

EYE 129 The Chicken Course

Egg Factory Egg-spanion: A Role-Playing Project Review Activity

Mrs. Tweedy's Egg Farm is a two-acre site in central Maine, town of Zal (pop. 15,000). There are 175,000 white leghorns employed on the site. Mrs. Tweedy's is planning a 75,000 hen expansion. There will be numerous stakeholders involved in the review process. A public hearing will be held in which the hosts (conveners of the hearing)--members of the town selectboard--hear concerns from various parties. All organizations and agencies are real. The town is, of course, fictional, the the town positions are real. Participants are assigned a role, which they will research using the Internet and other resources, so their positions are real-world based. Each person who is not a "host" prepares for the hearing by writing 1) their majors concerns/issues, supporting their points, and 2) identifying the major benefits/opportunities from their perspective. The hosts identify the areas most likely at issue for their probable "jurisdiction" over the project and they must prepare to run the simulated hearing.

Bring your stakeholder identity—perhaps make a nametag or fold cardstock into a sign for your desk. At the start of the class meeting, participants find out if they have allies, and if so, pool their knowledge and flock together. We expect there will be a group in favor and a group against. But there may also be other groups—perhaps a neutral one or a group that only mildly takes one position or another,

Here's the plan:

- a. Gathering of flocks. Participants will find out if they have allies and meet as a group to discuss and define their position. (15 minutes)
- b. Hosts convene the review and make an opening statement. (5 minutes)
- c. Each group will make a statement, focusing on the main points of their argument in relation to the expansion. We will alternate groups, so each group will have an opportunity to speak more than once. (30 minutes)
- d. Each group will make a summary/closing statement. (10 minutes)
- e. After a short recess to confer, the hosts will make a closing statement and announce their decision about the expansion. (15 minutes)

Stakeholder list

1. **Mrs. Tweedy** (actually, her name is Gladys Tickchek), She likes being in charge and she likes the “Yankee dollar.” She owns the business in its entirety.
2. **Mr. Tweedy**, a timid (perhaps even “hen-pecked”) man who does not like being in charge but does not mind taking things out on other people.
3. **Miss Tweedy**, a daughter who hopes to inherit the family income if not the business itself.
4. **Harry/Henrietta the Head Hen Wrangler**. A foreman at the company. Wants to keep his/her job.
5. **United Egg Producers lobbyist**. A hard-hittin’ advocate of egg producers (and I don’t mean the chickens themselves). This is a real, and effective organization.
6. **American Egg Board member**. “It’s all about the egg” is your motto. This too is a real organization.
7. **Maine Department of Agriculture senior staff**, with a degree in agricultural economics and a commitment to the governor and the people of Maine
8. **Maine Department of Environmental Protection senior staff**, secretly having an affair with a senior staff of the Maine Department of Agriculture. Has a degree in environmental science from USM. Dedicated about the environment but also knows people need jobs.
9. **Paul(a) the PETA board member**. Does not eat meat. Does not wear leather.
10. **MOFGA board member**. Pragmatic concern about people, animals, local food, and the environment.
11. **“Friends of Sanford River” board member**. You have been in this town for 30 years and know everyone. You are retired and have lots of energy for river stewardship.
12. **Little Roy Blue-Seal**, local representative of a large animal feed company. Just imagine the amount of feed needed every day for 225,000 hens!
13. **Young Andy/Amy**, member of Future Farmers of America. At your age you are still plenty naïve, but you are curious. And you want to have your own egg ranch some day, and plan to name all the chickens no matter how many there are.
- *14. **Zal Selectboard member**. Cranky but honest.
- *15. **Zal Selectboard member**. Friendly, but not particularly honest. Which way is the wind blowing?
- *16. **Zal Selectboard member**. New, wants to do a good job serving the town.

17. **Economic Development Director** for town of Zal. Gosh, the economy has been terrible and we need all the business we can get. How can the town lose? After all, chickens don't suck up tax money for schools and medical services.

18. **Little Fred Phen**, Baker of bread, purveyor of local health foods at a small natural food store in the town, and downwind of Mrs. Tweedy's. You are barely scraping by.

19. **Maine Toxics Action board member**. You took a course called "The Chicken" while you were an undergraduate and it changed your life.

20. **Zal Town Conservation Board member**. You know the selectboard only barely tolerates the conservation board, and your role is only advisory, but you are conscientious.

21. **Tanya Trucker**. You run a transportation trucking company. You want to focus on transportation issues because other things make your head hurt. Mrs Tweedy's is a major client so you have to be here even though you would rather be listening to country music.

22. **Sarah Sanitarian**. You are local but you work for the state health department. You are concerned about worker health and safety, and that the eggs do not endanger consumers.

23. **Zal resident**. You are concerned about the environment and jobs. This is hard because you know you need one to have the other. You want to be able to participate in the project review as a member of the town.

24. **Zal Planning Board Member**. Your position is that you know you have to follow the site plan and development laws of your town, which are the same as those of the town of Gorham.

25. **Central Maine Bird Fanciers member**. (Yes, this a real group:
<http://centralmainebirdfanciers.org>)

26. **Nancy/Ned Nurse Practitioner**. Lives in the community, treats many low-income people.

27. **Frannie/Frank Farmer**. Local small farmer and CSA owner/organizer

28 **Wendy/Wallace Worker**. You are an egg farm worker (Facilities supervisor and all-around-maintenance-person)

* You are the host and must run the meeting