, and three steps for achieving them, segregation, cleaning, and disinfection.

Segregation keeps uninfected animals away from infected ones

by means of barriers of control. These barriers should be physical whenever possible and procedural when not. Whether barns consist of a full wash-in-wash-out facility or simply require changing footwear, the practices should be deliberate and consistent.



**NO ENTRANCE
WITHOUT
AUTHORIZATION!**



Most pathogen contamination on physical objects is contained in fecal matter, urine, and other secretions that adhere to surfaces, therefore, proper cleaning is required to remove these pathogens from surfaces to stop of spread of disease. Soap and water and a scrub brush are normally adequate for smaller surfaces, like footwear or buckets, but high-pressure washing may be necessary for larger surfaces, like tractors or trucks.

Disinfection should occur shortly after cleaning by means of application of an agent that will destroy bacteria and viruses directly to clean surfaces. Disinfectants do not penetrate dirt and are deactivated by organic material such as feces and wood, therefore specific and liberal application must be done.

Disease can spread through direct animal-animal contact, through semen, airborne transmission, and by people through the means of contaminated footwear, clothing or even nasal mucous. Vehicles and other fomites can carry disease long distances and to multiple facilities, manure and bedding can harbor infectious bacteria if not removed and replenished regularly, and wild animals such as birds, bats, and rodents, can carry diseases and parasites between farms that may be too close together. Regions that have a large livestock population are at greater risk for disease, so

there is a need for more specialized biosecurity practices. An emphasis on the flow of aerosols, insects, vehicles and people in these regions is important to limit cross-contamination between farms.



Important biosecurity practices:

1. *Gather medical history on new reproductive sows or boars and test a representative sample of the herd before purchase.*
2. *Physical location of the herds should be planned so that a sufficient buffer area is present between herds, neighboring farms, and frequently used roads.*
3. *Consider filtering incoming air to reduce pathogens if you find that you are at risk for airborne disease transmission.*
4. *Only essential people have access to the farm and they*

follow strict procedural guidelines for entering (clothing change, footwear change, hand-washing, or showering).

5. *Deliveries should be scheduled so that trucks visit contaminated farms last. Nucleus herds should receive deliveries on Mondays, after a weekend of downtime.*
6. *Decontamination of vehicles before entry to farm premise is necessary to prevent cross-contamination of workers and farm vehicles.*

The following are key principles to vehicle disinfection:

- *Clean vehicles as soon as possible to reduce pathogen load;*
- *Wash trailers with high-pressure water and soap, leaving no organic matter behind;*
- *Disinfect vehicles with a product designed for livestock and ensure that the correct concentration, volume, and contact times are fulfilled;*
- *Allow vehicles to fully dry before transport.*

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If you would like a FREE copy of the Biosecure Area sign shown on the left page, please contact us at marcom@val-co.com.

In The Spotlight

Products



TruSeal™ Standpipe Cap

The new TruSeal standpipe cap is a fully engineered solution to the requirement that the standpipe cap must be able to “breathe” air, but not leak water. The new cap can inhale or exhale the required amount of air as the pressure in the drinker line changes, but seals against water when the drinker lines are flushed, helping prevent messy water spills. Keep your floors dry using the VAL-CO TruSeal standpipe cap.

Aqua-V™ Nipple Drinker



The Aqua-V nipple drinker is the next big thing in layer watering. Ideal for convertible or aviary systems, the Aqua-V delivers plenty of thirst-quenching water to active birds without leaking or dripping. It offers all of the precision quality you expect from world-famous VAL-CO nipple drinkers, in a bright new color.

Employees



Name: Bob Zeller, Jr

Position: VP Sales

Where were you born?:

Lancaster, PA

Hobbies:

Golf, biking, and spending time on the water with my family

Favorite family tradition:

Pork and Sauerkraut on New Year's Day with my Family

If you could share a meal with anyone, living or dead, who would it be and why?

General George C. Patton – Would love to sit down with him and understand what really makes him tick. He has a great mind and was never afraid to speak it, even to the point where it cost him his job.



What changes have you seen in your years in the industry?

I have been in the agriculture industry now 20 years counting my 12 with Pennfield Feeds. Technology and customer demand I feel are the biggest changes. Customer demand - I mean ABF, Organic, free range etc. I believe the consumer may not entirely comprehend what those items entail but they feel that is what they want and what they need.

What technology do you see coming in the industry?

From a technology standpoint I would say the internet will play an even greater part in the future as our customer demographic shifts to a younger, tech-savvy generation.

What excites you about your work and makes it easy for you to come to everyday?

I feel what we do makes a difference in people's lives. Meaning, we produce a product which has a direct impact on the health and well-being of people. When I talk to someone while flying, for example, and explain what I do, they are totally surprised. They had no idea what is involved in raising chickens, for example. So at the end of that day I educated someone.

Fun Stuff

Word Search - VAL-CO Poultry

H Z A G R B G F L N L Y N P Y O D A O X
 T Y J F F E E F Q O T A E U E B H C L Q
 D K P L A A W U U I T C K L K G U V Q D
 V M Q E T Q F X R T D C C L E O G E Q Z
 M N I H R Z N U N A E U I E V C V G Y E
 V C E D P M C V R L F F H T G H E A A P
 N R N I R E A Q H I P L C S O E M I I S
 S S W C S R J X P T A O T P B C G I E U
 D K A O F E T W N N D W L K R H L Y Z V
 T A I F A N S R R E L I O R B O R A S I
 R B G C Q D X H C V F Q S I E T L K V B
 S K C I H C Q H D J T A Q U L D A I S L
 R Z O Y K F L M M G A V N U Z E E J N K
 J E V W I K V P R B F X O W B M A E P E
 Q X V L C N D S Q K L P C X L M Z L R N
 J G T C I V H T D A K W K I O K D J U B
 W E R K F K W S U K Z B O G J H S I J O
 R I N E O K L E E M H W T H I S T Z N R
 F E E D E R S N R H T W M N B C Q V E W
 D R I N K E R S D K N Y B I Y H H G M V

Can you find the following words?

ACCUFLOW
 BEAKS
 BIOSECURITY
 BREEDER
 BROILER
 CHICKEN
 CHICKS
 DRINKERS
 EGG
 FANS
 FEATHERS
 FEEDERS
 FILTER
 HYPERMAX
 NESTS
 POULTRY
 PROLINE
 PULLETS
 VALCO
 VENTILATION

The first 5 people to complete this puzzle and send it in will receive a **\$10 gift card** to an establishment of your choosing (see below for list of options)! Just complete the puzzle, fill out the form below and send it to us via email to marcom@val-co.com or via fax at 717-355-2505. Have fun and good luck!

Name: _____ Company: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Choose your favorite: ☐ McDonald's ☐ Chick-fil-A ☐ Starbucks ☐ Walmart ☐ Pizza Hut ☐ Amazon

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