

Cholera Vaccine Keeps Turkeys Healthy

Brigham Young University



If you enjoyed that gobbler you and your family ate at Thanksgiving, or simply like the occasional turkey-on-rye sandwich, you may be indebted to a Brigham Young University (BYU) emeritus professor of microbiology named Marcus Jensen.

Jensen, who retired from BYU in 1994, developed a vaccine that prevents turkeys from getting coryza, a whooping cough-like disease. He also created vaccines to fight avian cholera and staph infections. Because of Jensen's work, coryza has been eliminated from many flocks.

“ Billions of turkeys have been inoculated with Jensen's M-9 vaccine and grown fat on their way to market.

Jensen started his research on poultry diseases in the late 1970s to help Utah turkey farmers who were experiencing severe financial losses because of high mortality rates among their flocks. Jensen was able to develop the M-9 coryza vaccine extraordinarily fast in 1979. Instead of working on the vaccine over a period of years, he and colleagues developed it in about six months. They started in January and by July were reporting successful field tests.

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