



A special breakfast and morning tea sponsored by Sunny Queen Australia took place at Millmerran State School and Pittsworth State School recently.

Foodbank and Sunny Queen reduce hunger

MORE than 20 percent of Queenslanders experiencing hunger are children and, in an effort to reduce this alarming statistic, Sunny Queen Australia – the nation's favourite smiley-faced eggs – joined with Foodbank Queensland to help make a difference to those experiencing food insecurity in regional areas in the state.

A special breakfast and morning tea sponsored

by Sunny Queen took place at Millmerran State School and Pittsworth State School recently to share the goodness of eggs and serve kids a delicious and nutritious meal.

In addition to this, through the charitable partnership, Sunny Queen and Foodbank Queensland have provided 120 food hampers and dozens of eggs for families who need a helping

hand at this time of year at these two schools.

When a child goes to school hungry and without proper nutrition, there's much more at stake than empty tummies – their entire education can be put at risk.

Foodbank Queensland is focussed on supporting the thousands of children returning to school from low-income vulnerable families.

Their mission is to make sure that all Queensland children, regardless of their circumstances, have an equal start in life.

A nutritious breakfast is proven to improve attention, memory, behaviour, and attendance, which all leads to happier and healthier children.

Foodbank Queensland's School Breakfast Program provides fresh, healthy breakfasts for thousands of children every week who would have otherwise gone without.

For more information on the program or to donate visit foodbank.org.au



Sunny Queen Australia joined with Foodbank Queensland to help make a difference.

Post-hatch performance using in ovo CrM supplementation

WELCOME to 2022 – hopefully the year of connection and prosperity.

I hope you all had a wonderful break and are looking forward to starting 2022 with anticipation to a more 'normal' year.

We are gearing up for a great year of funding, education and training events, so make sure you stay tuned to find out more.

I want to begin the year with a story from one of our recently graduated Poultry Hub Australia supported honours students.

PHA sees the importance of supporting up and coming researchers and doing everything we can to attract them into the poultry industry.

With the support of both Australian Eggs and AgriFutures Chicken Meat, we awarded two \$5000 honours scholarships.

Corey-Ann Firman was one of those recipients and she has recently completed her honours degree at the University of Adelaide.

The aim of Ms Firman's study was to improve the post-hatch performance of male and female chicks hatched from younger breeder flocks using in ovo creatine monohydrate supplementation.

It was hypothesised that an in ovo injection of CrM would:

- Positively influence post-hatch growth and body composition
- Increase fibre development and breast muscle yield in male



by TAMSYN CROWLEY
Director

and female birds hatched from young breeder flocks.

Her study found an increased hatch rate was seen in chicks given in ovo creatine monohydrate of 93.5 percent, compared to chicks given in ovo saline of 88.6 percent and the control group of 88.8 percent.

This increased hatch rate was not statistically significant but was a 5.5 percent increase over the commercial hatch rate expected for this age flock of 88 percent.

The growth of birds in this trial greatly exceeded the expected growth of Ross 308s in a commercial setting from week three onwards.

Treatment did not have a significant impact on breast muscle, liver or heart weights as a proportion of bodyweight at hatch or at day 42.

At day 42, despite having the smaller bodyweight, females had a higher proportion of breast muscle and liver, while males had a higher proportion of heart muscle.

Bone, fat and lean mass proportions were



the average proportions of lean and fat mass were less pronounced in birds given in ovo CrM.

Males had slightly more fat mass and females had more lean mass than birds in the other treatment groups.

This could be an important finding in regard to improving flock uniformity in mixed flocks.

Mean fibre area did not significantly differ between treatment groups at hatch or at day 42.

Females had a larger mean fibre area than males both at hatch and at day 42, and at hatch

continued P2



Corey-Ann Firman was a recipient of PHA's \$5000 honours scholarship.



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Poultry Industry Calendar of Events

2022

JAN 18-20 – VICTAM and Animal Health and Nutrition 2022, Thailand, www.victamasiasia.com

JAN 25-27 – International Production & Processing Expo, Atlanta US, www.ippexpo.org

MAR 30 - APR 1 – 7th International Conference on Poultry Intestinal Health, Columbia, www.ihsig.com

MAY 10-11 – British Pig & Poultry Fair, Stoneleigh UK, pigandpoultry.org.uk

MAY 15-17 – Poultry Information Exchange and Australasian Milling Conference (PIX/AMC), www.pixamc.com.au

MAY 31 - JUN 2 – VIV Europe 2022, Netherlands, viveurope.nl

NOV 8-10 – European Symposium on Poultry Genetics, Hannover Germany, www.espg2022.org

How to supply event details: Send all details to National Poultry Newspaper, PO Box 162, Wynnum Qld 4178, call 07 3286 1833 or email: design@collins.media

poultrynews.com.au
07 3286 1833

HAVE YOUR SAY!

All producers are encouraged to send in letters to be published in NPN, outlining any concerns or issues they may have with the industry.

This is an open forum where you can cover any topic, whether for or against an issue.

Please send your letters to: editorial@collins.media or PO Box 162, Wynnum Qld 4178

Reach out if you're under stress

THE past two years have been extremely tough years for many egg farming families.

As we enter another year, I am concerned that stress and mental health issues may be getting some of our egg farmers down.

Egg farmers have been under a large amount of stress for a prolonged period of time.

There are a whole range of issues on their plate, including an oversupply of eggs – causing very low egg prices – and rising farm production costs.

Some farms are facing severe financial repercussions.

COVID-19 has also had a big impact – not only disrupting transport, egg distribution and on-farm staffing but also in terms

of magnifying isolation. Quarantine and border restrictions over the past year restricted face-to-face contact with other people.

In the case of our industry, egg farmers were unable to catch up and meet at forums and events which would have been held throughout the year normally.

Having grown up on a



**Egg Farmers
of Australia**

by **MELINDA HASHIMOTO**
CEO

farm, I understand exactly how isolating it can be.

It can also be difficult to offload your stress by talking about it to other family members.

We can also feel too busy or embarrassed to pick up the phone to call a friend to talk over our stress.

In an article on this topic, Beyond Blue encourages men in particular to

talk about their feelings.

Beyond Blue stated, "Isolation and difficulty accessing services are some of the challenges faced by men living in rural and remote communities."

"For those making a living from the land, there is some evidence to suggest that the farm environment is hazardous to mental health, with farmers experiencing high rates of stress and depression."

Beyond Blue is an organisation that specifically helps with stress, anxiety and depression among men.

This is a link to the Beyond Blue website – beyondblue.org.au/who-does-it-affect/men/what-causes-anxiety-and-depression-in-men/men-in-rural-and-remote-areas

If this is you, I encourage you to take some steps to talk about your stress.

Likewise, if you're OK but know of another egg farmer who is facing high degrees of stress, call them to see how they're going.

Ask them – are you OK? When we get bogged on a country road, other drivers often stop to lend a hand.

It's the country way. This is the premise for an organisation called 'Are you bogged mate?'

It offers a helpful insight into the topic of stress and depression among

country-based men – areyouboggedmate.com.au/what-we-do

If you find yourself bogged by stress or you know a person who is in need of some help, then 'Are you bogged mate?' could be a good start.

You may also chat to your GP as a starting point.

There are other ways to take that first step to talk about stress on the farm.

These include:

- Farmer Assistance Hotline 132 316
- Lifeline Australia 131 114
- MensLine Australia 1300 789 978
- Kids Helpline 1800 551 800
- Suicide Call Back Service 1300 659 467.

Many farmers don't have a hobby because they focus on the farm.

Or, if they do have a hobby, it's not uncommon to find the golf clubs, fishing rods or books covered in cobwebs.

This is largely because – due to farming pressures – it's been so long since they spent some time on themselves.

Please reach out if you or someone in your family or team needs help or a good chat about current things that worry them.

Meanwhile, we look forward to a prosperous 2022, with better egg prices and a reduction in poultry industry disease issues.



Egg Farmers of Australia chief executive officer Melinda Hashimoto.

Post-hatch performance using in ovo CrM

from P1 males had more fibres per square micrometre.

Treatment did not affect the number of abnormal breast muscle fibres, but more males were more likely to have a higher number of abnormal fibres compared to females.

Despite not being statistically significant, the major finding of this study was the improved hatch rate.

An improved hatch rate was not seen in previous studies, so power calculations only took into consideration post hatch growth when calculating sample size.

Future research would need to increase the sample size for the results to be fully applicable to the Australian poultry industry.

That being said, the hatch rate was increased by 5.5 percent compared to the expected rate.

While no post-hatch improvements were seen, an improved hatch rate would result in farmers having more birds in their flock.

More birds would still be an increased income for farmers.

The possibility of in ovo creatine monohydrate potentially preventing leg issues in fast growing birds could be

a very important finding for the industry.

Further research would need to be conducted to determine the true effect, but as leg problems are known to occur in chicken meat birds, it would be fantastic if in ovo CrM could help with this issue.

The finding of a difference in growth and body-weight between the sexes is not new, but as the Australian poultry indus-

try rears mixed flocks, it reinforces the importance of considering both sexes when trying to improve the growth, health and welfare of the birds.

This is especially true when it comes to considering flock uniformity.

Ms Firman said, "Knowing that Poultry Hub Australia was interested enough in my research to provide me with a scholarship gave me extra incentive

to push through when things became stressful."

"It will help with bills, as the intense requirements of this honours project and wanting to give it my full commitment left me little time for paid work.

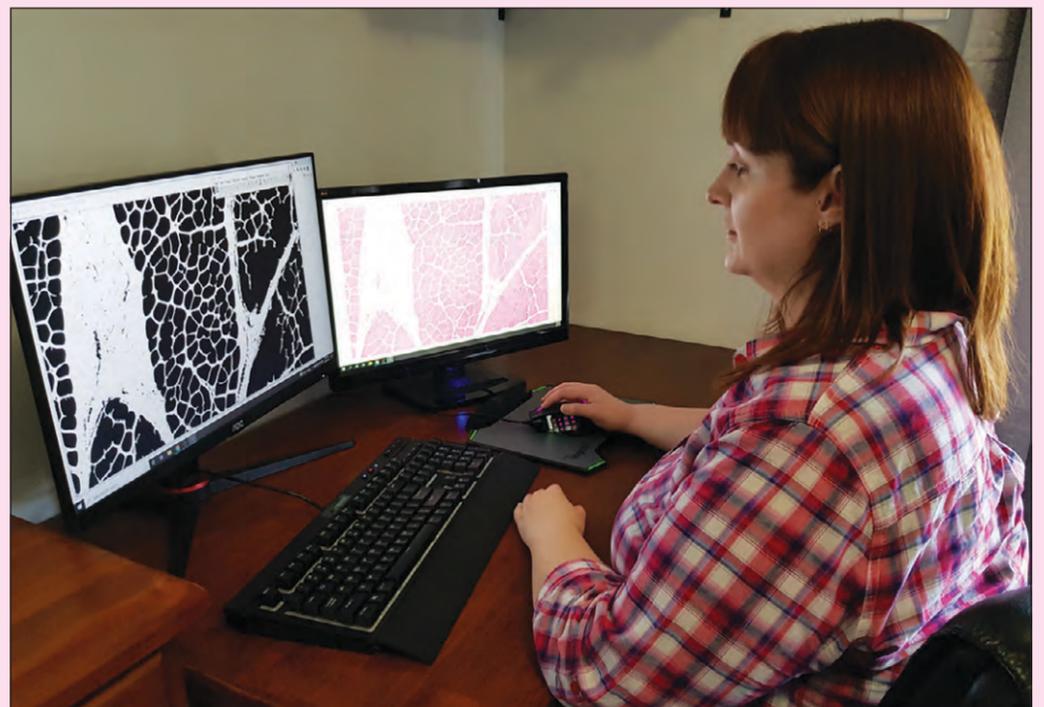
"It will also allow me to invest in more up-to-date technology, which will hopefully help in my future in research."

We wish Corey-Ann all the best with her

future studies.

I hope you are all safe and well and encourage you to reach out – we are always looking for ways to support industry and farmers and would welcome any suggestions of how we can be of assistance.

If you have an idea or would like to chat all things poultry, don't hesitate to contact our office poultryhub@une.edu.au



The scholarship will allow Corey-Ann Firman to invest in more up-to-date technology, which will help in her future in research.

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While in Lilydale, Tasmania recently, I enjoyed this Marion Bay Free Range Egg and Poultry Australia certified free range chicken and some pasture raised eggs from my host's farm.



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Cagey commentary nicely laid out

HEALTHY respectful articulate debate is too often in short supply, especially when it comes to highly emotive subjects such as how animals are farmed.

This is sadly so often the case when rabid activist groups try to validate their extremist views, typically via short sharp sensationalist and staccato social media posts.

While I occasionally understand their views, I more often than not have no empathy for their mode of delivery – particularly when their voices are backed up by illegal farm and business invasions – which puts the animals they are supposedly fighting for in peril.

Anyway, that's enough space for them.

In last month's column, headlined 'Caged hens have surely had their day', I made my views known on what I think of egg-laying



Cant Comment
by
BRENDON CANT

hens being kept in cages where they may occupy a space the size of an A4 piece of paper.

While I believe that 50 years on from the introduction of caged egg farming in Australia, it's time to move on.

I can understand and indeed sympathise with alternate views put by those heavily invested in Australian egg production, including those with a bias to caged eggs.

On this note, I was happy to receive prompt column feedback from Brian Ahmed, the managing director of LT's Egg Farm in Werribee, Victoria.

A widely respected industry figure, Brian began his email to me by saying he respected everyone having an opinion and fully supported people having freedom of choice – providing they have all of the correct information needed to make an informed decision.

Alas, he was off to a good start and pretty much won me over up-front.

Here's what he went on to say.

As your article stated, caged egg farming began about 50 years ago, but what it does not say is that it was designed to produce eggs in volume to feed a growing population and at the same time improve animal welfare, food safety and biosecurity.

If you ask the consumer whether they prefer eggs from chickens in cages or ones that are free then your answer will be 'free range', however if you ask the consumer if they would prefer their eggs produced from a farming system that has a lower mortality rate and does not use chemicals

and antibiotics, then the answer would be 'caged'.

How can farming and farmers develop in a way that is sustainable considering the confusion surrounding farming?

The gap between the city and country continues to grow and certain groups have used this space to run their own misinformation agendas.

While farming systems may have changed and today's farmers produce food in a variety of ways, a family farmer's ethical responsibility to his animals and the environment has not!

Why are supermarkets taking caged eggs off the shelves?

Is it because of consumer demand, or is it because the consumer continues to buy caged eggs and they would prefer to move the consumer to an egg where the profit margins are higher?

Free range egg sales in supermarkets may be growing, but is it 'consumer driven' if the supermarkets are not giving consumers the choice?

Farmers such as myself, who do not deal with the supermarkets, have a growing market for their caged eggs.

This may come as a surprise to many, but family farms build trust with their customers and continue to grow by promoting and building their own markets.

If everyone believes that the egg market is consumer driven, why not let the market decide?

Why are large retailers taking away consumer choice and why do governments want to take steps to phase out any form of food production?

All family farms are in the same boat – even though they may vary in

size, our traditional way of life is being threatened and our opportunity to grow sustainably to look after our families is being taken away from us by large companies that undertake in food production and control the market.

Free range is a small-scale farming system, however large retailers and producers have found a way to mass produce free range eggs.

I wonder what the consumer will think when they see how these farms are run.

The chickens will not be running around in the lush green pastures, as most people would imagine.

We should not be focussed on any farming system.

We should be focussed on assuring farmers are responsible to their animals and the environment – no matter which farming system they use – and allow the consumer freedom of choice.

Brian and his family have been egg producers for 50 or so years and therefore have witnessed and been part of many production cycles and trends in that time – hence have plenty of 'skin in the game'.

To this day, they still offer their customers a choice of caged and free range eggs.

While I can't disagree with the concept of freedom of choice when it comes to eggs and pretty much everything else in life, I still maintain that our egg-laying chickens also deserve freedom of choice.

In other words, while they may choose to remain indoors in some free range systems, if and when they are offered access to the great outdoors, at least they have that choice.

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Build Better

Aussie's cleaning miracle

THOUGH Aussie Pumps has been famous in the poultry business for years as an effluent pump supplier, firefighting pump manufacturer and pressure cleaner designer, the most recent breakthrough has been adapting their drain-cleaning jetters into an all-purpose shed clean up tool.

Widely regarded as Australia's most innovative and successful pressure cleaner manufacturer, Aussie Pumps has successfully exported their unique stainless-steel design of pressure cleaning equipment all over the world.

The company has had huge success in poultry farms where cleanliness and hygiene are paramount.

Healthy birds are clean birds!

Jetter breakthrough

The company started building high-pressure drain-cleaning jetters at the request of plumbers around 20 years ago.

Called the 'drain-cleaning revolution' because instead of using outdated electro-mechanical devices, or eels, Aussie Pumps' jetters use high-pressure water to clear blocked drains faster, more safely and far more efficiently.

The original machines were based on the plumbing industry's brief for a 4000psi machine delivering around a 20L/min flow.

Used with the right nozzles and lightweight high-pressure drain-cleaning hose, the Aussie Pumps' Cobra Jetter achieved a

real breakthrough in performance.

Powered by a Honda twin cylinder engine, the Cobra Jetter is able to clear blocked drains with a range of 60m from the machine.

These trolley mount units are able to be wheeled to the job.

Aussie Pumps chief engineer John Hales said, "It's not only the range that counts but also the ease of operation, the efficiency in which the job can be done – a matter of minutes not hours – that made all the difference."

"Bigger machines with flows up to 30L/min soon followed, along with higher pressures of up to 5000psi.

"We think the best combinations are 5000psi delivering anywhere between 16-20L/min for smaller diameter drains such as 4-8".

"For bigger drains, we developed the Aussie Python – a 30L/min pump delivering 4000psi.

"Since those early days, Aussie Pumps has developed the design so that the machines can be mounted on either trailers, ute beds or trolley mounted."

Reel convenience

The Aussie Viper Mini Reel is a portable high-pressure reel built into a handy stainless-steel carry frame that comes with its own nozzle rack, on/off valve and 60m of high-pressure hose.

Thus, the operator can use the Mini Reel 60m from the machine and still have 60m of range to clear blocked drains.

The Viper Mini Reel can

also be used with smaller Aussie machines such as the Aussie 4000psi Scud pressure cleaner – possibly the most popular poultry shed cleaning machine in the business.

"It may take a little longer to clear the blocked drain with the Scud 400," Mr Hales said.

"That's just a factor of pressure and flow.

"The bigger the machine, the quicker it is."

Clean up quick

Every poultry shed needs a pressure cleaner and using the Aussie Pumps Jetter as a high-powered pressure cleaner is also a bonus.

Being able to use a big Aussie machine with a gun quick coupled into the standard 60m hose gives an extraordinary cleaning range.

For longer reach, the Viper Mini Reel can also be used with a gun clicked in, which is connected to the jetter to provide real flexibility and ease of cleaning.

"The 4000psi 20L version is a Class A machine, ideal as a multifunction cleaning tool for the industry," Mr Hales said.

"We'll see these machines being used in sheds all over the country within the next year or two, as the need for hygiene means quickly cleared blocked drains are not only desirable but essential."

For further information on the Aussie Cobra Jetter range for poultry shed applications, contact Aussie Pumps authorised distributors or visit aussiepumps.com.au



Aussie Pumps' Cobra Jetter clears drains in minutes.

Sale of Hazeldene's Chicken Farm to private equity firm

GLOBAL law firm DLA Piper has advised the Hazeldene family – owners of Hazeldene's Chicken Farm – on the sale of HCF to BGH Capital, a leading Australia and New Zealand private equity firm.

HCF is at the forefront of poultry production in Australia, having grown to be one of the largest integrated poultry producers in Australia.

The deal involves BGH Capital taking a majority stake in HCF, with the Hazeldene family retaining a stake in the business they have owned for more than 80 years.

DLA Piper corporate partner Andrew Fiskien led the transaction.

"It has been an honour to work with the Hazeldene family to run a hotly contested and successful competitive sale process," Mr Fiskien said.

"The interest from buyers is a testament to the hard work the family has put in over generations to build one of regional Australia's largest and most dynamic food and agri-businesses."

Shareholder and outgoing managing director John Hazeldene said, "The family and the incoming investor BGH have achieved a great outcome here."

"HCF has been an integral part of the Hazeldene family story for genera-

tions, and it was important to us to be able to achieve a result that was a positive not only for us as shareholders, but also one that will deliver strong benefits for our customers, staff and the broader community.

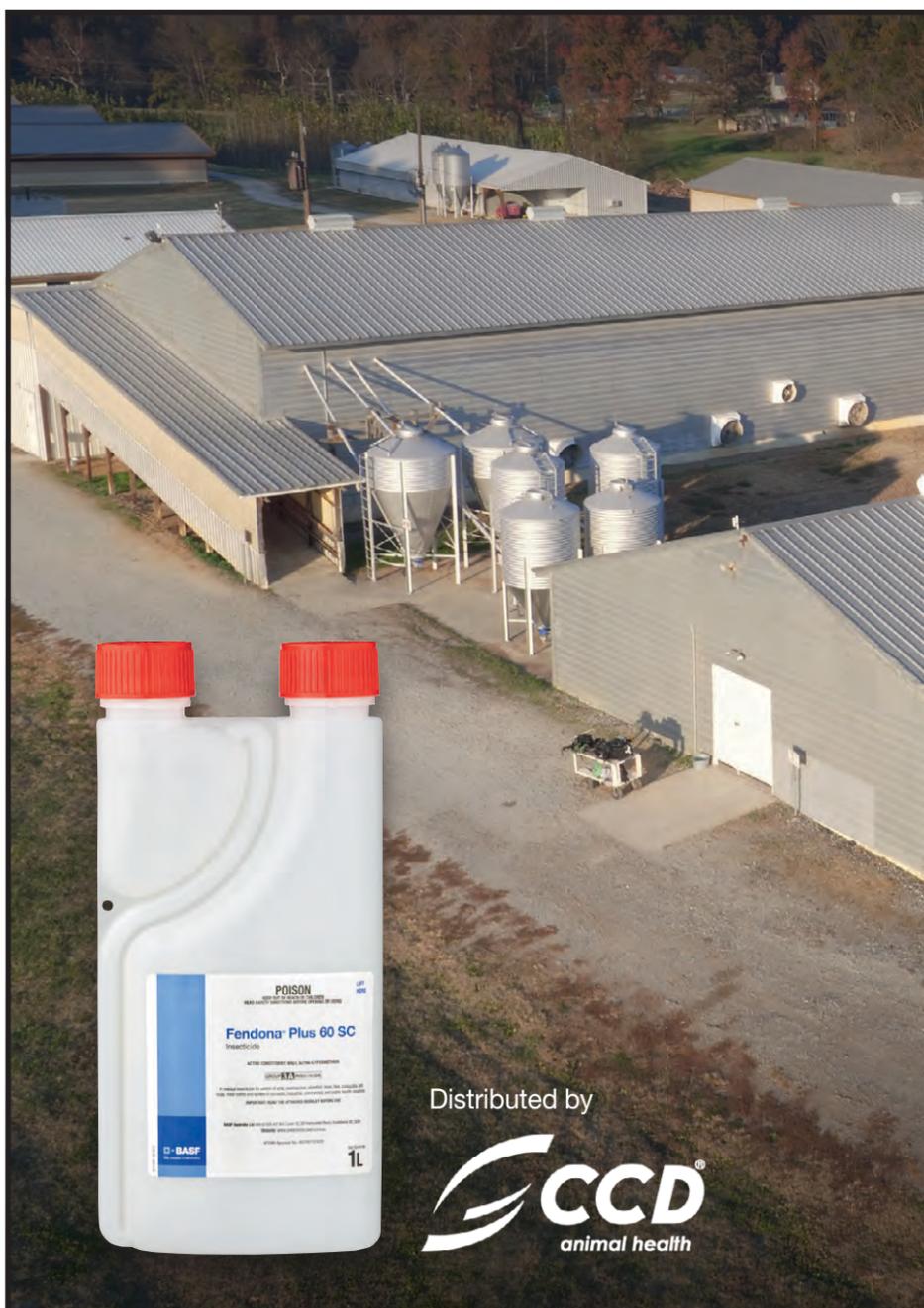
"We are confident in BGH's ability to deliver, so much so that we have remained invested as minority holders in the business," Mr Hazeldene said.

"The DLA Piper team was outstanding and integral in helping to secure this result – they understood what we were trying to achieve, were respectful of the history and legacy of the business, and guided us smoothly through what is the largest transaction the family has ever done."

The transaction was signed on October 27, 2021 and completed in December 2021.



DLA Piper corporate partner Andrew Fiskien led the transaction between Hazeldene's and private equity firm BGH Capital.





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Final word on washing raw chicken meat

AUSTRALIA'S leading chicken meat and food safety experts are calling on Australians to stop washing raw chicken.

The Australian Chicken Meat Federation and the Food Safety Information Council are concerned by new research that found nearly 49 percent of Australian cooks were washing raw whole chicken before cooking it, despite the food safety risk that it presents.

ACMF executive director Dr Vivien Kite said, "We are still seeing recipes advising cooks to wash raw chicken as part of food preparation and we want this to stop."

"Some bacteria, such as salmonella, are part of the normal microflora of the chicken gut but can cause illness in humans if food is not handled correctly.

"Washing raw chicken before cooking it is likely to splash raw meat juices – and any bacteria that may be present – around the kitchen sink, bench top, utensils and other raw foods, increasing the chances that you may get sick," Dr Kite said.

Top tips for handling raw chicken safely:

- Don't wash raw chicken
- Keep raw chicken separate from other cooked or raw foods
- Ensure your tools, utensils and chopping boards

are cleaned and dried thoroughly before you start preparing your food and ensure you clean any tools with hot soapy water after use

- Store raw chicken in the fridge for one to two days after bringing it home, preferably towards the back of the fridge and on the lower shelves

- Wash and dry hands thoroughly after handling raw chicken

- Cook chicken meat thoroughly – right through – with all parts of the meat to reach at least 75C.

Dr Kite said, "Chicken is the nation's favourite meat, with Australians consuming approximately 47kg per person each year."

"The Australian chicken meat industry has been working incredibly hard to ensure there will be a solid supply of chicken.

"Summer is the most popular time of the year for Australians to enjoy chicken, and we don't want holidays to be ruined by a food safety slip-up.

"Whether you like it hot, cold, in a roast or on a sandwich, there are plenty of reasons for Australians to enjoy chicken, but please handle it safely," Dr Kite said.

Did you know:
 • More than 99 percent of chicken meat consumed in Australia is grown here

- Chicken has the lowest environmental footprint of all meats

- Chicken is versatile and inexpensive

- Chicken meat is an excellent source of protein

- Cooked chicken is a source of essential nutrients including vitamins B6, B12 and niacin, and minerals magnesium, selenium and zinc

- Cooked chicken delivers more protein in fewer kilojoules than cooked legumes, pulses, nuts and seeds.

Reaching more than 8 million Australians, the collaborative ACMF and FSIC food-safety myth-busting campaign also found that:

- Rates of washing raw whole chicken have reduced from 60 percent to 49 percent since similar research was conducted in 2011

- Cooks who wash raw chicken pieces with skin on has reduced from 52 percent to 43 percent

- Cooks who wash skinless pieces has reduced from 41 percent to 40 percent

- 78 percent of respondents said they cook whole chicken

- 83 percent cook chicken pieces with skin on

- 88 percent cook skinless pieces.

For more information, visit chicken.org.au

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For more information, visit www.chicken.org.au

Australians, stop washing raw chicken.

Proposals sought for chicken meat program research

AGRIFUTURES Chicken Meat Program investments are driven by the its Strategic Research Development and Extensions Plan.

The current Chicken Meat Program Strategic RD&E Plan has four priorities that aim to improve the sustainability and productivity of the Australian chicken meat industry.

The program supports increased knowledge and understanding that fosters an innovative, adaptive and valuable chicken meat industry.

The program focusses on chicken meat production in Australia from

genetic factors, through to production and post farm-gate processing.

AgriFutures Australia is seeking proposals for the Chicken Meat Program that address at least one of the four priorities within the AgriFutures Chicken Meat Program RD&E Plan 2019-2022.

The program has an annual budget spend specifically allocated for RD&E projects focussed on outcomes aligned to the strategic plan.

The AgriFutures Chicken Meat Program open call for research closes Friday February 11, 2022 at 12 noon Australian eastern daylight time.



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Caged-egg layer hens.



Free range and cage free layer hens.



Marketing does get in the way of reality.

Give caged-egg farmers credit

■ A comparison of free and caged

MY family has been producing eggs – a valuable and affordable source of protein – for Australian families for over three generations.

We began farming in the 1960s, when all farms were free range.

Then the egg board run by the government of the day approached all egg farmers and said that all chickens needed to be taken off the ground and put into cages – to improve the welfare of the birds and to make the eggs safer and more affordable for the consumer.

Fast forward and now we have a continued push by activist groups to have caged-egg farming phased out... and they want governments to believe it is consumer driven.

If the question was asked 'Do you prefer eggs from chickens that are free to roam or locked up in cages?', the answer would naturally be free to roam.

However, if the question as to the preference for eggs produced with or without the use of antibiotics and chemicals were asked, then the answer would be in favour of caged eggs.

While we caged-egg farmers produce an affordable egg in a cage system, at no point in time is the welfare of our birds compromised.

Being a farmer means we look after our birds every single day of the year, as we understand the importance of their health and wellbeing.

Free range and caged free is the way my grandparents farmed, and these systems can be done very well on a small scale.

However, they were not designed for intensive farming and come with risk.

To produce eggs in volume and make them safe and affordable for the consumer, the cage system was designed and resulted in:

- Less mortality
- Less disease
- Less parasites, both internal and external
- Cleaner safer eggs
- Less use of antibiotics and chemicals.

Supermarkets and large organisations then saw an opportunity to increase their profit margins and began to market non-caged eggs in volume, and I am certain most consumers are not aware of how exactly their purchased eggs have been produced.

Supermarkets and big corporations have driven farmers to these intensive non-caged systems and as a result, the industry has seen the emergence of many diseases that had disappeared when chickens were taken off the ground and put into cages, separating them from their faeces.

Free range is no longer a few hundred chickens running around in green grass and living the life of luxury.

The reality is that many of these non-caged systems are large sheds holding tens of thousands of chickens, with

small openings for access to an open range which has little to no green grass.

The outside stocking density has also become a marketing tool.

People are now assuming that lower stocking density relates to better animal welfare when in fact, the outside stocking density is an environmental issue.

Chickens are birds and all birds flock together!

So, 50,000 chickens on a 35-hectare property may be less than 1500 birds per hectare however, is the consumer really getting what they're paying for?

Over the past 70 years, our farming systems may have changed but our commitment to animal welfare, food safety and the environment remain.

Our business, like any, continues to grow and we are proud farmers who continue to meet the needs of our customers.

Caged, barn or free range all have their place in meeting the diverse needs of the Australian consumer.

Therefore, rather than focussing on the actual farming system, we must focus on making all farmers responsible – so we can continue producing eggs from all methods and give people a quality product, with the freedom to choose the egg that best meets their needs.

Brian Ahmed
LT's Egg Farm
Managing Director



In reality, many non-caged systems are large sheds holding tens of thousands of chickens, with small openings for access to an open range which has little to no green grass.

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Plant based protein faces meat definition



Cheeky Chooks is an RSPCA game that encourages education about farming egg laying hens.

Cheeky Chooks student game

IT'S time to put your farmer hat on and take care of some cheeky chooks!

Get to know your hens' cheeky personalities and make sure they're always safe and happy.

Build coops and perches, keep food and water full and add lots of fun things to your farm – keeping these smart and curious birds playing and laying eggs!

And now for the boring grown up stuff...

Cheeky Chooks is a free educational computer game about farming egg-laying hens – created for eight to 13-year olds – with easy links to the Australian curriculum.

The game introduces players to the quirky and inquisitive nature

of layer hens and highlights the things they need to have a good life.

With 10 million plus hens still confined to battery cages in Australia, Cheeky Chooks aims to help people form a connection with hens through a fun and interactive resource.

RSPCA Australia has developed materials for a classroom activity that prompts discussion about animals' needs and what animal welfare is.

This activity can be modified for parents or guardians wishing to spark conversations about animal welfare at home and how it relates to the food we eat – whether it be at home, at school or when eating out.

A SENATE inquiry into the definitions of meat has been told the plant-based protein sector has the potential to quadruple the size of Australia's annual soybean crop, while one local manufacturer says he is currently "re-importing" Australian wheat because of a lack of value-adding capacity locally.

Manufacturers of plant based 'fake meats' appeared before a public hearing of the Senate Rural and Regional Affairs Inquiry into definitions of meat and other products recently.

They told senators they fully supported the need for clarity in labelling to prevent consumer confusion in the marketplace, but also defended the use of identifiers such as beef, pork and chicken on the labelling of their plant-based products, saying these are needed to ensure consumers understand their product.

One Australian-based manufacturer and exporter of plant-based meat substitutes told the inquiry his rapidly growing business will have to move off-shore if it is not allowed to use specific meat terms such as 'chicken'.

Without those terms, plant-based manufacturer representatives said, consumers would not understand what the plant-based products are going to cook, taste and eat like.

Impossible Foods vice president government relations Tyler Jameson said, "We do not see a problem with that, we have chicken nuggets instead of white meat nuggets, because

consumers understand the product is going to taste like a chicken nugget, not a beef nugget or a fish nugget."

"We have used pork instead of white plant-based meat or white meat made from plants because they know they're going to get the same fat level and chewiness of a minced pork, as opposed to a minced turkey or a minced chicken.

"It makes more sense from product utilisation and consumer optics and understanding to call it beef with the appropriate qualifiers and language on the label – contains no animal products, made from plants – so that consumers don't actually purchase it thinking it is from a cow."

Yet champagne can only come from the Champagne region in France, and many cheese products can only use certain names if they are produced in a specific region.

Why, Senator Susan McDonald asked, do we have this big push on provenance on some products, and yet on plant-based products we're saying this is somehow different?

Mr Jameson responded that by geographic indicators was a challenging issue and one that many countries and states consider to be 'protectionist'.

Representatives of US manufacturers Impossible Foods and Beyond Meats, and Australian companies v2food and Deliciou, each stated they had no interest in confusing consumers because their entire value proposition was based on

the fact their products, which they call meat, are made from plants.

Claims have been made that plant-based protein companies are deceiving customers, seeking to close down the livestock sector and threatening the fabric of regional Australia.

Beyond Meats counsel Jessica O'Connell said the company's position is that using consistent standardised food terms that consumers understand along with qualifiers such as 'plant based' is the very best way to convey to consumers what they're purchasing.

"When a consumer sees our Beyond Mince plant-based mince product they know this meat is from plants because of that phrase 'plant-based'," Ms O'Connell said.

"They know it is intended to function as any other mince, whether it is chicken, pork or plant-based and so we think this is the most appropriate way to convey this type of information.

"We're confident the naming conventions are truthful, they're not misleading or deceptive, and they're sufficient to convey the true nature of plant-based meat products."

Stronger naming regulations would force off-shore move

Deliciou founder Ketjil Hansen – an Australian-based company manufacturing a range of vegan seasonings and pea, soy and wheat-based meat substitutes and exporting to the US, Europe and Asia – said his company will

be forced to move away from Australia if it cannot use meat terms to label its plant-based products.

"If we are not allowed to use the word 'chicken' together with the qualifying words 'plant based', then it would be impossible for the consumer to know that our plant-based product will taste and feel like chicken.

"If Deliciou is not allowed use meat and dairy names on our packaging, then it will be impossible for Deliciou to communicate the purpose of our products to consumers and there will be no market for us in Australia.

"I will go as far as to say that if the outcome of this inquiry is that we are no longer to use meat and dairy terms, together with plant based qualifying terms, then it no longer makes sense for Deliciou to produce products in Australia and we will be looking at taking all of our production to overseas markets where meat terms are allowed to be used."

Impossible Foods grilled on mission to end livestock production

Impossible Foods was also grilled on its stated mission to end meat production from animals by 2035, comments which have earned the company considerable media coverage and publicity in a crowded and competitive plant-based market space.

Senator Susan McDonald pointed out that in Australia, livestock production is the largest agricultural industry, a major regional employer and one of the

country's largest manufacturing industries.

"Your program would effectively seek to end the livelihoods of hundreds of thousands of Australian families who work in the livestock production supply chain – what would you say to that?"

Mr Jameson responded by saying he grew up on a farm.

"I understand why you ask that question, my snow days in school were spent not sleeping in, they were spent throwing hay out to the cows and horses."

"I understand that this is a personal cultural issue for farmers and our company does not go out of its way to denigrate them necessarily.

"We are just putting a product out on the market and letting consumers decide."

Challenged that his statement was not consistent with the company's mission statement to end the production of food from animal derived products, Mr Jameson said he felt the company was being consistent.

"We're not asking the Australian Senate for anything, don't ask any of our legislatures back in the US for help – we're just putting a product out on the market and letting consumers decide."

Each of the plant-protein manufacturers said they have received no credible reports of consumer confusion from the labelling of their products and said the Government should not be making decisions based on

continued P11

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Plant based protein faces meat definition

from P10 anecdotal reports.

v2food founder Nick Hazell said, "Legislative intervention should not be based on some anecdotes such as 'I went to the supermarket myself and I was confused'."

"Because these anecdotes diametrically oppose the evidence provided to this inquiry by lots of organisations such as the ACCC, FSANZ, and also our experience where we have been selling to millions of unconfused consumers."

The inquiry heard that most ingredients used to produce the plant-based meat substitutes that sell in Australia are sourced from overseas.

Nick Hazell said that when he started v2food, he assumed it would be using Australian ingredients to make the plant-based burgers and mince it produces.

However, he said it was a shock to find that protein extracts, concentrates and isolates – which are the building blocks of alternative protein – are not made in Australia.

"We do grow great legumes and pulses, we have an amazing agricultural sector, but no one has felt the need to invest in manufacturing in Australia up until now," Mr Hazell said.

"So that is deeply concerning and we want to do something about it."

He said he believes Australia can quadruple the amount of high protein soy it produces from current levels as the plant-protein sector grows.

"We're forming consortia and partnerships so that

we can grow the soy in Australia and process it in Australia, and that involves hundreds of millions of dollars of investment."

Re-importing Australian grown wheat

Ketjil Hansen from Deliciou said he faced the bizarre situation in having to re-import Australian grown wheat at present.

"We find ourselves with our plant-based meat range having to import the key ingredient from overseas," Mr Hansen said.

"We have learned that suppliers overseas import Australian wheat, process it overseas, for us to then import it back to Australia.

"It is a huge lost opportunity to build out a massive processing of plant-based materials industry here in Australia.

"The opportunity is now to really invest in this, it will benefit so many and farmers in Australia will benefit."

Inquiry not an attack on plant-based proteins

Plant-based protein companies have characterised the Senate Inquiry as an attempt by the meat sector to stifle the growth of a competitive threat to their industry.

However, Senator McDonald reiterated that the inquiry is not an attack on alternative protein sources and is simply about labelling and terminology to ensure clarity for consumers.

"The purpose of this inquiry is not in any way to limit the growth of plant-based protein market, I agree that in a hungry world we are looking for additional food sources,"

Senator McDonald said.

"This is about what terminology is appropriate to use on this new foodstuff."

v2food approach to marketing earns praise

Senator McDonald also singled out v2food as a leading example of how to market plant-based protein products.

"v2food – I have no problem with any of your marketing, you use terms that we all agree on – burger, mince, sausage, Bolognese sauce," Senator McDonald said.

"You don't use pictures of animals on your marketing materials, you don't use the words for animals in your marketing materials, so I am not quite sure why you are feeling under attack.

"The purpose of this inquiry is to talk about definitions – the words that we use to describe products – it is not in any way to discourage you from making plant-based proteins."

CSIRO outlines opportunities for plant protein crops

CSIRO representatives told senators in response to questions that reports forecasting the growth of the plant-based protein and meat sectors suggested the former did not represent a major economic threat to the \$100 billion meat industry, with plant-based products likely to be a 'tiny blip' on global meat demand.

CSIRO Agriculture and Food deputy director Michael Robertson said, "As the Asian middleclass grows in affluence and it seeks to eat more protein, growth in that region will be more than enough to

satisfy supply in meat and plant-based protein production in Australia."

The CSIRO's research into plant-based protein products was simply motivated by market opportunities to grow jobs and responding to the market demand for such products.

"We have a 100-year long history of working with the red meat industry in Australia and a very proud history that we will continue to cultivate, support and nurture and that work remains by far our most dominant work in protein research," Mr Robertson said.

The CSIRO believed plant-based proteins represented a \$10 billion opportunity for Australia by 2030 and could create 60,000 jobs in regional Australia.

"That is our best guess at the moment," Mr Robertson said.

"We're seeing that of course play out on the ground currently, with a company such as v2food choosing to build a processing facility in Albury.

"And we also have other companies building plants in places such as Horsham to do the processing of plant products."

"The fractionation capacity is a weakness that is being addressed.

"The other issue is that a lot of the plant protein has been imported in terms of soybean from offshore, and we are determined to turn that around and create a boost for our domestic soybean industry so that it can supply the feedstock for these opportunities as well."

The Australian soybean industry is a small industry that has actually shrunk since the 1980s for a range of reasons, but a three-way partnership was underway between the CSIRO, the GRDC and NSW DPI to further develop the national soybean breeding program.

"With the market cues we're receiving from companies such as v2food and others, we believe there could be an opportunity to quadruple the area of soybean in northern NSW and southern Queensland – that is the main area where the crop would be grown under irrigation," Mr Robertson said.

"A complementary crop – such as cotton – grown in rotation benefits because it is a legume bringing some nitrogen into the system and other sustainability benefits.

"So, in summary huge opportunities for growing that little industry into something much more significant, benefits regional Australia as a consequence."

Mr Robertson listed faba beans and lupins as other crops that held potential to grow as the plant-based protein sector expands in Australia.

Pea crops were another alternative, but Australia was a very small player in a very competitive global market dominated by Canada.

"I think Australian producers would struggle to compete with that, so I think faba bean is probably the more likely opportunity, behind soybeans," Mr Robertson said.

First appeared graincentral.com

Bartter fined for release of high-strength effluent

BERESFIELD poultry processing facility Bartter Enterprises Pty Limited has been fined \$15,000 by the NSW Environment Protection Authority for allegedly discharging high-strength effluent into Woodberry Swamp.

The \$15,000 fine is the largest the EPA can issue under its legislation.

EPA director metro operations David Gathercole said Bartter was permitted to release wastewater only within strict conditions.

"Under its licence, Bartter Enterprises is allowed to release a controlled amount of treated wastewater," Mr Gathercole said.

"However, testing indicated that effluent treatment at the premises was inadequate, resulting in a high concentration of chemical compounds being discharged into the swamp.

"This included elevated levels of nitrogen and phosphorus."

High-strength effluent

can disrupt natural ecosystems and lead to rapid growth of weeds and algae, which can have a negative impact on delicate aquatic life.

Woodberry Swamp is a recognised wetland under the Coastal Management State Environmental Planning Policy 2018.

Mr Gathercole said the EPA had put Bartter Enterprises on notice to take action to prevent water pollution.

"By issuing this penalty notice and enforcing a number of immediate, medium and long-term actions – including modifying the on-site wastewater treatment plant – the EPA is emphasising the importance of Bartter's responsibility to comply with the law and protect the local sensitive environment."

For more information about the EPA's regulatory tools, see the EPA Compliance Policy at epa.nsw.gov.au/legislation/prosguid.htm



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Fertiliser from chook manure

THE cost of fertiliser has risen to such an extent that some Australian egg farmers have invested in turning chicken manure into a new soil enriching product.

A \$38 million investment has been made to transform poultry litter and waste into a viable fertiliser.

Australian Bio Fert Pty Ltd has developed a poultry waste solution, with Incitec Pivot Limited now a majority shareholder.

The company looks to produce 75,000 tonnes of fertiliser annually out of a new plant to be built in Lethbridge, south-west Victoria by using waste, carbon and fertiliser products.

Victorian Farmers Federation Egg Group president Brian Ahmed, a board member of ABF, said he and like-minded farmers have been looking for a solution for years.

"As part of a group of egg farmers in the region, we had big issues getting rid of our manure and spent hens," Mr Ahmed said.

"The Environment Protection Authority was very conscious of using raw manure on land because of the pathogen content and other things.

"Last year in Lethbridge, there was an avian influenza outbreak because of open-air composting.

"This will stop it because everything is being done indoors."

After years of building a professional network and relationships with engineers and industry groups, Mr

Ahmed was pleased with Incitec's move.

The EPA has granted a conditional works approval for ABF for the construction of a poultry organic waste facility in Lethbridge.

Incitec agronomy and innovation vice president Charlie Walker said the investment would produce a consistent quality product for farmers.

"The region around Lethbridge has quite a large number of meat chicken and egg producers and stretches out about 50-60km – a significant poultry region," Mr Walker said. "The main waste stream will be chicken waste.

"We will chop up the material into a certain degree of fineness into the torrefier – that applies heat and produces a black powder – then we can combine it with the other ingredients.

"We're basically stimulating microbes into the soil, so when we first apply the fertiliser a small proportion of it is immediately available.

"Then the microbes in the soil use the carbon as an energy source and consume the nutrients.

"We're better synchronising the supply of nutrients in alignment with plant demand, whereas a typical application of compost or conventional fertiliser gets a big wave of nutrient availability and then it dies out."

Once made, the fertiliser price will be competitive in the market.



The adoption of the RSPCA standard across the meat chicken industry has also seen a steady rise in other well-known brands sourcing RSPCA Approved chicken.

Restaurants and cafes support better welfare for meat chooks

THE significant uptake of the RSPCA standard by Australian meat chicken farmers, and the animal welfare improvements this has seen, is undoubtedly one of the most significant achievements of the RSPCA Approved Farming Scheme to date.

In 2020 alone, more than 579 million meat chickens – or 87 percent of our country's 660 million chickens – were raised to our higher animal welfare standard and certified by the scheme.

The adoption of the RSPCA standard across the meat chicken industry has also seen a steady rise in other well-known brands sourcing RSPCA Approved chicken.

This has included several restaurants, some of which may surprise you.

Grill'd

Since 2016, Grill'd has proudly sourced 100 percent RSPCA Approved chicken and was one of the first restaurants to work with the RSPCA Approved Farming Scheme.

The commitment to making considered choices about what goes on the Grill'd menu, and what is good for farm animal

welfare, set a valuable example.

Along with RSPCA Approved chicken, Grill'd uses 100 percent free range eggs – including in sauces, which is a huge deal – and 100 percent grass-fed lamb and beef.

Grill'd stated, "It's not just about what we're eating, but where it has come from."

"With so much misinformation around ethical sourcing, the trust we have from our customers to source the best quality produce is an important responsibility."

Zambrero

Under the mantra of 'feel good Mex', Zambrero has received many accolades for its humanitarian initiatives.

The RSPCA is excited to work with Zambrero to see this commitment extend to prioritising farm animal welfare in its business as well.

Since 2016, Zambrero has sourced RSPCA Approved chicken for its menu nationally.

Zambrero affirmed, "At Zambrero we're all about the feel good."

"You, us ... everyone. Even the way we source

the ingredients for our menu has to feel good.

"That's why, when it comes to sourcing chicken, we only use RSPCA Approved – because meat chicken welfare is important to us.

"That's why we're 'feel good Mex'."

Zeus Street Greek

The philosophy at Zeus Street Greek is to do food honestly with thoughtfully sourced ingredients.

For this reason, Zeus Street Greek used chicken from farms participating in the RSPCA Approved Farming Scheme for nearly five years.

This demonstrates a commitment to supporting better farm animal welfare, working with local farmers and offering customers chicken that's been farmed to higher welfare standards.

Zeus Street Greek has also used grass-fed lamb since 2017.

Oporto

With an aim to deliver a feel-good food experience, Oporto also strives to extend this to its sourcing policies, including by supporting better farm animal welfare.

Oporto source 100 per-

cent RSPCA Approved chicken and have done so since 2019.

Oporto are also proud users of cage free whole eggs for better hen welfare.

Nando's

Nando's might be famous for its flame-grilled chicken, but did you know Nando's are committed to better farm animal welfare within its supply chain?

Nando's only source chicken from RSPCA Approved farms and cage free whole eggs for its menu.

Which is peri peri good for chicken welfare!

Gami Chicken & Beer

Gami Chicken & Beer, the ever-popular Korean fried chicken restaurant, made an ethical decision to source its chicken from higher welfare farms early.

By using RSPCA Approved chicken at all of its venues, Gami knows it is serving fried chicken customers can feel better about, knowing it has been farmed with a focus on animal welfare.

McDonald's

McDonald's is one of the biggest names in the restaurant industry and earlier this year began sourcing RSPCA Approved chicken.

With over 15.7 million kilograms of chicken purchased in 2019, making the decision to prioritise meat chicken welfare at McDonald's is a big step forward for the welfare of Australian meat chickens.

In 2017, McDonald's switched to sourcing all of its whole eggs from cage free farming systems, meaning the company is supporters of better welfare for layer hens as well.

Starbucks

Did you know the chicken found in Starbucks' handmade wraps, salads and sandwiches is RSPCA Approved?

Not only is Starbucks committed to sourcing chicken from higher welfare farms, but it is also cage free and proud.

Right now, Starbucks only use cage free whole eggs but have made an important public commitment to also only source cage free where eggs are used as an ingredient – for example in baked goods and sauces – by 2025.

The Coffee Club

When it comes to sourcing ingredients, The Coffee Club cares about farm animal welfare and know customers do too.

That's why the café group proudly uses RSPCA Approved chicken on its Australian menu.

Along with this, all the fresh eggs cracked and cooked at The Coffee Club cafes, come from cage free hens.

The Coffee Club stated, "Responsible farming practices are fast becoming a popular choice for consumers, however at The Coffee Club we've strived to deliver responsibly farmed ingredients where possible for a long time."

"Over seven years ago, we made the choice to go cage free with our fresh Aussie eggs because we feel passionate about hen welfare.

"We purchase over 11 million eggs per year, so that's a lot of happy hens!

"We are also proud to work with the RSPCA Approved Farming Scheme and source our chicken from RSPCA Approved Australian farms.

"Supporting better welfare for Aussie chickens means that they are raised in an enriched environment improving their health and quality of life.

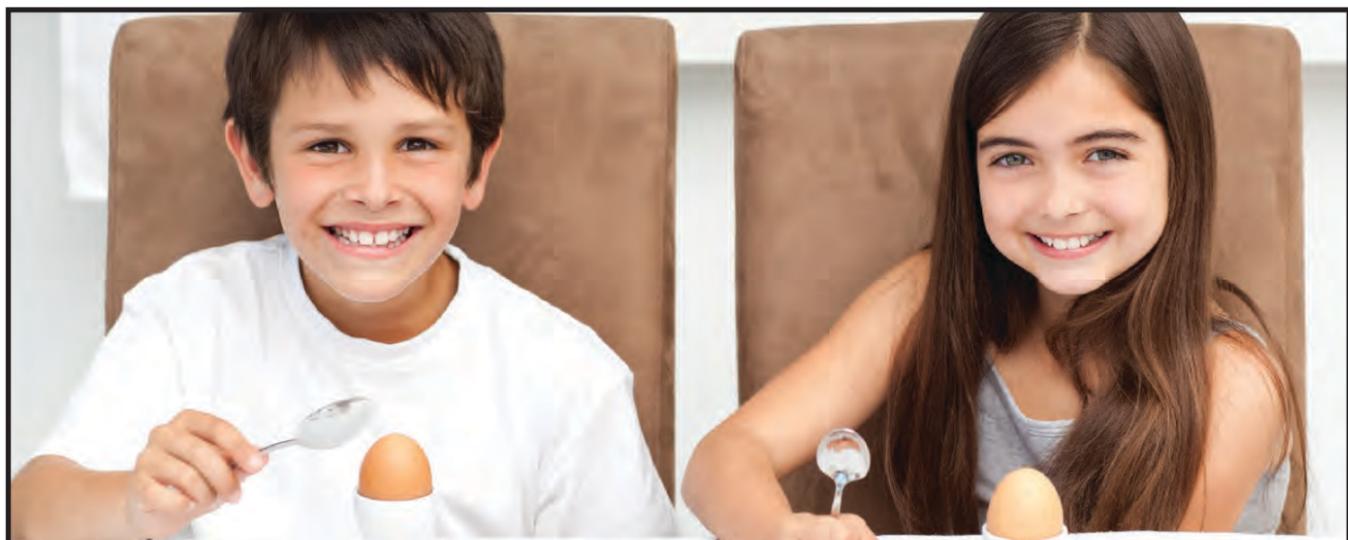
"At the end of the day we want to make sure our customers feel good about their choices at The Coffee Club."

Improving the lives of Australia's farmed animals is an important priority for the RSPCA.

Our work encouraging food companies and brands to support a better future for Australia's farm animals has led to the scheme currently working with 36 forward-thinking brands sourcing RSPCA Approved ingredients and more than 1000 products with the RSPCA Approved certification available.

What this means is greater awareness of the source of our food, and higher welfare food that is more accessible than ever to Australians – and that's something we are very proud of.

Explore what the scheme means for animals and the journey we've been on for the past 25 years at the new RSPCA immersive impact webpage – all of which has only been possible because caring Australians support a future of higher welfare by choosing RSPCA Approved.



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New vaccine technology for poultry industry

AUSTRALIANS consume more than 6.3 billion eggs a year, which is over 17.3 million eggs each day.

To ensure the safe and reliable production of these millions of eggs, Australian egg farmers are embracing technology to help improve the vaccination process of hens for better hen welfare.

Vaccination is an expensive but vital part of egg production.

In the industry, manually vaccinating hens is standard.

However, new innovative technology is now allowing egg farmers to automatically vaccinate their hens.

The new technology is improving occupational health and safety outcomes while improving hen welfare.

Australian Eggs managing director Rowan McMonnies said, "Manual vaccinations are a challenging task for farm staff and the recent pandemic has made it hard to source manual labour to support this part of the production process."

"One of the difficulties with the manual process is reliability, as the injection can sometimes be ineffective."

"With hens required to be vaccinated throughout their growing stages, alternative methods for vaccinating – such as autovaccination – are being adopted by the Australian egg industry, and we are seeing great results."

"With the emergence of free-range systems, extra vaccines are needed, and autovaccination will become increasingly important for disease prevention," Mr McMonnies said.

"By implementing new technology across the industry, we strive to demonstrate responsiveness to the concerns of the Australian community, which contributes to a higher trust in the industry."

"In fact, our recent community research shows that 8 in 10 Australians believe that technology has improved the welfare and environmental outcomes of egg farms, and this in turn has contributed to close to 65 percent of Australians expressing trust in the egg industry to act responsibly."

For more information on the Australian egg industry, visit australianeggs.org.au



AgriFutures Chicken Meat Advisory Panel June 2021.

Applications open for AgriFutures advisory panel

AN exciting opportunity is open to growers, consultants, poultry nutritionists, industry professionals and environmental specialists, with an interest in contributing to the profitability and sustainability of Australia's chicken meat industry.

AgriFutures Australia currently has three positions open to join the AgriFutures Chicken Meat Advisory Panel.

This exciting opportunity is open to growers, consultants, poultry nutritionists, industry professionals and environmental specialists, with an interest in contributing to the profitability and sustainability of Australia's chicken meat industry.

Researchers who are not actively engaged in AgriFutures Chicken Meat Program funded research are also encouraged to apply.

To maintain continuity in the advisory panel, knowledge and to ensure diversity in skill sets, the appointment of successful advisory panel applicants

will be staggered throughout 2022.

Successful applicants will also be invited to observe advisory panel meetings prior to their official commencement date.

This is a fantastic opportunity for the next generation of chicken meat industry leaders to become involved.

AgriFutures Chicken Meat Program is looking for applicants who have skills and experience in:

- Chicken meat farming (grower)
- Environmental sustainability
- Poultry nutrition.

About

The AgriFutures Chicken Meat Program invests in research, development and extension that maximises opportunities to grow the long-term prosperity of the chicken meat industry.

The program has four key objectives as detailed in the strategic RD&E plan:

- Improving food safety of Australian chicken meat
- Develop and implement measures to improve industry's impact

on the environment

- Improve chicken meat production through the whole supply chain
- Improved ability to meet consumer needs.

These objectives are underpinned by key focus areas that identify priority areas in which AgriFutures Chicken Meat Program will invest.

The advisory panel

The advisory panel consists of people with a range of skills and experience in the research, farming, veterinary, nutrition and processing sectors of the chicken meat industry.

In partnership with AgriFutures Australia, the advisory panel provides recommendations on the allocation of RD&E funding for the AgriFutures Chicken Meat Program.

AgriFutures Australia aims to maintain geographical, age and gender diversity to ensure the advisory panel appropriately represents the Australian chicken meat industry.

Roles and responsibilities

The core functions of

AgriFutures industry advisory panels are to ensure that the RD&E investment remains industry-demand driven, including:

- Advising – providing advice on the industry requirements for investment through the development and monitoring of strategic RD&E plans
- Identifying – providing recommendations to AgriFutures on suitable RD&E opportunities and activities to address industry issues
- Aligning – providing feedback and investment advice on RD&E proposals submitted to AgriFutures to ensure investment is aligned to priorities in the respective program's strategic RD&E plan
- Awareness – representing the industry to advise and assist in the dissemination, adoption and commercialisation of RD&E activities.

Activities of the program are funded by industry levy and Commonwealth funds and any funds contributed from third parties.

Advisory panel members are recompensed for

their services to AgriFutures Australia at rates determined by the Commonwealth's remuneration tribunal.

Panel members may be required for up to 25 days per year and some travel is necessary.

It is recommended that any panel member who sits on the AgriFutures Chicken Meat Advisory Panel does not submit a research proposal in the capacity of project leader during their term on the panel.

To apply

Applicants are required to complete the application form, skills matrix and attach their CV (no longer than three pages) via the AgriFutures Australia online application system.

As part of the application process, applicants will be required to outline relevant experience in the Australian agricultural sector and expected contribution to the advisory panel.

Submissions close at 12pm Thursday January 20, 2022.

For more information, visit agrifutures.com.au

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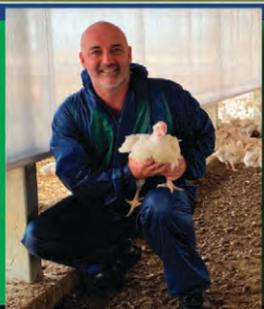
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AUSTRALIA has one of the most efficient chicken-meat producing and processing industries in the world.

Chicken meat is a hugely popular food among Australians, with consumers spending around \$6.6 billion annually on chicken meat products.

Almost all chicken meat sold in Australia has been grown here and more than 1.23 million tonnes of chicken meat are produced across the nation each year.

Chicken meat is the

most environmentally sustainable of all meats, due to its highly efficient use of feed, energy and water to produce a kilo of chicken meat, with therefore less greenhouse gas emissions created.

Australia's chicken meat production is a vertically integrated industry, meaning that individual chicken processing companies generally own most elements of production – from breeding farms, hatcheries and feed mills to primary and further processing plants.

However, the chicken rearing farms are generally owned by individual farmers who rear chickens under contract to the chicken companies.

This is vastly different to the structure in other agricultural industries.

The chicken companies provide farmers with one-day old chicks and feed, veterinary and farm management support.

This unique structure creates an industry rich in diverse and progressive career opportunities.

The Australian chicken meat industry employs more than 40,000 people in metro and regional Australia in a variety of roles and, with Australians eating an average of 49kg per person annually – representing more than 44 percent of all meat consumed in Australia, is a rewarding career choice.

For more information about a career in the Australian chicken meat industry, visit chicken.org.au



Adam Lilleyman's Kambah farm. Photo: Dion Georgopoulos

Food poisoning danger

■ Danger from washing raw chicken before cooking

ALMOST half of Australians surveyed are washing raw chicken before cooking it, according to a recent poll.

A consumer survey by the Food Safety Information Council and Australian Chicken Meat Federation found 49 percent of people reported washing whole, raw chicken.

While down from 60 percent when the question was posed a decade ago, the result is still concerning.

Washing raw poultry can spread bacteria to hands, surfaces and other foods that may not be cooked.

It is also unnecessary – cooking poultry to 75C as measured with a food thermometer in the centre of a fillet or the thickest part of the thigh will kill any bacteria.

The survey was conducted nationally by Omnipoll with 1219 people aged 18 and older in October 2021 ahead of the holidays and the Australian summer.

Food Safety Informa-

tion Council chair Cathy Moir said washing any raw poultry was risky.

"We are pleased that rates of washing raw whole chicken have reduced from 60 percent to 49 percent since we last asked this question in 2011," Ms Moir said.

"Cooks who wash raw chicken pieces with skin on had also reduced from 52 percent to 43 percent, and washing skinless pieces from 41 percent to 40 percent.

"The survey found that chicken is a popular dish, with 78 percent of respondents cooking whole chicken, 83 percent cooking chicken pieces with skin on and 88 percent cooking skinless pieces.

"But the message is that washing any raw poultry – whether it is chicken, duck, goose or turkey – is both unsafe and unnecessary."

Hot weather

Other holiday and summer entertaining food safety tips include washing hands with soap and

water before preparing and cooking food, and after handling shell eggs, seafood, raw meat and poultry, burgers and sausages.

Reduced salt hams are becoming popular but will not last as long as conventional hams, so check storage instructions and dates on products.

Refrigerate leftovers as soon as possible.

Tools, utensils and chopping boards should be cleaned and dried thoroughly before starting to prepare food and cleaned

with hot soapy water after use.

Use separate chopping boards – such as one for raw meat and poultry and another for vegetables.

Plan ahead and don't buy more food than needed so the refrigerator and freezer are not overstocked.

Try to avoid raw or minimally cooked egg dishes such as raw egg mayonnaise or aioli, egg-nog or desserts similar to tiramisu, which can pose a higher risk of food poisoning.



Food safety tips include washing hands with soap and water before preparing and cooking food, and after handling shell eggs, seafood, raw meat, poultry, burgers and sausages.

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