INTEGUMENT DISORDERS

I. KERATOCONJUNCTIVITIS
   (Ammonia Burn)

Keratoconjunctivitis is an inflammation caused by excessive levels of ammonia in poorly ventilated poultry houses. Lesions include keratitis, conjunctivitis, and a corneal opacity with a possible ulceration. Birds may become blind, but recovery is possible depending on the severity of damage to the cornea. Because ammonia is produced by the degradation of uric acid by bacteria in the litter, control of litter moisture and proper ventilation will prevent this problem.

II. SCABBY HIP SYNDROME

Scabby hip syndrome is a lesion observed at the slaughter plant in broiler chickens and is characterized by superficial ulceration and scabbing of skin on the thighs. This is a multifactorial problem; poor feathering, high stocking density, and poor litter conditions have been incriminated. Affected carcasses are downgraded. In recent years, improvements in litter management and use of nipple drinkers have contributed to the reduction in incidence of this condition.

III. STERNAL BURSITIS
    BREAST BLISTER or BREAST BURN or BREAST BUTTON

Sternal bursitis is a fluid-filled lesion located on the ventral aspect of the keel bone of poultry. Chickens and turkeys have a synovial bursa, the sternal bursa, which under repeated trauma increases in size and may become secondarily infected. This lesion is closely associated with locomotor problems in heavy birds and increased contact time with litter. Such blisters, if not too large, are trimmed from the carcass at processing resulting in downgrading. The terms breast blister, breast button, breast burn are also used for this condition.

IV. XANTHOMATOSIS

Xanthomatosis is an unusual condition characterized by the abnormal subcutaneous intracellular accumulation of cholesterol in chickens. Skin lesions are initially soft with fluctuating honey-colored fluid, and later become firm with marked thickening and irregularity of the surface [Fig. 1; Xanthomatosis; Cornell U]. This condition is rare and in the past was probably due to contamination of feed fat with hydrocarbons.