



Egg Farmers of Australia chief executive officer Melinda Hashimoto hopes states wait until 2046 to cease cage production.

## Cheap egg source in limbo

THE future of cage egg production in Australia continues to remain in limbo with farmers no closer to knowing if they have a future in the industry.

The observation was made after the federal and all state agriculture ministers signed-off on new Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for Poultry in Perth on July 13, 2023.

After waiting 11 years, Australian egg farmers are relieved that a long-awaited update of standards governing the wellbeing of hens on their farms has finally been completed at a national level.

But Egg Farmers of Australia chief executive officer Melinda Hashimoto said farmers in various states had mixed reactions.

“Our free range and barn laid sectors have the green light to expand but cage egg producers are in limbo, with no clear picture about their future in Australia’s egg supply chain,” Ms Hashimoto said.

“That’s because the ministers voted to end cage eggs but left the phase-out time to each state to decide.

“This could be good or bad news for producers – depending on how long the states allow cage eggs to continue to be sold.

“Consequently, we need clarity from states so that farmers can plan for their future.”

Cage eggs are the cheapest available and remain the most affordable protein for Aussie families.

Compared to the other egg farming methods, cage eggs farming has the lowest carbon footprint, the lowest incidence of cannibalism among hen flocks and the lowest incident of disease.

An earlier draft standards and guidelines document had set a deadline of 2036 for an end to conventional cages – 10 years earlier than the egg industry had requested of 2046.

Ms Hashimoto hoped that many states would now wait until 2046 to cease cage production

and warned that farmers would seek state compensation if conventional production ceased earlier.

Egg Farmers of Australia chair Bede Burke said cage farmers in states such as NSW had wanted extra time to allow them to adjust financially.

“We want until 2046,” Mr Burke said.

“That’s because it can take up to 30 years to pay off debt on an existing cage egg business.

“Any earlier time frame would financially impact on many family egg farms.”

He said that currently cages make up about 50 percent of the nation’s total egg production and a premature phase out could spark future egg shortages and higher prices for consumers already struggling with the cost of living.

State egg farming bodies will now work with their relevant state agriculture minister on the issue.

For more information, contact the EFA egg farming representative in your state.

## Bridging knowledge and application gap

THE Poultry Hub Australia team has been busy working away on a suite of education and training initiatives.

First, we are delighted to announce PHA’s open call funding round and look forward to reviewing the great ideas and projects that are due in on August 21, 2023 – check out poultryhub.org for further details.

PoultryGrad 2023 applications are now open and this year’s promises to be excellent!

The event will follow on from Ideas Exchange 2023 in Adelaide, so there’s an opportunity for PoultryGrad students to attend Ideas Exchange as well.

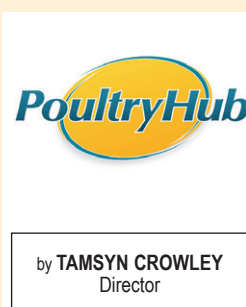
Applications are open for all poultry PhD and honours students studying at an Australian university.

Training is crucial in the Australian poultry industry and proper training equips workers with the knowledge and skills necessary to perform their jobs.

PHA is keen to hear what training you think our industry needs through our online survey.

This survey will inform the future development and implementation of short courses for our industry.

Training plays a vital role in sustaining the industry, protecting its reputation and



delivering safe and high-quality poultry products to consumers, so make sure you have your say.

The survey can be found at poultryhub.org/2023-industry-training-survey

Recently, University of New England undergraduate student Jarrah Ransome had the opportunity to visit a Baiada broiler farm and feed mill near Tamworth in NSW.

Jarrah was hosted by Baiada nutritionist Emma Bradbury, who explained the intricacies of managing sheds, diets and feed additives.

Her visit was part of a PHA initiative and kicks off our program that facilitates undergraduate placements in the industry.

Following the experience, Jarrah now has a new interest in what the poultry industry has to offer new graduates.

“This experience has really opened my horizons into the future of poultry as a career choice,” Jarrah said.

“I think the education surrounding opportunities in poultry

is really lacking – its organisations such as Poultry Hub that are ahead of the game – reaching out to students and allowing them opportunities such as this day at Baiada Tamworth, which broadened my perspective on poultry as an industry worth exploring for a future career path.

“Poultry has so far been a very inviting industry, there’s a lot of transparency into what the industry is focused on with regards to health, biosecurity and production.

“If there is anything I’ve learnt, it is that the industry itself is made up of people from all walks of ag-

riculture – it has been very hard to come by people who are directly from a poultry-based background – and that’s certainly an aspect that I think is important,” she said.

“The principles of intensive production in poultry being applicable to many other agricultural sectors.”

Internships play a crucial role in the poultry industry by providing practical experience, industry exposure, networking opportunities, skill development, career exploration and adaptation to industry changes.

They bridge the gap between academic knowledge and real-world application, helping individuals develop the necessary understanding and insights into the poultry industry.

If you are interested in hosting a student or would like more information, contact us at poultryhub@une.edu.au



Jarrah Ransome on site at a poultry shed in Tamworth.



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**Poultry Industry  
Calendar of Events**

**2023**

**AUG 3** – Kemin Salmonella Smart Education Workshop, Orange NSW, greg.heeney@kemin.com

**AUG 14-16** – USPoultry National Safety Conference for the Poultry Industry, Florida USA, www.uspoultry.org/programs/education/seminar/#nsc

**SEP 4-8** – World Veterinary Poultry Association, Verona Italy, www.wvpac2023.com

**SEP 7-9** – Egg and Meat 2023, Krakow Poland, www.eggmeat2022.com

**OCT 17-18** – Poultry Hub Australia Ideas Exchange, Adelaide South Australia, www.poultryhub.org

**NOV 6-8** – Poultry Tech Summit 2023, Georgia USA, www.wattglobalmedia.com/poultrytechsummit/

**NOV 6-8** – Avicola and Porcinos 2023, Buenos Aires Argentina, www.avicola.com.ar/en/

**NOV 23-25** – Poultry India 2023, Hyderabad India, www.poultryindia.com.in

**2024**

**JAN 31 - FEB 4** – International Production and Processing Expo (IPPE) 2024, Georgia USA, www.ippexpo.org

**FEB 6-8** – Australian Poultry Science Symposium, Sydney Australia, www.apss2024.com.au

**MAR 12-14** – World Agri-Tech Innovation Summit, San Francisco USA, www.worldagritechusa.com/

**MAR 12-14** – Meat Pro Asia, Bangkok Thailand, www.meatpro-asia.com

**NOV 12-15** – EuroTier 2024, Hanover Germany, www.eurotier.com

**How to supply event details:**  
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**Phase out lacking**

HUMANE Society International Australia is calling on Australia's state agriculture ministers to publicly announce their phase-out timeframes for battery cages without delay, after the recent agriculture ministers meeting concluded with no state-specific deadlines.

In early July, Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Murray Watt announced that all state and territory agriculture ministers had endorsed the new Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for Poultry, which calls for a battery cage phase out by 2036, but that it would be left to each state to decide exactly when they would implement it.

Western Australia's Minister for Agriculture, Food, Forestry and Small Business Jackie Jarvis said she was hoping to bring the deadline forward for the state, expecting an end to battery cages in WA by 2032. Humane Society International Australia animal welfare campaigner Georgie Dolphin said, "The confinement of layer hens in barren battery cages is inherently cruel and out of touch with community expectations."

"It's encouraging to see the federal and state agriculture ministers united on a step in the right direction for animals, but it's not the concrete decision we needed to see. "Our haphazard and fragmented federal system for animal welfare means that ministers will each need to enact the newly agreed standard into the animal welfare laws in their own jurisdictions, meaning there will be no consistency across the nation," Ms Dolphin said.

"Australia clearly needs an urgent overhaul of the animal welfare standard setting process.

"Each year this continues to drag on, millions more hens continue to suffer, locked away.

"We thank the WA Government for their confidence in bringing forward the deadline to a much more logical 2032, and we're calling on the other states to step up as well – don't chicken out, set a phase-out for well before 2036."

The ACT is the only region in Australia that has already banned battery cages – enacting the change in 2014, almost a decade ago.

Also, major supermarkets Coles, Woolworths and Aldi all have long-standing commitments to phase out battery caged eggs by 2025, a strong indication of the growing consumer demand for an end to cruel intensive production systems.

Australia has been lagging behind the rest of the world by continuing to cage layer hens.

More than 75 percent of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development nations have already outlawed or are winding up conventional battery cages, including the UK, New Zealand, Mexico and the entire European Union.

"Huge credit goes to the vast majority of Australian consumers who continue to drive this important change," Ms Dolphin said.

"They have long-called for battery caged eggs to be removed from supermarket shelves and voted with their wallets, selecting cage-free options or avoiding eggs altogether."

HSI Australia is one of the core members of the Australian Alliance for Animals, whose combined efforts, along with RSPCA Australia, will eventually see an end to cruel battery cages.

**Humane Society International**



National Farmers' Federation vice president David Jochinke.

**NFF responds to ag meeting**

THE National Farmers' Federation has welcomed the National Statement on Climate Change and Agriculture, signed off by agriculture ministers at their meeting in Perth, Western Australia recently.

Farmers have expressed concerns however over the proposed implementation of new poultry standards, and a lack of tangible progress on other issues placing pressure on the sector.

NFF vice president David Jochinke said it beggars belief that there was silence on the phase out of live sheep export in the communique from the recent meeting – held in the state set to lose the most from the ban.

"The meeting being held in WA was an important opportunity for agriculture ministers to consider the impacts of the live export phase-out," Mr Jochinke said.

"With formal consultation concluding recently, we hope that ministers took the chance to reflect on the hardship the Federal Government's policy would inflict on producers in WA.

"The NFF continues to call for a reversal of that policy as evidence mounts of the

harm it will cause." **National statement on climate change and agriculture**

The NFF said the statement provided helpful guidance as Australian agriculture strives to maintain its global leadership in climate-smart farm practices.

"Through droughts, fires and floods, farmers are at the front line of climate change," Mr Jochinke said.

"They have been navigating these risks and doing the hard yards to reduce emissions for years.

"To now have our nation's agriculture ministers agree a strategy to help the sector build on the work it has done is a positive step forward.

"We're standing at the precipice of a low emissions economy, but our industry needs the right policy settings to support that transition and tap into emerging opportunities."

**Poultry standards and guidelines**

Ministers endorsed the new Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for Poultry on July 13, 2023.

When the standards and guidelines were released last year, the NFF expressed its

strong concerns about the impacts they would have on farming families in the poultry sector, and in particular those involved in the layer hen and turkey industries.

These concerns remain.

"The farm sector places significant importance on ongoing improvements in animal welfare outcomes, but this must be led by science and holistically consider all factors including animal health and biosecurity," Mr Jochinke said.

"Importantly too, when governments implement such changes, they must support impacted producers who have operated and invested in their businesses in good faith for generations.

"For layer hens, our members have clearly told us that a transition of less than 25 years, without support and compensation, could spell the end for many family-owned egg producers, and impact on the consumers they supply."

The meeting did not provide this.

"It's critical now that the states work with and listen to farmer representatives as they consider implementation timeframes," he said.



**PHA Industry Research Funding  
2023 call for applications**

POULTRY Hub Australia will fund a number of research projects as part of PHA's Industry Research Funding for 2023.

The aim of the call is

to encourage scientists to engage with industry and work together to develop innovative applied research projects, with the objective to solve problems faced by

the Australian poultry industry.

For more information, or to download an application form, visit poultryhub.org/research/pha-funding

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# Resisting for resistance's sake

ACCORDING to a July report in US-based *Food Business News*, Tyson Foods is changing its 'no antibiotics ever' production policy and claim to 'no antibiotics important to human medicine', according to a company spokesperson.

The transition is expected to be completed by the end of 2023.

The company will add ionophores – which are antibiotics not considered important to human health – into the diets of some of its chickens used to produce fresh products, as well as frozen and ready-to-eat branded products.

Ionophores are often used in poultry diets to prevent intestinal disease in poultry, specifically coccidiosis.

In 2017, Tyson announced its transition to NAE was adopted across its retail and foodservice products.

A company spokesperson told *Meat+Poultry* – sister publication to *Food Business News* – the change was being made in the best interests of customers, to ensure the health of chickens in its supply chain and was part of the company's commitment to responsible stewardship.

"At Tyson Foods, we base our decisions on sound science and an evolving understanding of the best practices impacting our customers, consumers and the animals in our care," the spokesperson said.

"While roughly half of the industry uses some form of antibiotic in producing chicken, NAIHM is a heightened standard that has been recognised by the USDA for decades and qualified through program documentation showing no antibiotics important to human health have been used."

To me, the above seems like a very clever way of circumnavigating a perception problem.

For that matter, consumers and medics in the US and globally are increasingly raising concerns about rising incidences of antimicrobial resistance in people, courtesy of inappropriate use of antibiotics in intensive livestock production systems.

It seems our Australian chicken meat industry is responsibly positioning itself well ahead of the game.

A few months ago, Australian Chicken Meat Federation posted the following on their website, and I commend them for it.

## Cant Comment

by BRENDON CANT



resistance and infectious diseases expert Professor Sam Abraham for driving it.

Clearly, Australia's chicken industry takes its role in preventing antimicrobial resistance development very seriously.

The ACMF, as an example, has coordinated an antimicrobial usage survey of the six major Australian chicken companies, with data collected since 2017, and provides context for the data with an 'appropriateness of use' survey, repeated annually.

Antibiotic residues are managed by the use of withholding periods to ensure that antibiotics have been sufficiently degraded and or metabolised by the animal before they are slaughtered for human consumption.

Several antibiotics used in poultry are not absorbed from the gut and do not leave residues and no withholding period is necessary.

The practice of enforcing appropriate withholding periods ensures there are no unsafe residues in meat or other products destined for sale for human consumption.

To confirm this, the chicken industry participates in the National Residue Survey – a government-managed monitoring program that tests chicken samples for antibiotic residues to ensure that Australian standards are met.

The National Residue Survey is managed by the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources on behalf of a range of agricultural industries, including the chicken meat industry.

This sort of gatekeeping around the issue can give Australian consumers confidence.

Without that, meat production industries can very quickly be compromised in the eyes and pockets of consumers.

The ACMF is proud to share the results of the latest national survey of antimicrobial resistance in Australian meat chickens.

Pleasingly, the report on this survey found that resistance to antimicrobials, and particularly to antimicrobials that are of critical importance to human health, remains low – consistent with the findings of the previous survey published in 2018.

Importantly, there was an overall decrease in the prevalence of AMR in this study compared with the previous study.

Over the past few decades, the Australian chicken meat industry has participated in a number of properly designed nationally representative surveys for antimicrobial resistance in bacteria in chickens and chicken meat products.

In particular, two large-scale surveys have been completed in the past five years.

The report on the first of these – undertaken in collaboration with the Australian Government's Department of Agriculture and Water Resources with funding from the Animal Bioscience and Response Reform Program – was published on the ACMF's website in 2018.

The survey represented the most comprehensive data set to that point on the level of antimicrobial resistance found in bacteria in Australian meat chicken flocks.

The most recent survey was completed in 2022.

It was funded by the

Australian Government's Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and AgriFutures Australia.

Lead researcher Professor Sam Abraham from Murdoch University's Antimicrobial Resistance and Infectious Diseases Laboratory said that this was pioneering and exciting Australian research that used internationally recognised methods in AMR surveillance, along with cutting edge robotics, mass spectrometry and genomics platforms.

The results of the previous survey have been published in a number of peer-reviewed journal papers and we look forward to seeing published papers from the 2022 report in the future.

The results of both surveys show that the Australian chicken meat industry is in an enviable position globally with low and improved levels of AMR and importantly, low levels of resistance to antimicrobials that are priorities for use in human health.

By participating in surveys such as this, Australia's chicken meat industry gains valuable feedback on the effectiveness of its antimicrobial stewardship efforts to reduce, refine and replace the use of antibiotics.

The ACMF would like to thank Australian Government's Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and AgriFutures Australia for funding this comprehensive and valuable piece of work, and to antimicrobial



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One can now assume this Tyson Foods chicken product will have no antibiotic residues likely to cause antimicrobial resistance issues down the track for those who consume it.

## Sustainability indicator comparisons

ENVIRONMENTAL sustainability has become a large part of discussions in international trade, particularly considering the increasing focus on the environmental harm caused by agricultural support policies.

Understanding environmental sustainability requires an understanding of the diversity of natural environments and agricultural production systems.

A one-size-fits-all approach does not recognise this diversity.

The July 2023 ABARES Insights shows that it is pivotal to develop agri-environ-

mental measurements that account for these differences and provide more accurate international comparisons.

It shows that Australia has strong sustainability credentials compared to many other major agricultural producing countries.

### Key findings

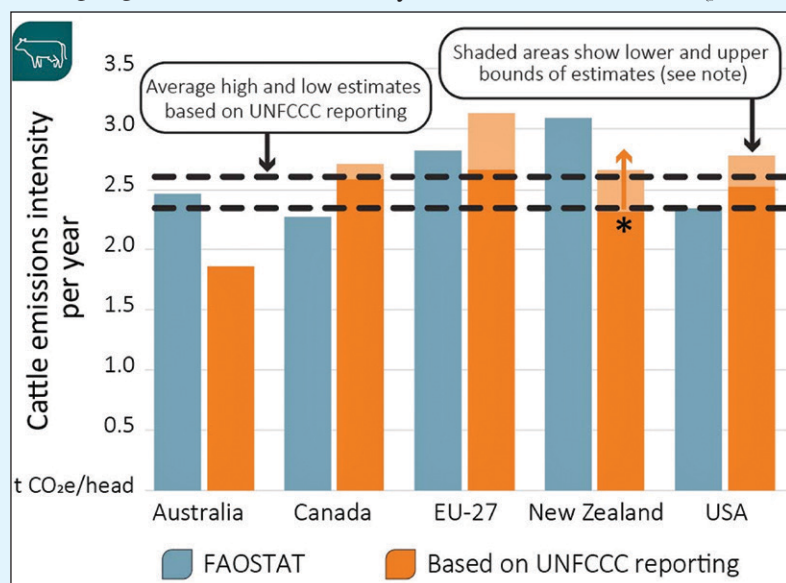
- Australian agriculture has an internationally enviable environmental sustainability record

- Australia's use of pesticides and fertilisers are among the lowest in the world, tillage practices are minimally disruptive to biodiversity, environmentally harmful

subsidies are practically non-existent, and Australia has shifted large swathes of land out of agriculture and into conservation

- Australia's emissions intensities are below average for cattle, specialist beef production and grains compared to major developed country producers and exporters, and Australia has reduced agricultural emissions more percentage-wise than most other developed countries in the past 30 years.

To view the report in full, visit [daff.ent.sirsidynix.net.au/client/en\\_AU/search/asset/1034821/0](http://daff.ent.sirsidynix.net.au/client/en_AU/search/asset/1034821/0)



The graph appropriately accounts for the local environment and better informs international comparisons of cattle emissions intensity.



The Australian Poultry Science Symposium has become a 'must-attend' conference for poultry researchers and industry experts across the globe.

## Australian Poultry Science Symposium 2024

THE Poultry Research Foundation of the University of Sydney has, since its inception in 1958, always valued its interaction with the poultry industry.

It held workshops, seminars and an annual symposium aiming to update the industry on the happenings around the world in poultry science as well as the foundation's own research outcomes.

In 1989, under the leadership of PRF director Dr Derrick Balnave, the foundation symposium became the Australian Poultry Science Symposium, a joint conference series with the Australian branch of the World's

Poultry Science Association.

The annual conference of APSS is always held in February in Sydney, organised by dedicated PRF staff at the University of Sydney.

APSS 2024 will be the twentieth conference for Jo-Ann Geist, who has indeed become synonymous with the conference itself – thank you Jo!

Over the years, APSS has become a 'must-attend' conference for poultry researchers and industry experts across the globe because it focuses on frontier science relevant to industry and attracts top experts to deliver out-

standing talks.

Furthermore, since the conference attracts around 250-300 delegates, it is not too large that you lose yourself and it is not so small that you are only mixing with your familiar crowd.

As such, APSS offers the balance – you will be able attend most if not all sessions and immerse yourself in the science over the 2.5 days of the conference, as it's run without concurrent sessions.

While you also have ample opportunity to mingle with researchers, industry colleagues and students in a relaxed atmosphere in one of the world's best

cities... Sydney.

APSS 2024 will be our thirty-fifth symposium.

As per our first announcement, APSS 2024 will cover an exciting array of topics – including but not limited to breeder nutrition and chick quality, genetics, productivity and welfare, and nutrition, microbiome and gut health.

It will run from midday Monday February 19 to Wednesday February 21, 2024 at the Sheraton Grand Hotel in Sydney.

I hope you will come and join us.

**Mingan Choct**  
Poultry Research Foundation Director

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Kuhn Corp celebrated 30 years of growth and achievements and will continue to scale its products, distribution and processes into the future.

## Egg carton provider celebrates 30 year anniversary

FROM humble beginnings in 1993, Kuhn Corp Print and Packaging opened its doors as an instant print shop in Albion, Brisbane with two staff members in a 150sq m factory.

Fast forward 30 years and you'll discover a bustling operation of large-scale commercial printing, product packaging, egg packaging and distribution in Virginia, Brisbane with a 1100sq m production facility and additional warehousing factories.

Our growth has been accredited to the dedication, innovation and creativity of our team, our community involvement and long-standing partnerships with businesses and suppliers both in Australia and overseas.

Kuhn Corp has remained a local family owned company that is very active within the community and are long-time supporters of many of Brisbane's favourite community events and charities.

Our team has trained more than 10 apprentices in prepress, graphic design, printing and print finishing over the past 30 years, giving opportunities to young creatives to work and refine their skills within the print industry.

Walter Kuhn said, "Our staff have been our biggest asset and we are fortunate to have had a team of passionate creatives that align with our company values and continue to produce exceptional quality work."

Industry achievements include being awarded numerous state and national Craftsmanship Print Awards since 1995 and positioning our company as the first choice of printers for state and federal governments, large corporate companies and small local business across Australia.

Another highlight has been launching our online store during COVID-19 lockdowns amid the uncertainty, aimed at providing

business-to-business support through a contactless ordering and delivery process.

Kuhn Corp has a focus on sustainability and are accredited by Sustainable Green Print with the highest level of sustainability.

Our print facility and offices are powered by solar energy for 75 percent of its daily power usage and we offer a range of plant-based inks and recycled paper stock options to limit our

environmental impact. In 1998, Kuhn Corp aligned with Ovotherm International in Vienna to become business partners and the Australasian distribution agents for a first-of-its kind recycled polyethylene terephthalate egg carton – aimed at closing the loop on waste.

These cartons are now stocked in popular retail outlets such as IGA, Woolworths, Coles and Costco.

This year, we celebrate 30 years of growth and achievements and will continue to scale our products, distribution and processes into the future with the opening of a new manufacturing facility in Malaysia to accommodate the growth and demand for packaging within the Australia and the Asia Pacific region.

Thank you for your support along the way, we couldn't have done it without you.

**Kuhn Corp**



Walter Kuhn said, "Our staff have been our biggest asset and we are fortunate to have had a team of passionate creatives that align with our company values and continue to produce exceptional quality work."



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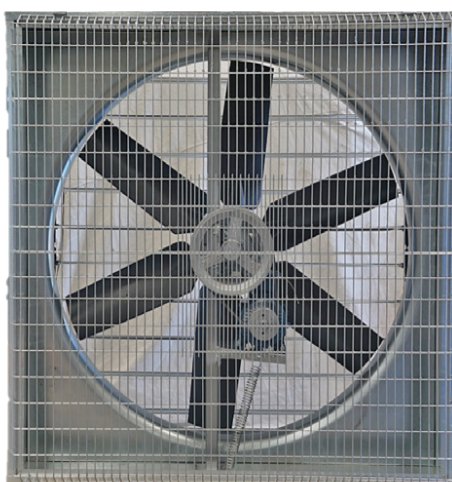
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### Wall Mounted Fan

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## Ingham's gets purchase go-ahead

THE New Zealand Commerce Commission granted clearance for Ingham's to acquire the assets of the Cobb and Riverland businesses of Bromley Park Hatcheries.

The two companies had entered an agreement in February in which Ingham's would acquire those assets for \$A7.88 million but that agreement was subject to approval from the Commerce Commission.

Bromley Park Hatcheries is a producer of day-old chicks.

Its operations include breeder farms and a hatchery.

Bromley Park Hatcheries has three business units – the Cobb Commercial

business that sells day-old chicks to poultry growers and processors, the Riverland business that sells Cobb parent stock to the Pacific Islands and the Shaver SXB business that produces day-old chicks for egg production only.

Meanwhile, Ingham's – which is headquartered in Australia but also has operations in New Zealand – produces day-old chicks for its own needs but does not sell them to third parties.

New Zealand Commerce Commission chair Dr John Small said, "Our assessment of the proposed acquisition focused on the supply of day-old chicks to poultry growers and processors."

"After careful consideration of all of the relevant factors, the commission is satisfied that the proposed acquisition is unlikely to substantially lessen competition when compared to the situation if the proposed acquisition does not proceed."

The two companies already had a working relationship, as Ingham's has depended on BPH as a third-party supplier of day-old chicks.

The acquisition of BPH will give Ingham's the opportunity to become self-sufficient in meeting its DOC requirements and also reduce network risk, improve hatchery contingency and position it for further growth.

**WATT Poultry**



Clearance granted for Ingham's to acquire the assets of the Cobb and Riverland businesses of Bromley Park Hatcheries. Photo: Wattagnet.com



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Day-old male chicks are normally either macerated, suffocated or electrified. Photo: Andrew Skowron



A laboratory in Israel has a solution – what if the male eggs don't hatch? Photo: Myriams Fotos

## Gene tech spares male chicks cull

EVERY year, egg farmers kill seven billion one-day-old male chicks because they cannot grow up to lay eggs and are the wrong breed for meat.

A laboratory in Israel has a solution – what if the male eggs don't hatch?

All the chicks are female at Yuval Cinnamon's laboratory in central Israel, where new technology offers an answer to what he calls "the most devastating animal welfare issue worldwide – the culling and sorting of day-old male chicks."

Day-old male chicks are normally either macerated, suffocated or electrified.

Principal investigator at Volcani Institute – which works to attain food security and food safety – Dr Cinnamon said, "In some countries, they do not even bother to cull their males properly."

Adding that his team had generated a sex-linked genetic trait that stops the develop-

ment of male embryos shortly after eggs are laid.

"We take these eggs and activate the genetic trait using blue-light illumination, which immediately causes the males to stop developing," he said.

"The females don't carry the trait and are entirely non-genetically modified, as are the table eggs they lay."

The unhatched male eggs can be used for other purposes such as animal feed.

Poultry by Huminn – which is licensed to commercialise the research – wants to bring the technology to hatcheries worldwide, according to chief executive officer Yaarit Wainberg.

"We are in advanced talks with layer genetics companies and can see our solution on the market within two years," Ms Wainberg said.

"It will solve a major problem for the industry."

Reuters

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## DAF sludge transfer pump resolved abattoir problem

A QUEENSLAND abattoir was looking for a dependable solution for their dissolved air flotation tank sludge and scum transfer.

They had used submersible and double diaphragm pumps in the past but with limited success.

A Hydro Innovations pump specialist recommended the use of a Ragazzini peristaltic hose pump for the application.

Ragazzini hose pumps are positive displacement pumps that use a set of rollers to compress an elastomeric tube, which pushes the fluid contained within it.

This means that no mechanical moving parts are in contact with the fluid being pumped and there are no valves or seals to replace, ever.

And because the pumps use rollers and not 'shoes', the casing does not need to be filled with an expensive lubricating fluid.

### Solution

The abattoir needed to transfer up to 10CMH of the sludge, so Hydro Innovations recommended the Ragazzini MS3 peristaltic pump with fully cast casing, cast-iron rotor and cast-iron rollers.

The pump only needed to run at the slow speed of 26RPM to meet the task, so the pump is expected to have a very long service life.

It is also fitted as standard with a leak detector that instantly detects a damaged hose.

The leak detector stops the pump and sends a warning signal.

Pumps are mounted on stainless-steel base frames and are supplied with 316SS ports.

### Benefits of the installation

The pump was duly ordered and installed.

An operator at the plant commented, "It was easy to install and works very well, with little maintenance."

"Great features are not having to fill the roller section with glycol and the quiet operation of the pump."

He said he would certainly recommend the pump to others and that it was a "great pump and does the job above expectations."

The operators at the abattoir are very pleased to have a reliable solution to the previous problematic sludge and scum transfer system.

The abattoir was so happy with the installation, it has since rolled the new technology out to other branches around the country.

Ragazzini pumps are available in sizes ranging from 10mm ports up to 150mm, with flows from 0.2LPH up to 180CMU, with pressures to 15 bar.

Various pump hose materials allow pumps to move abrasive fluids, corrosive fluids, fats and oils, with US Food and Drug Administration-approved hoses for foods and pharmaceutical products.

With a rich Italian history of innovation and quality manufacturing excellence, Hydro Innovations is very pleased to represent Ragazzini in Australia.

More information about these pumps may be obtained from emailing [info@hydroinnovations.com.au](mailto:info@hydroinnovations.com.au)



The ideal dissolved air flotation sludge transfer pump.



A reliable solution to a previously problematic sludge and scum transfer system.



# From rugby league star to Lenard's legend

STEVE Jackson owns two Lenard's stores in Mackay, at Mt Pleasant and Canelands.

A local boy, born in Mackay in 1965, Steve's claim to fame was that he played rugby league at the top level.

"I was a local football hero in Mackay until I was 19, and then I got the opportunity to go to Canberra and play for the Canberra Raiders from 1985-1989," Steve said.

"I played in the Grand Final in 1989 at the top A Grade level and then went on to play for Western Sydney for two years.

"The contract of my life was with the Gold Coast Seagulls from 1992-1994.

"I retired in 1994 at age 27 from an injury – a prolapsed disc in my back.

"I played in nine State of Origin games.

"I came home to

Mackay in 1995 and coached the local team in Mackay in 1996."

When back home, Steve met a man named John Whitbread, who was the master franchisee for Lenard's North Queensland.

One day he said to Steve, "I'm opening a Lenard's store at Mt Pleasant and you're the man to run it!"

The store was part of the \$30 million extension at Mt Pleasant Shopping Centre, and 12 months later, on November 26, 1997, Steve was in the store.

"I've had some ups and downs, as you do in business, though I've recently had my twenty-seventh Christmas at the Mt Pleasant store."

Steve purchased the Canelands store four years ago in 2018, before COVID-19.

The pandemic highlighted the challenges of running a business in

a shopping centre.

"Rents vary, they tend to go up when you have good times and tend not to go down during the bad times," Steve said.

"So there have been some struggles during the past four years in the Mt Pleasant store, however things are starting to look good this year because I've re-negotiated the rent."

When asked what he loved most about being a Lenard's store owner, his emphatic response was the chicken!

"I have a family of four – they're all grown up now, three boys and one girl, my youngest is 16 – they used to eat so much chicken, they nearly had feathers growing out of their underarms," Steve said.

"Chicken is amazing, it's so versatile, you can do so much with it.

"I've always loved chicken – I still stop on my way to work to get a toasted chicken sandwich," he said.

"I really like the Lenard's format – back in the early days, the way they presented themselves in the market was very strong, with more than 200 franchises at one stage.

"It's great to see the brand on the comeback.

"Lenard's has always released new products – they haven't rested on their laurels – their philosophy is, if it's not perfect, make it better.

"I like their concept of how they keep looking for better ways to present our chicken." 🐔



Steve Jackson, ex-rugby league superstar, owns two Lenard's stores in Mackay, at Mt Pleasant and Canelands.

## Importers to pay fair share of biosecurity costs

THE Australian Government is strengthening Australia's biosecurity system through long-term, predictable and sustainable funding.

These changes are part of a \$1.03 billion sustainable funding package that was announced in the federal budget to maintain biosecurity policy, operational and technical functions on a sustainable basis.

A strong biosecurity system protects our national economy and way of life – including agricultural, fisheries and forestry exports forecast to be worth \$74.5 billion in 2022-23, environmental assets worth over \$5.7 trillion and 1.6 million jobs across the agricultural supply chain.

Deputy Secretary of Biosecurity and Compliance Dr Chris Locke said new fees and charges for importers would better reflect the true cost of delivering Australian biosecurity services.

"While some importers will experience slightly larger increases in the prices, the average increase across all importers is around 28 percent," Dr Locke said.

"This is expected to raise an additional \$35 million in revenue in 2023-24 to recover the department's costs of managing the risks of pests and diseases associated with overseas imports.

"These changes follow the first end-to-end review of fees and charges in eight years.

"Since 2015, regulatory charges have not kept pace with constantly evolving threats at the Australia border.

"It's an essential component of long-term, sustainable funding for Australian biosecurity.

"And it is one way that the Australian Government is working to ensure that importers and other risk creators pay their fair share of these system costs – consistent with the 2017 Intergovernmental Agreement on Biosecurity Review."

New fees and charges for biosecurity regulation, including forecast costs and expected volumes, are detailed on the department's website – [agriculture.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/DRAFT%20-%202023-24%20Biosecurity%20CRIS.pdf](https://agriculture.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/DRAFT%20-%202023-24%20Biosecurity%20CRIS.pdf)

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# Get a jetter for blocked drains

AUSSIE Pumps has been watching the growth of Australia's chicken production numbers with great satisfaction.

With current slaughtering running at around \$1.35 billion dollars' worth of product per year and close to 700,000 tonnes of chicken meat, it's clear from the Australian Bureau of Statistics report that poultry has overtaken all other types of meat products.

One handy tool that poultry hasn't adopted yet is an Australian innovation, the Aussie 'Cobra' drain cleaner.

These machines – designed for high-pressure drain cleaning – can double as very

effective high-pressure cleaners.

Aussie Pumps came out with the first high-pressure jettets and now sees them used in a wide range of applications, including at piggeries, hospitals, manufacturing plants and anywhere else where drains could block, which could cause not only inconvenience but a potential health hazard.

The star performer, the King Cobra A Mk3 Deluxe version, is built into a sculpted ergonomic stainless-steel frame serving as a platform for the pump and engine.

Pumps are Big Berty triplex pumps, with pressures of up to

5000psi and flows up to 31LPM.

The most popular model is a Class A unit, which means operators don't have to be certified to use them.

The current safety standards issued by the Standards Association of Australia indicate that certain classes of machines based on their performance do require operator registered training organisation certification.

Aussie Pump's chief engineer John Hales said, "The 5000psi Class A, one of the biggest sellers, provides 16LPM flow that will clear blocked drains promptly."

"Our experience with the plumbing industry

shows that a choke, even tree roots, can be cleared in less than half an hour, from the time the job starts to when it finishes."

The jettets are made in mass production quantities and are even being exported to China.

Aussie's innovative approach is claimed to be ahead of any other product of its kind in the world.

"We just imagine we are the user and build the machines accordingly," Mr Hales said.

"Feedback from the market is really invaluable."

For details of Aussie Pumps high-pressure jetter range, visit [aussiepumps.com.au](http://aussiepumps.com.au)

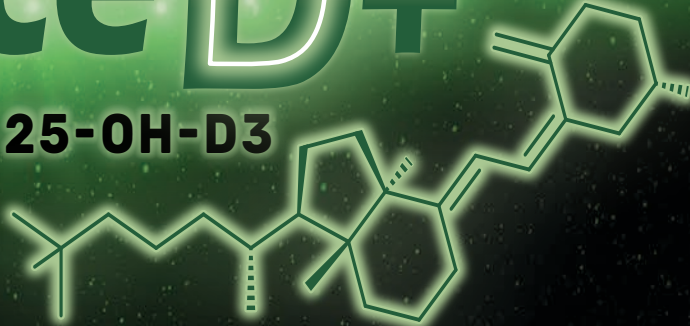


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The RSPCA was disappointed in the uncertainty of the time frame for Australia's layer hens.

## Hens' fate inconclusive

THE RSPCA recently welcomed news that state and territory agriculture ministers endorsed new national poultry standards and guidelines – paving the way for a long-overdue phase out of barren battery cages – but said it was disappointing there was still no certainty on a time frame for Australia's millions of layer hens.

RSPCA Australia chief executive officer Richard Mussell said a phase out of battery cages was long overdue and couldn't come soon enough.

"These small barren wire cages where each hen has space that's less than a piece of A4 paper are a cruel and outdated farming system and simply have no place in modern Australia," Mr Mussell said.

"That's why it's good news to see positive steps on this issue today.

"But there needed to be clarity on the phase out date and exact implementation plans – to protect animal welfare, achieve consistency across jurisdictions and give certainty to Australian producers.

"So while it's good news that the standards have been endorsed, it's disappointing that implementation timing is still being left up to states and territories because that means there's

no guarantee that battery cages will be gone by the recommended 2036 deadline.

"We look forward to state and territory governments as soon as possible making their intentions clear about how they will implement the standards into legislation, including how they will do so by or ahead of the phase out date of 2036.

"We commend those states and territories who have already made positive commitments on this issue and hope that all states and territories will do the same."

Already, over 75 percent of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development countries had moved to phase out battery cages, "it's time that Australia joined them," he said.

Mr Mussell added that the outcome was a sign of Australia's broken approach to developing and implementing animal welfare standards.

"This process so far has taken nearly eight years, and countless layer hens have suffered because of these delays, which are still not entirely resolved," he said.

"Australia must improve our approach to animal welfare standards and start being serious about how we achieve consistency across state and territory borders." RSPCA

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Disease experts have warned that Australian wildlife will be highly susceptible if HPAI arrives here. Photo: Hakan Tahmaz

# Protecting Australian wildlife from avian flu

THE Invasive Species Council is calling on the Australian Government to urgently prepare for the potential arrival of a deadly bird flu known as HPAI H5.

This form of avian influenza has already killed millions of wild birds of more than 300 species and thousands of mammals overseas.

Australia and Antarctica are now the only continents free of HPAI H5 – high pathogenicity avian influenza of subtype H5 – which can spread with migrating birds and poultry.

Invasive Species Council principal policy analyst Dr Carol Booth said, “Late last

year, when HPAI H5 reached South America, within a few weeks it killed more than 60,000 seabirds and 3500 sea lions in Peru alone.”

“Disease experts have warned that Australian wildlife will be highly susceptible if HPAI arrives here,” Dr Booth said.

“A study in black swans concluded they would face ‘significant peril’.

“Australia is well prepared to respond to avian influenza infection in poultry, having previously eradicated it eight times, but there is no plan for wildlife.”

The Invasive Species Council is calling on the Australian Gov-

ernment to establish a national taskforce to develop and oversee the implementation of a response plan for avian influenza in wildlife.

“HPAI cannot be eradicated in wildlife but the experience overseas shows that it is important to be prepared so as to minimise the impacts and maximise recovery after mass mortality events,” Dr Booth said.

“The Australian Government has invested millions of dollars in preparing for the arrival of livestock diseases such as foot and mouth disease in cattle, African swine fever in pigs and avian influenza in poultry.

“We need a similar level of preparation for major wildlife diseases.”

“The lack of it is a serious gap in Australian biosecurity.”

“The situation is more complex in native species – unlike livestock, native animals cannot be culled or contained – and the consequences are potentially dire.”

Australia has already lost at least nine unique animal species due to new diseases.

And 16 plant species are on the brink of extinction due to the recently arrived myrtle rust.

“For the Australian Government to achieve its commitment to no new extinctions, we need a stronger more collaborative biosecurity system,” Dr Booth said.

“We also need new environmental laws with a strong focus on preventing new and emerging threats from becoming the next

drivers of extinction.”

The risk of HPAI arriving in Australia has been considered low because waterbirds do not migrate to Australia and it is a long way for an infected bird to fly.

But experts warn that the risks are likely increasing.

The most likely pathway to Australia is thought to be with migratory shorebirds.

Every spring more than 8 million shorebirds fly to Australia along the East Asia Australasia flyway.

There is also concern that migrating seabirds could carry the disease to Antarctica or sub-Antarctic islands.

Wildlife Health Australia has advised that every Australian bird species should be considered susceptible.

The patterns of disease in Australia could be different from elsewhere due to Australia’s distinctive ecology and unique species.

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## Evaluating projects

THE AgriFutures Chicken Meat Program invests in research, development and extension to increase knowledge and understanding that fosters an innovative, adaptive and valuable chicken meat industry.

The program is funded through statutory levies, paid by chicken meat producers and Australian Government matching funding.

The chicken meat RDE levy is paid at the first point of sale at a rate of 0.195 cents per chicken sold.

Michael Clarke of AgEconPlus evaluated the cost-benefit of projects funded under the AgriFutures Chicken Meat Program RDE Plan 2019-2022 in present value terms.

The impact assessment addressed a population of 29 projects and both upper-bound and lower-bound estimates of program performance were prepared.

Funding from all sources for the 29 projects totalled \$8.33 million – of the 29, the impacts from 11 were valued.

Funding for the 11 projects where impacts were valued totalled \$3.56 million and produced aggregate total expected benefits of \$48.09 million.

This gave an upper-bound estimate of program performance of \$44.53 million net present value and a

benefit-cost ratio of approximately 13.49 to 1.

The 11 projects valued represented approximately 42.7 percent of total funding for the 29 projects.

When the benefits of the impacts valued \$48.09 million were compared with total investment in all projects in the population \$8.33 million, this lowered the investment criteria and provided a lower-bound estimate of program performance.

Total investment in the 11 projects produced an estimated net present value of \$39.76 million – present value terms – and a benefit-cost ratio of 5.77 to 1.

It was concluded, given the assumptions made in valuing the impacts, that the benefit-cost ratio for investment in the AgriFutures Chicken Meat Program from 2019-2022 lies somewhere between 5.77 and 13.49 to 1.

Results from the analysis show industry, the community and government are expected to derive significant net benefits from investment in the AgriFutures Chicken Meat Program made from July 2019 through to completion of PRJ-012663 in March 2023.

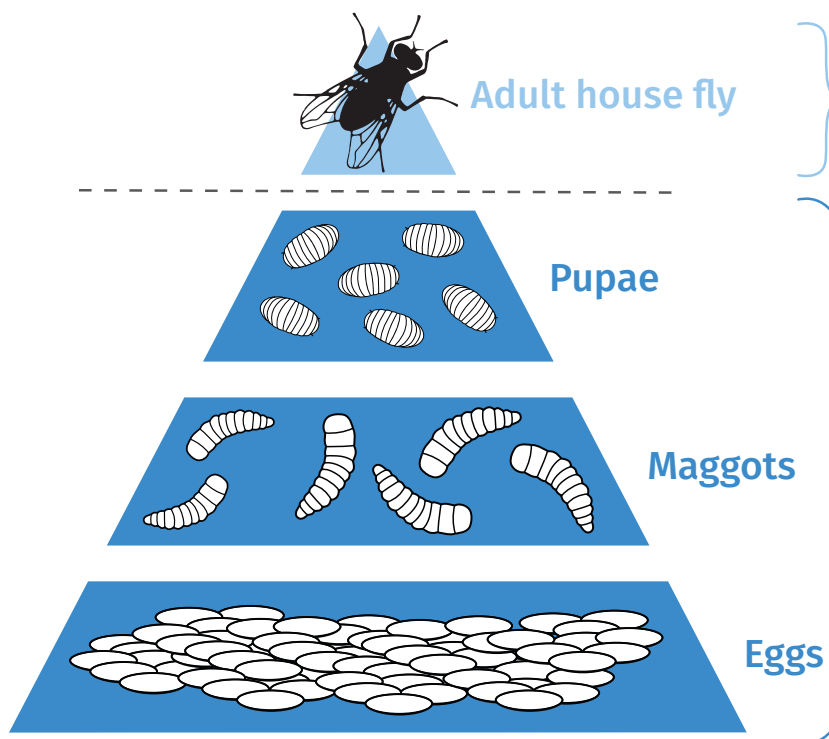
Furthermore, the results are somewhat better than those estimated for the program between 2014-2019, which recorded a benefit-cost ratio of between 2.2 and 11.6 to 1.

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2023 Cobb Research Initiative Grant Recipients		
Researcher	Project Title	Institution
Yang Zhao	A vision-based precision livestock farming system for real-time detection of mating behaviours in broiler breeders	University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture
Marian Dawkins	Accelerating generic progress through improved assessment of broiler chicken welfare, digital phenotyping and gut health	University of Oxford
Allison N. Pullin	Advancing animal welfare and health of broiler breeder pullets via innovative assessment of feed and water programs	North Carolina State University
Guoming Li	An artificial intelligence-assisted gait scoring system for individual broilers in group settings	University of Georgia Research Foundation
Stephanie Richter	BBAI: Broiler breeder development modelling and anomaly identification based on automated CT scan analysis	Georgia Tech Research Institute
Breno Faragomeni	Genomic selection as a tool to mitigate salmonella shedding in broilers	University of Connecticut
Colin Usher	High fidelity data collection and analytics for enhanced broiler breeder liveability	Georgia Tech Research Institute
Si Hong Park	Investigation of reproductive tract of hen and deteriorated egg microbiome to increase the hatchability	Oregon State University
Charlene Hanlon	The impact of restricted feeding regimens on reproductive capacity and successful fertilisation in broiler breeder flocks	Auburn University

# New funding for research grants announced by Cobb

## ■ Nine recipients named for 2023

COBB is pleased to announce nine grant recipients in funding for the 2023 Cobb Research Initiative.

Cobb Vice President of Research and Development Dr William Herring said, "We are excited to announce our first grant recipients for this new initiative and the partnerships that come from the developments of these projects."

"Each proposal was carefully reviewed, and we believe that the chosen recipients will help propel us forward,

not only in genetic progress but in numerous areas including new innovative technologies and advanced research.

"We must find ways to control and prevent diseases, improve animal health and welfare outcomes, reduce production costs and enhance product quality while advancing sustainability needs," Dr Herring said.

"We thank all those who submitted their ideas and look forward to our rolling submission process moving forward."

The CRI program was developed to help propel poultry genetics further by creating opportunities that bring together diverse scientific research disciplines to create advancements in global protein production.

Innovations such as artificial intelligence, data system collection and management, robotics, automation and application of biotechnology are all areas of focus in this initiative.

Cobb president Joyce J Lee said, "Cobb, as a leading genetics company, is at the forefront

of what we believe is the convergence of science, technology and animal health."

"This funding not only shows Cobb's commitment to genetic progress but our understanding that the demand for quality protein around the world will continue to increase with the global population," Ms Lee said.

"We will use innovative research, new technologies and data analysis to help further our genetic progress and answer key issues facing the global poultry industry."

Learn more about the Cobb Research Initiative, including research priorities, at [cobbresearchinitiative.com](http://cobbresearchinitiative.com)  **Cobb Vantress**



Cobb president Joyce J Lee.

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## Antibiotic use in animals

THE responsible use of antibiotics in both veterinary and human medicine is essential to protect both animal and human health and ensures that animal-derived products are safe for human consumption and use.

Antibiotics should never be routinely used in place of good animal-care practices.

However, it is vital that antibiotics remain available for a veterinarian to use when an animal is sick, or likely to become sick, from a bacterial infection.

Using the right antibiotic at the right dose, at the right time and for the right duration will treat an infection most effectively and efficiently, reducing the development of resistance and protecting the effectiveness of antibiotics in the future.

Visit [animalmedicinesaustralia.org.au/industry-stewardship/frequently-asked-questions-about-antibiotic-use-in-animals](http://animalmedicinesaustralia.org.au/industry-stewardship/frequently-asked-questions-about-antibiotic-use-in-animals) for a document developed by Animal Medicines Australia that aims to assist veterinarians in discussions with clients and interest groups regarding responsible use of antibiotics in animals.



Antibiotics should never be routinely used in place of good animal-care practices. Photo: Magda Ehlers

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# National sign up for new poultry standards

AGRICULTURE ministers from all states and territories have now endorsed the new Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for Poultry.

The poultry standards were finalised by the Independent Poultry Panel commissioned by all agriculture ministers.

The standards are the culmination of an extensive stakeholder and public consultation pro-

cess and underpinned by contemporary animal welfare science.

Assistant Secretary for Animal Welfare Dr Carol Sheridan said the endorsement of the poultry standards is an important step towards harmonising national animal welfare legislation and providing clarity and consistency to industry, consumers and trading partners.

"The poultry standards introduce a range of welfare measures

for chickens, ducks, pigeons and emus, including a focus on light, water and ventilation," Dr Sheridan said.

"The standards also allow for a range of egg production systems, such as larger furnished cages, barns and free range that producers can choose from to best suit their business."

While the standards propose a phased approach to banning conventional cages, implementation is a matter

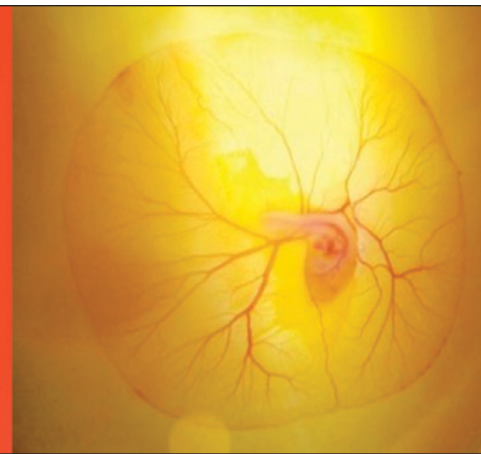
for the states and territories.

Consumers also have a choice about the products they purchase, and some retailers have already announced that they will introduce a ban on products from conventional cages.

To view the Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for Poultry, visit [agriculture.gov.au/agriculture-land/animal/welfare/standards-guidelines/poultry](http://agriculture.gov.au/agriculture-land/animal/welfare/standards-guidelines/poultry)

35th Annual Australian Poultry Science Symposium  
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## Pre-registration for APSS 2024

THE thirty-fifth annual Australian Poultry Science Symposium will again be returning to the Sheraton Grand Sydney Hyde Park in February 2024.

The conference next year will be centred around the over-arching theme of 'Frontier Science – Integrating Nutrition, Gut Health and Welfare'.

Invited presentations will be a highlight for next year's event, and as always everyone is encouraged to submit their current research outcomes to be included in the program.

As for previous years, early-bird pricing will

only be available to those who pre-register for APSS 2024 prior to September 30.

Pre-registration allows you to also indicate if you are willing to review papers or wish to sponsor the event next year, and will ensure that you get personalised registration reminders prior to any applicable deadlines.

Pre-registration is quick and easy and should take no longer than one minute of your time, visit [apss2024.com.au/pre-registration](http://apss2024.com.au/pre-registration)

The Poultry Research Foundation, in conjunction with the Australian

branch of the World's Poultry Science Association, looks forward to taking the conference to new heights next February and hopes to see you there.

### Important key dates:

- July 1, 2023 – Online Paper Submission portal opens

- September 30, 2023 – Full Paper Submission deadline

- October 2, 2023 – Online Registration portal opens

- December 15, 2023 – Author and early bird registration deadline

For more information, visit [apss2024.com.au](http://apss2024.com.au) or email [prf.admin@sydney.edu.au](mailto:prf.admin@sydney.edu.au)

## ABARES reports shows farmers helping to offset climate effects

CLIMATE change is having an impact on Australian agriculture, with farmers having to contend with higher temperatures and lower winter rainfall.

Despite these challenges, many farmers are adapting and adopting new technologies and practices to

offset these effects.

The latest Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences figures show climate-adjusted productivity in Australia's broadacre industries grew by 0.6 percent per year on average between 1988-89 and 2021-22.

In the climate-exposed grain production industries, climate adjusted productivity increased 1.4 percent per year on average, compared to a growth rate of 0.9 percent not adjusted for climate and weather effects.

ABARES executive director Dr Jared Greenville said the result demonstrated that Australian farmers are adapting and adjusting production systems to help offset the negative effects of a changing climate.

"Significant advancements in technology and management practices were essential in achieving this result and we need that to continue," Dr Greenville said.

ABARES has previously found that on average \$1 invested in public research and development has yielded a return of around \$8 in agricultural gross value added.

ABARES has also released updates to

farm performance by size statistics that confirm the trend towards fewer but larger farm businesses.

In the three years to 2021-22, the largest 10 percent of broadacre farms produced around half of total output, while the smallest 50 percent of farms produced around 10 percent of total output.

"An important consequence of this structural trend is that industry level farm performance is increasingly driven by the performance of the largest farms," Dr Greenville said.

The latest ABARES climate adjusted productivity statistics and farm performance by size statistics can be found on the ABARES website – [agriculture.gov.au/abares](http://agriculture.gov.au/abares)



ABARES executive director Dr Jared Greenville.

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Agriculture Victoria's free online business program is designed to help farm businesses better manage risk in the face of a variable climate, particularly drought. Photo: Jasper Wilde

## Online farm business program helps manage drought risk

AGRICULTURE Victoria is offering farmers an opportunity to participate in a free online business program designed to help farm businesses better manage risk in the face of a variable climate, particularly drought.

The online program commenced late July and is suitable for livestock, grains, mixed farmers, horticulturalists and apiarists.

Project leader Kit Duncan-Jones said participants will improve their skills and knowledge to better prepare for and manage risk, adapt to change and strengthen their farm businesses.

"The course is designed to help farmers set and achieve their individual business goals and is relevant to those who are new to farming

and young farmers, as well as more experienced farmers," Mr Duncan-Jones said.

An introductory session ran at the end of July, which will be followed by five sessions on key farm management topics, including:

- Identifying and managing risks, strategic planning and setting business goals
- Financial management, budgeting and profitable decision-making
- Managing people on-farm, succession planning and farm safety
- Climate risk and natural resource management
- Business planning.

As part of completing the course, participants will be offered a one-on-one session with an experienced farm management consultant to review their business plan. Mr Duncan-Jones

said participants will be supported by Agriculture Victoria staff and Jane Foster, a farm business consultant with ORM Pty Ltd.

"Online delivery of the course allows farmers from anywhere in the state to participate, from the comfort of their own homes and without the added time commitment of travel," Mr Duncan-Jones said.

"If you're a farmer who wants to better manage your business, strengthen your farm resilience to withstand future droughts and shocks, and set up your farm for success now and into the future - this is the program for you."

For more information, contact Elizabeth Alsop on 0457 838 537 or email [elizabeth.alsop@agriculture.vic.gov.au](mailto:elizabeth.alsop@agriculture.vic.gov.au)

# Slow boil for caged eggs ban as cracks show in timeline

BATTERY hen eggs will be banned under a national agreement by the country's agriculture ministers but states can decide when they bring it in.

Federal Agriculture Minister Murray Watt said some jurisdictions would move away from battery cages faster than others but all were working towards a deadline of 2036.

"Some states will be able to do it more quickly than others and if some states are struggling that is something we can discuss," Minister Watt said.

The national standards, which includes the phase out of battery cages, was agreed to at a meeting in Perth recently.

NSW would not commit to the timeline.

Agriculture Minister Tara Moriarty said, "We will work to our own timeline to make sure that we're working with industry in NSW to get the best outcome."

"We're going to work with industry so that we're not impacting supply, and we're not worried about cost of living issues."

Minister Watt said 2036 was a reasonable timeline that gave the industry plenty of time to adjust.

An independent review of animal welfare standards recommended an end to the use

of battery hens by 2036 but industry advocates wanted the deadline pushed back by a decade.

Egg Farmers of Australia warned the target would lead to higher egg prices and compensation claims from producers.

Federal Nationals leader David Littleproud added to calls for an extension.

"Our egg farmers deserve support not surprises from state governments," he said.

"Farmers have made investment decisions worth millions of dollars, predicated on the current guidelines, believing they had until 2046."

Minister Watt rejected suggestions a cage ban would trigger price rises.

Caged hens make up half of the nation's total egg production.

Supermarket giants Woolworths and Coles have agreed to phase out caged eggs from all the brands they sell by 2025.

Coles-branded eggs have been cage-free since 2013 and Woolworths since 2015.

Australian Alliance for Animals director policy and government relations Dr Jed Goodfellow said it was disappointing a national timeline hadn't been agreed.

"It doesn't provide the level of certainty that the Australian community and indeed the industry wants to see," Dr Goodfellow said.

"What's the point of endorsing a national standard that includes a very definitive time

frame, if it's going to be left to each individual state to determine their own?"

"With the supermarket commitments to phase out the use of caged eggs in their own supply chains by 2025, it's very likely that the industry is going to be free of the battery cage system well before the 2036 timeline."

Melinda Hashimoto from Egg Farmers of Australia said producers would also be disappointed.

"It really does leave farmers in limbo, it wasn't the surety that we were hoping to get," she said.

"Farming organisations now have the role to work with their state agricultural minister around the timing." AAP



Our egg farmers deserve support not surprises from state governments. Photo: Klaus Nielsen

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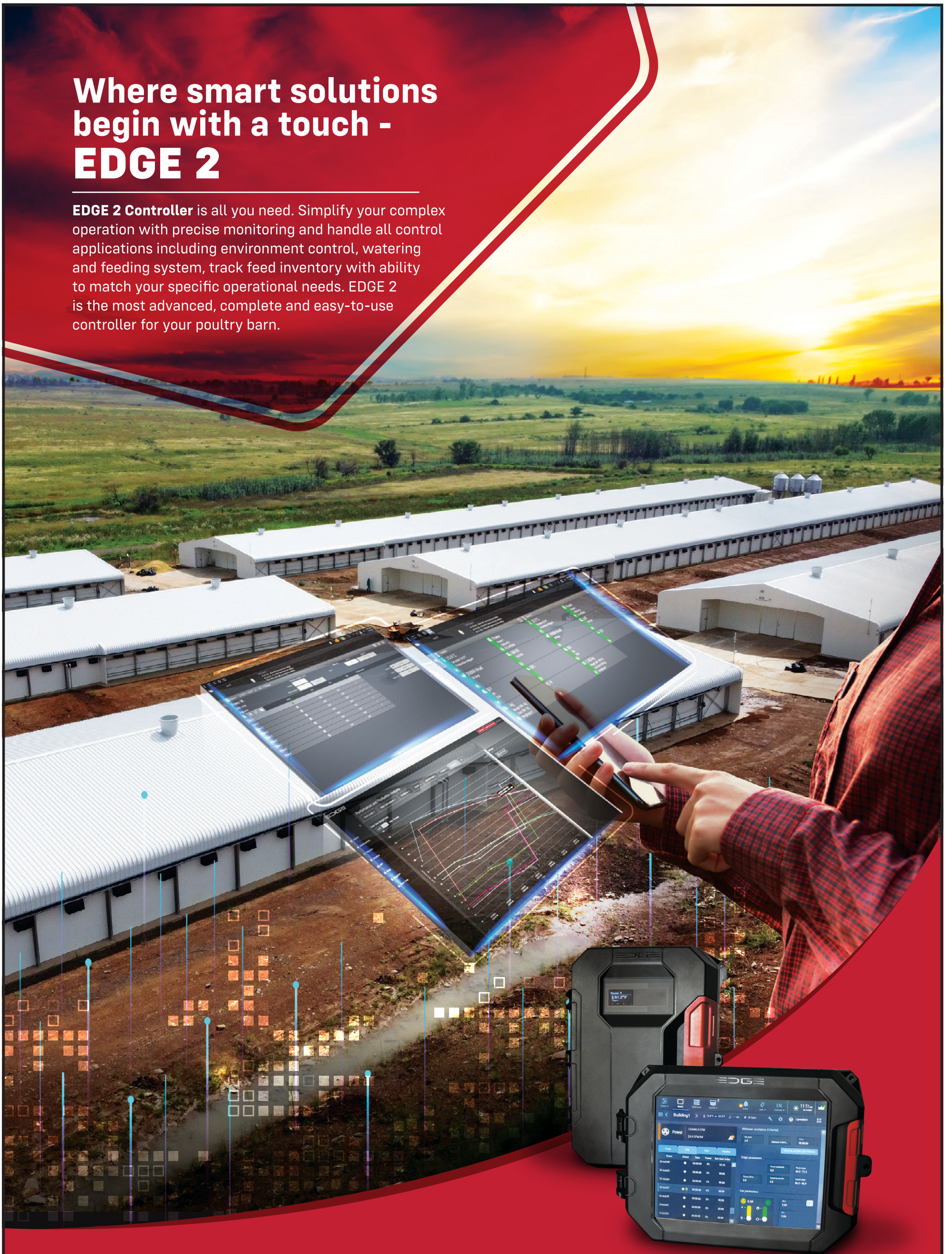
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