Canola meal
Canola meal is a high-quality protein source with an excellent amino acid balance for poultry, according to T.D. Knezacek, A.K. Ward, J.P. Dahlia, K.V. Schwean-Lardner and H.L. Classen of the University of Saskatchewan (abstract 100).

However, they said the level of canola meal inclusion is often limited in laying hen diets due to evidence of a reduction in feed intake and egg size and an increase in hen mortality with the use of higher levels. Part or all of these effects may relate to amino acid digestibility and/or the level of glucosinolates in canola meal, Knezacek et al. noted.

They explained that current knowledge and use of amino acid digestibility for feed formulation and much lower glucosinolate levels in canola meal suggest that there may be no need to maintain a limit on canola meal use in laying hen diets. Knezacek et al. conducted a study to determine the effect of graded levels of low-glucosinolate canola meal, up to complete replacement of soybean meal, on the performance of laying hens.

Wheat-based diets were formulated on a digestible amino acid basis with four levels of canola meal (0-16.7%) and were fed to three commercial laying hen strains: Lohmann Brown, ISA Brown and Lohmann LSL. Rations were fed from 19 weeks to 52 weeks of age, with new weight, specific gravity and feed intake measured at four-week intervals.

Overall, Knezacek et al. said that the canola meal inclusion level had no effect on hen bodyweight gain, feed intake, feed-to-egg mass ratio, egg weight or egg specific gravity. Hen-day egg production was also not affected by canola meal, but hens fed all diets — including canola meal — laid numerically more eggs than those fed the wheat/soybean meal control diet (P = 0.0512).

Although not statistically significant, hens fed the highest level of canola meal had the highest mortality (P = 0.0933), Knezacek et al. reported.

Hen-day production and mortality were similar for all strains, but there were significant differences among genotypes for egg shell quality traits. There were no interactions between the level of canola meal inclusion and bird strain.

They concluded that the complete replacement of soybean meal in laying hen rations with canola meal did not affect hen performance, but the effect of high levels of canola meal on hen mortality requires further investigation.

In 60 seconds
Cattle products: Vigortone Ag Products has announced several additions to its product lines. CinnaGar is a blend of two potent plant extracts from garlic and cinnamon that are encapsulated by a patent-pending technique that ensures a slow release of the product in the rumen. Vigortone noted that garlic inhibits the production of methane, while cinnamon slows the breakdown of peptides and amino acids. Summer Grazer Products with I.C.E. Technology is a line of mineral/vitamin mixes designed to aid in the prevention of nutrient deficiencies in grazing cattle, especially during periods of heat stress. Vigortone said these products contain relatively high levels of trace minerals, vitamins, calcium and phosphorus to help ensure optimum health, reproductive performance and forage digestibility. Preg-Saver with I.C.E. Technology has been shown to improve dry matter intake and milk production in dairy cattle during periods of heat stress. The I.C.E. Technology is a patent-pending technology consisting of a combination of key ingredients, including an osmotic compound that helps animals stay hydrated when under heat stress.

Scours vaccine: Intervet/Schering-Plough Animal Health announced U.S. Department of Agriculture approval of an important label extension for its Guardian scours prevention vaccine. The new label approval affirms that the vaccine provides a six-month duration of immunity for E. coli K99. This positions the product as the only multi-valent bacterial and viral combination scours vaccine with six-month duration of immunity for E. coli. Guardian is a broad-spectrum scours vaccine for use in healthy pregnant cows and heifers that protects against the most relevant viral and bacterial causes of scours. It is labeled as an aid in the prevention of neonatal calf diarrhea caused by enterotoxigenic E. coli pilus type K99, bovine Group A Serotype G6 rotaviruses, enterotoxemia caused by Clostridium perfringens types C and D and as an aid in the control of neonatal calf diarrhea caused by bovine coronavirus.