



An Introduction to Future Flock Health Management

Part II

M. Scott Echols, DVM
Brian L. Speer, DVM, Dip, ABVP, Certified
in Avian Practice, Oakley, CA

In order to get to where we want to go, we have to know *where* we are going, what the goal is. The Mission Statement—the first part of the detailed information needed to properly “profile” a flock—serves this need. The Flock Profile is equivalent in many ways to a careful physical examination of an individual bird, except that the most important entity, the flock, is the patient being examined and evaluated, rather than an individual bird.

Can you imagine a business that intends to manufacture and sell cars without any other plan other than the hope to produce as many cars as possible and to see their automobiles out on the street? Unfortunately, at the present time, many aviculturists’ goals are simply based on producing and selling or otherwise distributing chicks without any written or stated plan of how to achieve their goals.

When the time comes that an aviculturist needs input from other professionals, such as nutritionists, construction planners, veterinarians, conservationists, etc, the absence of a carefully thought out and recorded business plan can easily lead to complications along the road to success.

How are these professionals going to be able to best serve the needs of aviculture if there is no solidly recorded plan?

It is said that we all should have dreams. Once we write them down, those dreams become goals—goals that can be shared and worked towards by others that clearly understand them.

The mission statement is a brief written document that clearly defines who you are, what you are trying to accomplish and how you want to attain your goals. A consulting professional should have a clear idea who he or she is working with, or better stated, who is running the business (flock) that is being evaluated. Knowing the operation’s goals gives supporting professionals the ability to work alongside the aviculturist as a team player. A clearly defined Mission Statement provides targets to reach for, windows to the understanding of how these objectives are to be attained, and sets the boundaries for the managerial decisions that must be made.

A Mission Statement does not have to be a complicated thing. A simple mission statement may be “I, Jane Doe,

wish to raise and sell high quality budgerigars at a moderate price to the pet trade, and to have this operation pay for itself.” Another aviculturist may have a different point of view and write “I, John Smith, plan to raise and sell a variety of African parrots in high volume as a significant source of my personal income.” An ostrich breeding farm owner may write that he intends to be employed full time in this agribusiness within a five year period, and have a targeted flock size necessary to sustain this goal. A conservation group working with an endangered species may have as their mission statement the desire to produce as many genetically unrelated birds as possible that are in good health and conditioning. These birds may be intended for reintroduction to the wild, with their budget to be supplied entirely from private donations.

Once the mission statement is set, and understood, an aviculturist can utilize a managing team, including veterinary input, toward some basic goals and constraints within which to operate.

Each separate aviary will obviously be managed differently even though the end product, viable chicks, is the same in all of them. The differences, are many: individual people and personalities, economic constraints and realities, facility issues, the nature and biology of the birds being reared, marketing issues, feed costs, and time line considerations to name a few. As the aviculturist’s needs or goals change, or the market, aviary or other variables change, so must the mission statement and the management being applied. When you are writing your mission statement, make certain that it reflects truly who you are and realistically sets attainable goals.

As we continue to discuss Flock Health Management, we will cover other categories of detailed information that are utilized in the generation of a “Flock Profile.”

Structural Design and Facility Maps, Traffic Flow Maps, Production Records and Business and Financial Records will all be discussed as individual categories that are combined during the evaluation of the flock. ➔

AVICULTURAL CONSULTATION SERVICES

3807 Main Street, Oakley, California 94561
(510) 625-1878 • Fax (510) 625-8511

Brian L. Speer, DVM
Dip, ABVP, Avian Practice

M. Scott Echols, DVM

Comprehensive Flock Management Programs

- Programs individually tailored to fit your needs; including production, marketing, financial and personal goals.
- Helping you to establish effective and practical record systems designed to optimize your desired avicultural results.
- Concepts of comprehensive flock health management that can be effectively applied to caged bird and aviary species, ratites, gallinaceous birds, passerines, columbiformes and others, including endangered species propagation efforts.
- Local, National, and International clients are welcome.
- Initial call and estimate for consultation services provided free of charge.

“AVICULTURE IS SPOKEN HERE!”