

For Immediate Release
U.S. Poultry & Egg Association
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Contact: Hannah Keck, 678.514.1979, hkeck@uspoultry.org

USPOULTRY's 2025 Workforce Success and Engagement Conference Addresses Employee Well-Being, Safety, Retention and the Future of HR in the Poultry Industry

USPOULTRY's 2025 Workforce Success and Engagement Conference addressed how industry human resource (HR) professionals can help improve employees' belonging and connection to their organization, retention and recruiting best practices, ways to alleviate stress within the workplace and more.

A panel discussion that included Justina Brownlee, complex HR manager II at Pilgrim's; Anne Guggenbiller, corporate HR manager at Cooper Farms; and Hannah Cagle, HR manager at House of Raeford emphasized the critical importance of eliminating burnout and fostering open communication. They highlighted the need to discuss career growth with employees, helping them understand what it takes to advance within the company and recognize the importance of life outside of work. To boost employee morale, they stressed the value of clear communication—explaining the “why” behind tasks to foster a sense of involvement—and the impact of small gestures such as a verbal “thank-you.” The panel was moderated by Kenyell Carson, head of strategic initiatives at Pilgrim's.

Bobby Riley, director of HR at Pilgrim's; Dale Cook, director of HR operations at Mountaire Farms; and Ja Stephens, corporate director of HR at Claxton Poultry Farms, shared insights on employee retention and effective recruitment strategies, emphasizing the importance of fostering a culture centered on employee satisfaction. Key practices included offering praise and recognition, maintaining self-awareness to ensure that actions align with stated values and navigating generational differences thoughtfully. Acknowledging that the poultry industry requires unique dedication, they stressed the value of verbal appreciation and morale-boosting efforts to show employees they are truly valued.

Dr. Tami West, a stress and mental health expert, highlighted the importance of proper communication and not making stress a competition between two people. She also encouraged people to strive for balance and to remember that everyone is on their own path. West emphasized the importance of setting boundaries within the workplace and using language that motivates, encourages and empathizes. “Don't be afraid to ask for help,” West remarked.

Other related topics were covered, with audience interaction adding value to the overall program. More information on upcoming seminars can be found on USPOULTRY's [website](#).

About USPOULTRY

U.S. Poultry & Egg Association (USPOULTRY) is the All Feather Association progressively serving its poultry and egg members through research, education, communications and technical services. Founded in 1947, USPOULTRY is based in Tucker, Georgia.

About USPOULTRY Foundation

The USPOULTRY Foundation's mission is to support the recruitment and training of the brightest students, seek and fund scientific research, foster student scientists and promote careers in the poultry and egg industry.



(Left to right): Moderator Kenyell Carson, head of strategic initiatives, Pilgrim's; Justina Brownlee, complex HR manager II, Pilgrim's; Hannah Cagle, HR manager, House of Raeford; and Anne Guggenbiller, corporate HR manager, Cooper Farms.