

## Capsule Summary

**PG:62-38**

**Building 264C, Poultry Physiology Cage House**

**United States Department of Agriculture, Beltsville Agricultural Research Center**

**Beltsville, Prince George's County, Maryland**

**1965**

Building 264C was a Poultry Physiology Cage House or laboratory at the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center (BARC). Building 264C is a large rectangular 1-story wood-frame building that is clad with 1/4" wallboard panels. The building rests on a poured concrete foundation with poured concrete slab. The metal gable roof has an elastomeric covering. The building features single metal door on the east and north elevations and a single metal door and a large wood frame double door covered with wallboard panels on the west elevation. Double louvered vents are located in each gable end. The building is divided into four rooms, three on the east and large room covering the western 2/3 of the building. The large room houses metal poultry cages and a small room served as an autopsy room. The building was vacated in 2008.

Building 264C was used by the Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI), the largest bureau at the agricultural research facility. Poultry research took place at BARC as early as 1912, which included experiments on poultry breeding, studying the incubation of eggs, and the effects of feeding on egg production (Houck 1924; Mohler 1939). Through their efforts, the BAI undertook critical poultry and swine research to improve the size and health of farm animals. Researchers focused on breeding and nutritional studies with the aim of making chickens more economically productive for farmers and the poultry industries. Building 264C is located on the 2,980-acre Central Farm, the largest of the farms at BARC. Building plans for Building 264C were drafted in 1963 and 1964, and by 1965 the 2,880 square-foot building was constructed off of Poultry Road with a row of other laboratory buildings (Master Plan 1996).

Building 264C has not previously been evaluated to determine its individual significance or status for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) as a contributing or non-contributing resource within BARC. This evaluation concludes that while Building 264C is not individually significant, it is a contributing resource within BARC, a 6,582-acre federal agricultural research facility, which was determined eligible for the NRHP in its entirety as the largest national research facility for the USDA and for its role as the most diversified agricultural research complex in the world. BARC's period of significance ranges from its inception in 1910 to its reclassification as a regional center in 1984. Under Criterion A, Building 264C is a contributing resource within BARC, which is significant at the national level for its association with events that have made significant contributions to the broad pattern of our history with agricultural experimentation. Under Criterion C, Building 264C is also a contributing resource within BARC, which is significant for embodying the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction. Although Building 264C does not reach the level of significance necessary for individual listing on the NRHP, it maintains its significance within BARC under Criteria A and C.

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM**

NR Eligible: yes   
no

Property Name: Building 264C: Poultry Physiology Cage House  
Beltsville Agricultural Research Center (BARC) Inventory Number: PG:62-38  
10300 Baltimore Avenue, Building 264C,  
Address: Central Farm City: Beltsville Zip Code: 20705

County: Prince George's County USGS Topographic Map: Beltsville 7.5-Minute

Owner: U.S.A. - U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Is the property being evaluated a district?  yes

Tax Parcel Number: 0143 Tax Map Number: 0019 Tax Account ID Number: 01-0070151

Project: NEPA Predesign and Hazmat Services Project for BARC Agency: USDA

Site visit by MHT Staff:  no  yes Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Is the property located within a historic district?  yes  no

<i>If the property is within a district</i>		District Inventory Number: <u>PG:62-14</u>
NR-listed district <input type="checkbox"/> yes	Eligible district <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes	District Name: <u>Beltsville Agricultural Research Center</u>
Preparer's Recommendation: Contributing resource <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no Non-contributing but eligible in another context <input type="checkbox"/>		

<i>If the property is not within a district (or the property is a district)</i>	
Preparer's Recommendation: Eligible <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	

Criteria:  A  B  C  D Considerations:  A  B  C  D  E  F  G  None

Documentation on the property/district is presented in: Historic Site Survey, BARC, 6 volumes, in MHT Library, PR229  
Addendum to MIHP Form for PG:62-14

Description of Property and Eligibility Determination: *(Use continuation sheet if necessary and attach map and photo)*

The Beltsville Agricultural Research Center (BARC) was one of the largest agricultural research facilities in the United States (Figures 1 and 2). Owned by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the facility was established in Beltsville in 1910 and significantly expanded in the 1930s and 1940s. In the 1960s, USDA's research program began evolving from an internationally recognized research center to a decentralized model. In 1984, it was reclassified as a regional center. BARC's period of significance ranges from its inception in 1910 to its reclassification as a regional center in 1984.

Building Location

BARC identifies Building 264C's address as 10300 Baltimore Avenue - Building 264C, Central Farm. Building 264C is 820 feet southwest of the intersection of Poultry Road and Odell Road.

Building Description

Located at the Poultry Complex in the Central Farm of the USDA's BARC, the Poultry Physiology Cage House is a large rectangular building (Figures 3-5). The front of the rectangular building faces east towards an unnamed paved road running parallel to Poultry Road. The 1-story wood-frame building is clad with 1/4" wallboard panels. The building rests on a poured

<b>MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW</b>	
Eligibility recommended <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Eligibility not recommended <input type="checkbox"/>
Criteria: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D	Considerations: <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> G <input type="checkbox"/> None
Comments: _____	
<u>Heather Z...</u> Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services	<u>05/23/2017</u> Date
<u>Be...</u> Reviewer, NR Program	<u>6/8/17</u> Date

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
NR-ELIBILITY REVIEW FORM**

Continuation Sheet No. 1

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concrete foundation with poured concrete slab. The metal gable roof has an elastomeric covering. The building features a single metal door on the east and north elevations and a single metal door and a large wood frame double door covered with wallboard panels on the west elevation (Photos 1 and 2). Double louvered vents are located in each gable end. The building is divided into four rooms, three on the east and a large room covering the western 2/3 of the building. The large room houses metal poultry cages and a small room served as an autopsy room.

History of Property

Building 264C was a Poultry Physiology Cage House or laboratory used by the Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI), the largest bureau at the agricultural research facility. Poultry research took place at BARC as early as 1912, which included experiments on poultry breeding, studying the incubation of eggs, and the effects of feeding on egg production (Houck 1924; Mohler 1939). Through their efforts, the BAI undertook critical poultry and swine research to improve the size and health of farm animals. Researchers focused on breeding and nutritional studies with the aim of making chickens more economically productive for farmers and the poultry industries.

Building 264C is located on the 2,980-acre Central Farm, the largest of the farms at BARC. The Central Farm contains the original acreage USDA purchased in 1910 and historically was used by the Bureaus of Dairy Industry and Animal Industry, and their successor units for several decades. The designed farm landscape of Central Farm contained most of the buildings at BARC, with research and support being their primary land uses (P.A.C. Spero 1998, Robinson and Associates 1998). Building 264C is located on one of the five major clusters arranged on the Central Farm known as the 200 Area Cluster (Robinson and Associates 1998). The 200 Area Cluster is one of four clusters that date to the New Deal era expansion. The poultry area included buildings 236 through 281. The 200 Area Cluster partially follows a 1934 design by A.D. Taylor and Delos Smith that features park-like conditions with trees and clipped lawns. The poultry area's design has two formal and ornamental planting areas, and trees were planted on a relaxed grid to provide shade to the poultry houses.

In 1953, the USDA had a major reorganization that abolished the bureaus as organizational units, which resulted in BARC becoming part of the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) (Wiser and Rasmussen 1966; Matthews 1953). In 1959, research at ARS was undertaken by divisions and departments, with the Animal Husbandry Research Division and Animal Disease and Parasite Research Division conducting poultry research (USDA 1959). During that same year, there were at least 700 small animal and poultry houses. Building plans for Building 264C were drafted in 1963 and 1964, and by 1965 the 2,880 square-foot building was constructed off of Poultry Road with a row of other laboratory buildings (Master Plan 1996). By the time Building 264C was constructed, BARC was in a state of decline as funding was being directed to experimental stations elsewhere in the country (Sinclair 1988). By 1988, BARC had diminished to 7,000 acres and by 1990 there were approximately 800 buildings still being used as research laboratories, greenhouses, barns, poultry houses, shops, and offices. Poultry research was still being conducted during this time period (USDA ca. 1990). In 2008, Building 264C was vacated.

NRHP Evaluation

Building 264C has not previously been evaluated to determine its individual significance or status as contributing or non-contributing to BARC. This evaluation concludes that while Building 264C is not individually significant, it is a contributing building of BARC, a 6,582-acre federal agricultural research facility, which was determined eligible in its entirety for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) as the largest national research facility for the USDA and for its role as the most diversified agricultural research complex in the world. The history and development of the agricultural research facility also reflects New Deal policies and programs, and contains notable landscape architecture, Georgian Revival architecture, and experimental agricultural architecture.

Under Criterion A, Building 264C is contributing to BARC, which is significant at the national level for its association with events that have made significant contributions to the broad pattern of our history with agricultural experimentation. Many aspects of twentieth century living for the farmer and consumer were influenced by the scientific research conducted at BARC. BARC is a prominent example of the federal role in agricultural research, scientific agricultural research in general, and New Deal policies and programs, such as the 1930s agricultural policies and funding, PWA, and CCC, which all played important roles in shaping the experimental farm. BARC's scientists and researchers have made major contributions toward scientific knowledge that have resulted in incredible advances in crop production, plant and animal disease control, and pest control. Building 264C was specifically used as a Poultry Physiology Cage House or laboratory for the BAI, the largest bureau at the

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
NR-ELIBILITY REVIEW FORM

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agricultural research facility. BARC scientists and researchers made valuable scientific contributions, both in foundational and applicable science.

BARC and Building 264C have not been determined significant under Criterion B for their association with the lives of persons significant in our past.

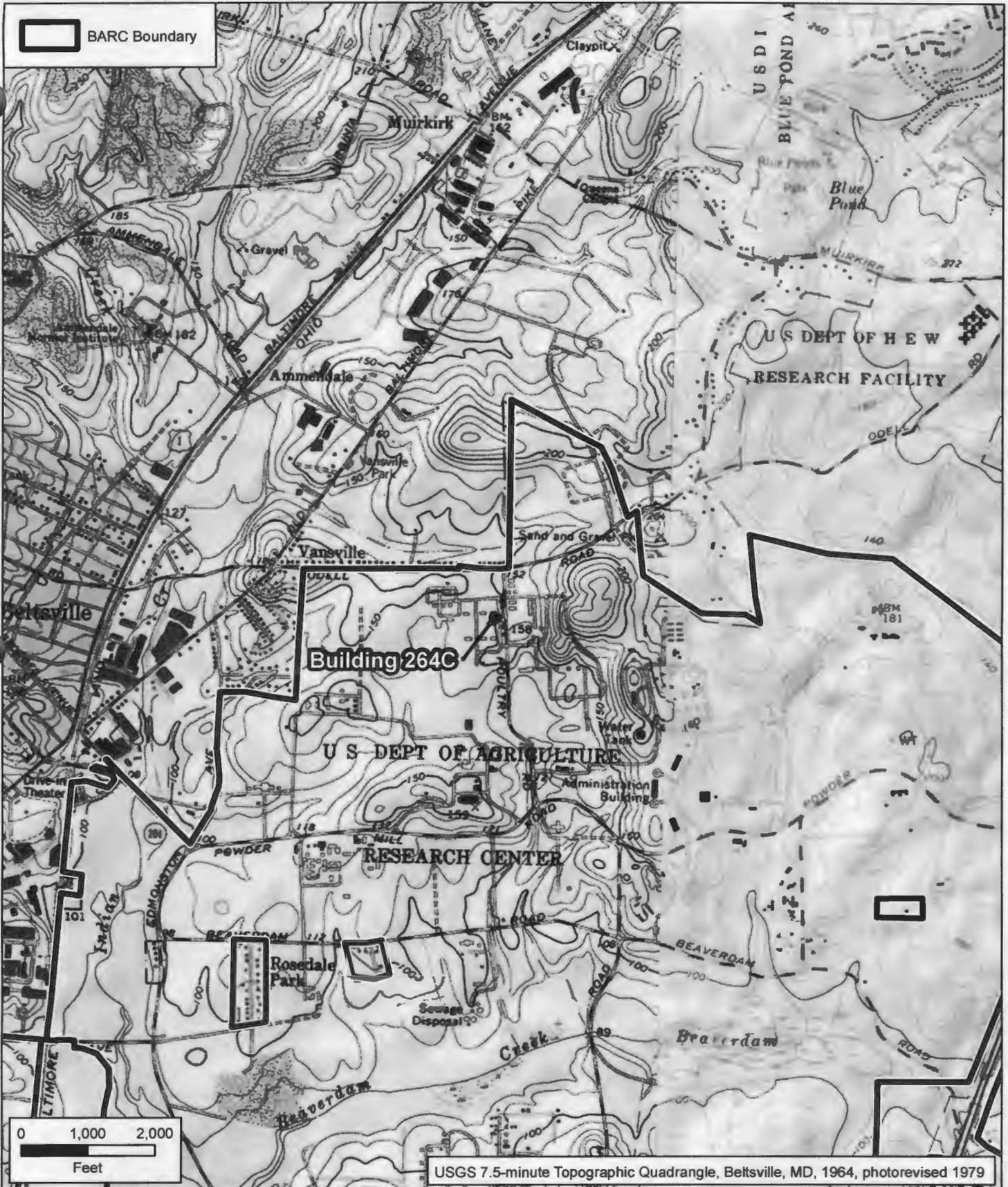
Under Criterion C, Building 264C is contributing to BARC, which is significant for embodying the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction. The physical appearance of BARC was strongly influenced in the 1930s by the planning team of A.D. Taylor, landscape architect, and Delos Smith, architect. The majority of the facility's buildings share a Georgian Revival style and/or display the characteristics of experimental agricultural architecture. BARC's landscape includes major paved roads, minor service roads, field and research crops, pasture lands, seasonal ponds, forests, sustainable meadows, and other landscape features and buildings. Though Building 264C is a later addition to the BARC landscape and a relatively modest design, it represents a good example of the experimental agricultural architecture for which BARC is significant, and contributes to the overall landscape.

The agricultural research facility was not evaluated under Criterion D for its yielding, or likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Building 264C retains its original location and has the same setting within an agricultural research complex. It is specifically linked to its research functions and ties to the surrounding poultry research buildings in the 200 Area Cluster. The feeling of, and association with, an agricultural research center is intact. The building has few alterations and it retains its integrity of design, workmanship, and materials. The building has been vacant since 2008 and in poor condition. There is considerable overgrowth on the building and the exterior door has been removed.. Although Building 264C does not reach the level of significance necessary for individual listing on the NRHP, it maintains its significance within BARC under Criteria A and C.

Prepared by: Lorin Farris, MA (AECOM)

Date Prepared: March 17, 2017



USGS 7.5-minute Topographic Quadrangle, Beltsville, MD, 1964, photorevised 1979

CLIENT	U.S. Department of Agriculture		
PROJ	USDA ARS Beltsville		
SCALE	1:24,000		
SOURCE	ESRI 2017		
Q:\Projects\ENVI\AP\CRM\USDA - BARC CRM study\900-GIS and Graphics\920-GIS\BARC_Bldg_264C_topo.mxd			
	TITLE		
	Central Farm, Building 264C		
		12420 Milestone Center Dr. Germantown, MD 20876	
		PROJ NO	60521079
		FIGURE	4



CLIENT U.S. Department of Agriculture			TITLE Central Farm, Building 264C		
PROJ USDA ARS Beltsville				12420 Milestone Center Dr. Germantown, MD 20876	
SCALE 1:1,500				PROJ NO 60521079	FIGURE 5
SOURCE ESRI 2017		Q:\Projects\ENVI\AP\CRM\USDA - BARC CRM study\900-GIS and Graphics\920 GIS\BARC_Bldg_264C_aerial.mxd			

## **Photograph Log**

**PG:62-38**

**NEPA Predesign and Hazmat Services Project for  
Beltsville Agricultural Research Center**

**Building 264C: Poultry Physiology Cage House**

**10300 Baltimore Avenue, Central Farm**

**Prince George's County, MD**

**Brian Clevon, Architectural Historian/Photographer**

**12/2/2016**

**MD SHPO**

1. PG;62-38\_2016-12-2\_01.tif, Building 264C, Poultry Physiology Cage House, View of North and East Elevations, Looking Southwest
2. PG;62-38\_2016-12-2\_02.tif, Building 264C, Poultry Physiology Cage House, View of South and West Elevations, Looking Northeast



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MD - Prince George's County - Poultry Physiology Cage House\_000

B. Cleven, 12/2/2016

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EPSON

Epson  
Professional Paper

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Professional Paper

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