



## ACCC Inquiry into farmer treatment

THE Nationals have recently secured an historic inquiry by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission into the domestic fresh food and dairy supply chain, from the farm gate through to the retailer, including examining the treatment of farmers in the marketplace.

Minister for Agriculture and Deputy Leader of the Nationals David Littleproud said the government had secured a three-month ACCC independent inquiry into the supply chain for fresh foods such as meat – beef, lamb, pork, chicken – eggs, seafood, fruit and vegetables. Critically, this inquiry will examine whether the new Dairy Code should be extended across the entire domestic supply chain to include retailers.

“The Nationals fought hard to deliver this important inquiry in response to long-held concerns about bargaining imbalances that currently exist and the misuse, and in some cases the abuse, of this power by some sections of the fresh food supply chain.

“Australian farmers take considerable risks and work incredibly hard to grow the fresh and affordable food we all take for granted.

“But there are concerns that once farm produce is harvested or processed and sent off to market, producers have little bargaining power and are at the mercy of the powerful supermarkets when it comes to the price they are paid.

“Unfortunately, not all interactions between farmers and the major supermarkets are conducted fairly and in good faith, and there are bargaining imbalances and other serious issues that need to be looked at.

“We saw this in 2019 when Coles had to pay over \$5 million to Norco dairy farmers after it was found it had not passed on the full amount of a milk price rise, despite claiming to do so in a marketing campaign,” Minister Littleproud said.

This inquiry will provide Australian farmers across all food producing sectors with an opportunity to submit evidence,

raise concerns and share their own experiences in the domestic marketplace.

“I strongly encourage farmers and other businesses across the supply chain to take this opportunity, while it’s available, and contribute to this important inquiry.

“We want to ensure we have the right policies in place – but to do that, we need industry to speak up and tell us what’s really going on.

“Importantly, the ACCC has guaranteed that the inquiry will accept confidential submissions, so farmers can provide evidence of harmful practices without fear of punishment and retribution by major supermarkets.

“This inquiry is not designed to regulate food prices.

“Instead, it will identify problems and recommend policy options – including a possible all-encompassing Agricultural Code – if appropriate,” Minister Littleproud said.

The ACCC commenced its inquiry on August 31 and will report to the government by November 30, 2020.

## New precision poultry facility and Poultry Hub programs

POULTRY Hub Australia is proud to announce the opening of a new high-tech research facility at the University of New England.

This facility is the first of its kind and was made possible with the financial help of both PHA and Feedworks.

The poultry facility is fitted out with a precision feeding robot, affectionately named “Dorothy”, able to deliver precision diets that can be specifically tailored for every day of a broiler’s life cycle.

This high-tech approach is currently being evaluated through a number of research trials that have been funded by PHA.

We look forward to sharing the results of these trials, once the scientific evaluations are complete.

The facility also hosts an automatic drinker line that enables water intake measurements – a fantastic tool that can be used in conjunction with Dorothy to understand exactly what chickens are eating and drinking.

These types of rela-



by **TAMSYN CROWLEY**  
Director

tionships between research institutions and industry are essential to facilitate impact-driven research that can be adopted by the sector.

We are excited to have Feedworks, which is extremely supportive of research, as an industry partner.

We look forward to future collaborations and facilitating additional services that will benefit both researchers and industry across the country.

To find out more about the impact and rationale for this fantastic partnership, check out our video at the PHA website [poultryhub.org/new-precision-poultry-facility](http://poultryhub.org/new-precision-poultry-facility)

We have recently opened our second call for research funding.

We look forward to re-



ceiving applications that are targeted, scientifically sound and will ultimately have impact for our wonderful industry.

In addition, we have opened a number of other funding opportunities in research train-

ing and undergraduate programs. For further details on PHA programs head to our website [poultryhub.org/pha-program](http://poultryhub.org/pha-program)

Finally, we will soon be opening registrations for a workshop titled “Meet the Media” – an opportunity for discussion with journalists from television, radio and newspaper, moderated by Science in Public.

Find out what makes poultry science news, and how to ensure your message is reported accurately.

If you are interested, contact us at [poultryhub@une.edu.au](mailto:poultryhub@une.edu.au)



New Precision Poultry Facility located at the University of New England in Armidale, NSW.

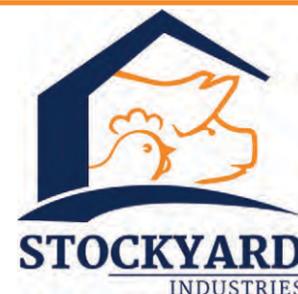


Dorothy the precision feed robot.



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## Poultry Industry Calendar of Events

### 2020

**NOV 4-5** – Poultry Xpo, Stratford, Canada [www.poultryxpo.ca](http://www.poultryxpo.ca)

### 2021

**FEB 9-10** – Australian Poultry Science Symposium, University of Sydney, NSW [www.apss2021.com.au](http://www.apss2021.com.au)

**APR 11-13** – Poultry Information Exchange/Australasian Milling Conference (PIX/AMC), Gold Coast, QLD [www.pixamc.com.au](http://www.pixamc.com.au)

**JUN 21-23** – European Symposium on the Quality of Poultry Meat and XIX European Symposium on the Quality of Eggs and Egg Products, Krakow, Poland [www.eggmeat2021.com](http://www.eggmeat2021.com)

**AUG 8-12** – World Poultry Congress, Paris, France [www.wpcparis2020.com](http://www.wpcparis2020.com)

**AUG 16-18** – World Poultry Science Association (WPSA) – Cambridge UK [www.wpsa2020.org](http://www.wpsa2020.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](mailto:design@collins.media)

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## 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](mailto:editorial@collins.media) or PO Box 162, Wynnum Qld 4178

# Disease - a disorder of structure or function?

A NUMBER of key elements influence our lives – health, family, social, financial, business, civic and spiritual.

The impacts of disease in 2020 seem to have infiltrated every area of our lives and affected each of the elements, and most would agree that there is little balance in our lives given the reality we have all been confronted with.

Also impactful is avian influenza.

This virus has had an effect on the egg-layer industry as well as on turkey, emu and – our close industry partner – chicken meat sectors, and these along with the egg industry have been providing funding to avian influenza responses.

Avian influenza, Newcastle disease and infectious bursal disease (hypervirulent form) are included in the Emergency Animal Response Disease Agreement.

Though salmonella enteritidis is not.

NSW and Queensland are the only states that currently have mandatory testing for salmonella enteritidis.



**Egg Farmers  
of Australia**

by **MELINDA HASHIMOTO**  
CEO



Salmonella enteritidis is not currently a categorised emergency animal disease under the Emergency Animal Disease Response Agreement.

On four occasions – 2003, 2017, 2018 and 2019 – there have been discussions around SE being categorised as an emergency animal disease in the EADRA.

Each time proposals have been brought forward, they have been rejected because they do not meet the definition of an emergency animal disease.

It is difficult to argue that SE is not endemic in Australia, and the reason it cannot be categorised as an EAD?

It does not meet the

criteria outlined in the EADRA.

SE occurs sporadically as a food borne illness in people in Australia.

Cases may be acquired overseas, and while SE is the second most common serovar in Australia behind salmonella typhimurium, it is the major serovar in many other countries and is predominate in Southeast Asia.

The following from the EADRA outlines the criteria for an EAD.

*“Emergency Animal Disease or EAD is a disease that has met one or more of the following criteria:*

*(a) It is a known disease that does not occur in endemic form in Australia, including without*

*limitation the diseases listed in Parts 1.2 to 1.5 inclusive of Schedule 3, and for which it is considered to be in the national interest to be free of the disease.*

*(b) It is a variant form of an endemic disease, which is itself not endemic, caused by a strain or type of the agent, which can be distinguished by appropriate diagnostic methods, and which if established in Australia, would have a national impact.*

*(c) It is a serious infectious disease of unknown or uncertain cause, which may on the evidence available at the time, be an entirely new disease, or one not listed in the categorised disease list set out in Parts 1.2 to 1.5 inclusive of Schedule 3.*

*(d) It is a known endemic disease, but is occurring in such a fulminant outbreak form (far beyond the severity expected), that an emergency response is required to ensure that there is not either a large-scale epidemic of national significance or serious loss*

*of market access.”* Supporting documents relating to salmonella enteritidis, such as the Salmonella Enteritidis Response Plan, can be found at the Australian Eggs website.

Egg Farmers of Australia visited a number of states in 2019, bringing together agriculture, health and food authority officials to discuss SE plans and to gain an understanding of the direction each state was taking in relation to SE issues.

Egg Farmers of Australia look forward to the release of a national SE response plan, to focus on the management of SE across the nation – given the roles and responsibilities of health, agriculture and food safety often differ between jurisdictions.

Such a plan would ensure a consistent national response aligning with that of the poultry industry.

I would like to acknowledge the assistance of Animal Health Australia in providing information for the purposes of compiling this article. 🐔

## Nominations open for Australian Biosecurity Awards

THE search is on for the next round of biosecurity champions, with nominations now open for round two of the 2020 Australian Biosecurity Awards.

Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment head of biosecurity Andrew Tongue said round two included new categories that demonstrate the diversity of biosecurity and the different roles we can all play.

“Australia has faced some tough challenges this year, but maintaining the nation’s biosecurity system has remained a priority.”

“Our biosecurity system strengthens our country’s long-term resilience by safeguarding our economy, food sources, unique environment and way of life.

“It is important to recognise individuals and

groups who support our biosecurity and are committed to safeguarding Australia from pests and diseases.

“We will be presenting four new award categories for round two – Environmental Biosecurity, Community, Education and the Dr Kim Ritman Award for Science and Innovation,” Mr Tongue said.

The Dr Kim Ritman

Award for Science and Innovation was created in honour of Dr Kim Ritman’s contributions as Australia’s Chief Plant Protection Officer.

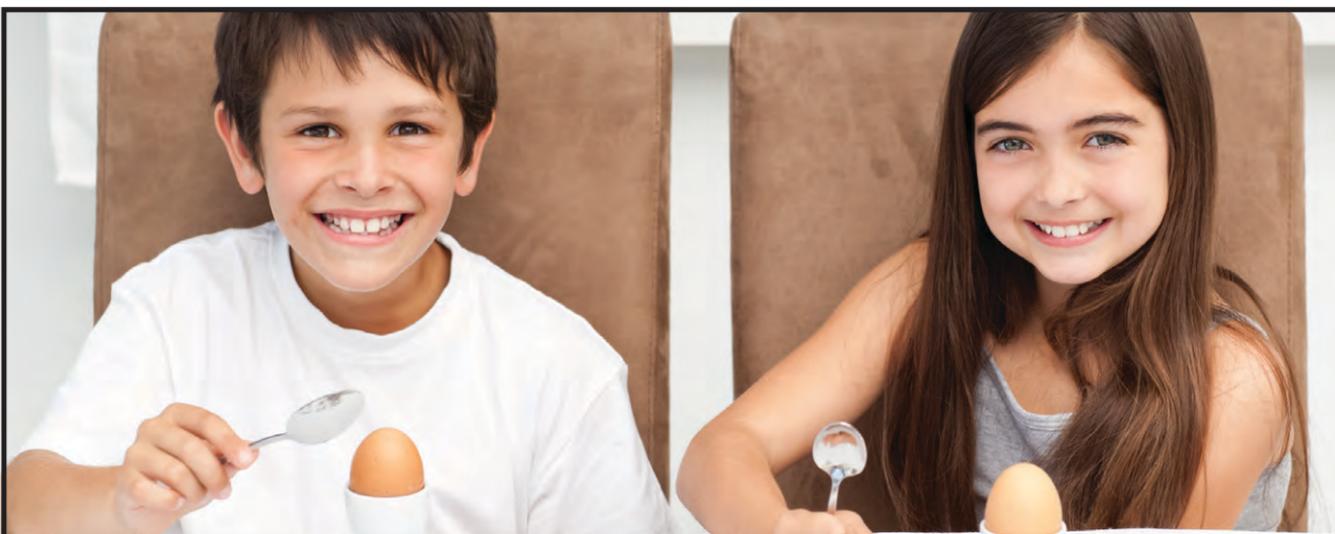
“The new categories recognise a wider range of stakeholders and the diverse parts of our biosecurity system, as well as emphasise the importance of biosecurity education,” Mr Tongue said. “If you know a group,

individual or organisation that deserves to be recognised for their biosecurity work, nominate them today.”

Round two of the ABAs will be presented at the National Biosecurity Forum in November.

Nominations close on Friday, October 2.

For more information and to put in a nomination, visit [agriculture.gov.au/aba](http://agriculture.gov.au/aba) 🐔



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# Traceable and accountable federal funds shelled out

TRACEABILITY of food products is a no brainer.

Defined as the ability to track any food through all stages of production, processing and distribution, including importation and at retail, traceability should mean movements can be traced one step backwards and one step forward at any point in the supply chain.

Being able to track food through all stages of production, processing and distribution obviously then makes a product recall easier and quicker if something does go wrong.

Noting the above, I was interested to learn on August 28, via an announcement by Federal Agriculture Minister David Littleproud, that Australian Eggs Limited had been granted \$325,000, essentially to ensure egg farmers adopt a consistent approach to traceability.

Apparently this Traceability Grants Program funding is to be used to develop software and educational material, hopefully to enhance egg supply chain integrity.

Good news, I think. I'm thinking further that



**Cant Comment**  
by  
**BRENDON CANT**

Australian Eggs Limited must have hatched a very well laid-out proposal.

After all, I'm advised they were one of only 16 successful applicants in the Round One funding, which attracted 168 applications, collectively chasing \$90 million.

Surprise/surprise, this well and truly exceeded

the \$4 million available. The program's stated objectives are:

- Support industry projects that will enhance our agricultural supply chain traceability systems. This includes developing and trialling technologies that digitise information flow.

- Provide an advantage for our exporters in overseas markets that will assist them to maintain their competitive edge.

- Increase opportunities to export Australian commodities.

It seems clear, therefore, that the government and the industry are hoping exports of Australian eggs can be boosted by having superior accountability and traceability, as egg exports are currently only a very small part of the industry.

I understand that in the 2019 financial year, only about \$3.4 million worth of Australian egg products – shell eggs, egg pulp liquid and egg powder – were exported, with Hong Kong, New Zealand and Singapore shelling out the majority, at about \$2.5 million.

By way of comparison, in the same year, grocery

sales of eggs in Australia, via major supermarkets, was worth \$961 million.

In an increasingly frenetic free trade world, the Federal Government clearly views ramping up exports of Australian primary produce as a priority and is subsequently keen to incentivise to ensure it happens, and that it happens in a controlled, clean, traceable environment.

"The project will deliver a simple way for farmers to support on farm egg accounting, as well as provide a mechanism for supply chain traceability," Minister Littleproud proudly pronounced – before explaining that a series of workshops around the country would hopefully deliver the goods to farmers, while also educating their customers about the safety and premium quality of Australian eggs.

The project is supported by the NSW, Queensland and Western Australian state governments and Egg Farmers of Australia, which has a database of 450 egg producers according to the Minister's statement.



The more eggs move around, the more important supply chain traceability becomes.

## Egg Farmers of Australia welcome ACCC Inquiry

ANY efforts to provide increased communication between farmers and other stakeholders across the supply chain are always welcomed.

Egg Farmers of Australia provide regular updates to major retailers relating to production challenges, and look for increased ongoing engagement by retailers in relation to egg policy.

An understanding that production costs must be reflected in a return back to the farm gate is

important for a sustainable industry.

Our organisation has previously written to ACCC in relation to increased transparency and advocacy in relation to egg pricing.

As a representative body, under the Australian Competition and Consumer Act, discussion around prices and supply contracts with farmers would be in breach of the legislation, making it difficult for representative bodies to advocate on behalf of farmers.

It is hoped that the inquiry considers current existing regulatory arrangements, impacts on consumers due to supply chain decisions, and the wider impacts for industry both domestically and in order to compete in export markets.

Such an inquiry should be welcomed as an avenue to assist the egg industry remain economically viable, both in the short and long-term, and allow increased options for farmers.



**Egg Farmers of Australia**

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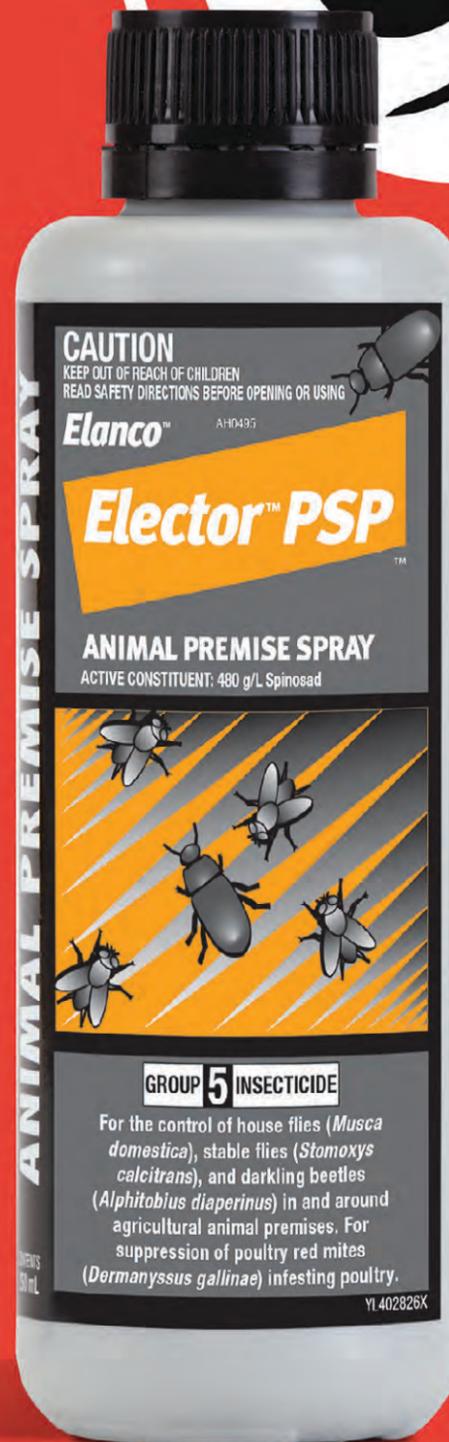
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References: 1. Spinosad Technical Bulletin. Dow AgroSciences (2001). 2. Salgado VL. Studies on the Mode of Action of Spinosad: Insect Symptoms and Physiological Correlates. *Pest. Biochem. & Physiol* 60:91-102(1998). 3. Elector Technical Manual. Elanco (2012). 4. The residual toxicity of spinosad as measured by in vitro efficacy against poultry red mites (*Dermanyssus gallinae*). Data on file: T9CGB09001 (2009). 5. Sparagano OAE. Significance and Control of Poultry Red Mite, (*Dermanyssus gallinae*). *Annu. Rev. Entomol.* 59:447-66 (2014). 6. Bacci L et al. A review of Spinosyns, a derivative of biological acting substances as a class of insecticides with a broad range of action against many insect pests. *J. Entomol. Acarol. Res.* 48:565 (2016). 7. Liebisch G. Field Study to Evaluate Elector against Poultry Red Mites (*Dermanyssus gallinae*) Labor Zecklab. Data on file: T9CDE090011 (2009). 8. The University of Georgia. Cooperative extension service. Broiler tip...Darkling beetles in broiler houses. May (2010). 9. Goodwin A & Douglas Waltman W. Transmission of Eimeria, viruses, and bacteria to chicks: Darkling beetles (*Alphitobius diaperinus*) as vectors of pathogens *J. Appl. Poultry Res.* 5:51-55 (1996). 10. Arends JJ. The efficacy of Extinosad™ PSP applied to commercial poultry premises for the control of *Alphitobius diaperinus* (Lesser Mealworm) infestations in poultry litter. Final Report. Data on file T9C370608 (2006).

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## ANIMAL PREMISE SPRAY

Lindy MacGregor  
Elanco Technical Consultant, ANZ

Elector PSP is registered for the control of house flies (*Musca domestica*), stable flies (*Stomoxys calcitrans*) and darkling beetles (*Alphitobius diaperinus*) in and around agricultural animal premises. More recently in Australia, Elector PSP has been registered for the suppression of poultry red mites (*Dermanyssus gallinae*) infesting poultry, when used to treat the premises where these pests are found.

Elector PSP's active ingredient is Spinosad, which is derived from the naturally occurring soil-dwelling bacterium, *Saccharopolyspora spinosa*.

**UNIQUE MODE OF ACTION<sup>1,2</sup>:** Elector PSP alters the function of nicotinic and GABA-gated ion channels in the insect's nervous system, requiring multiple adaptations for resistance to develop to the active.

Elector PSP has not shown cross resistance with existing classes (organophosphates, carbamates or pyrethroids)<sup>1</sup>

**DUAL EXPOSURE:** Spinosad has an effect on the insect both by **contact** and by **ingestion<sup>4,6</sup>**.

ELECTOR PSP has a residual effect, and if applied correctly, will provide continued control even weeks after application<sup>1</sup>

### FLY CONTROL



Spinosad acts on both adult and larval stages (maggots) of house flies, and is effective through direct contact and ingestion of product<sup>2,4,6</sup>. Treat areas where flies rest (such as walls of buildings, posts and crossbeams) or apply where fly larvae are found e.g. directly to manure surfaces.

### SUPPRESSION OF POULTRY RED MITE<sup>3,4,5,7</sup>



Red mites have a cycle of approximately 7 to 14 days, from egg to adult mite. Due to Elector PSP's residual effect after effective premise treatment, mites newly hatched from the eggs are very likely to encounter the active ingredient of Elector PSP as they move across surfaces. One application of Elector PSP can suppress poultry red mite for an extended period of time. Duration depends on concentration, accuracy of application and red mite challenge.

#### Always read and follow the label directions.

**BEFORE USE:** Protect animals from direct spray; where practical, remove animals before use.

**POULTRY SHEDS:** Avoid contaminating feedstuffs or water used for drinking and cooling with premise treatment.

**Poultry may be exposed to incidental spray and do not need to be removed prior to application. Protect laid eggs from incidental spray, where practical, remove laid eggs before use. Do not apply as a fog or space spray.**

**Broiler chickens (for all purposes of product use): Birds must not be exposed to more than one treatment of the premises during the grow-out period.**

**LIVESTOCK HOUSING:** Do not contaminate feedstuffs or water used for drinking or cooling with premise treatment. Feeders, waterers and feedcarts should be covered before application to prevent contamination. Do not apply where livestock could be exposed to direct spray and allow treated surfaces to dry completely before restocking or reintroducing livestock. Avoid spraying areas where animals are known to lick or rub. Do not apply to milking machines or apparatus. Animals must not be exposed to more than one treatment of the premises.

### DARKLING BEETLE CONTROL

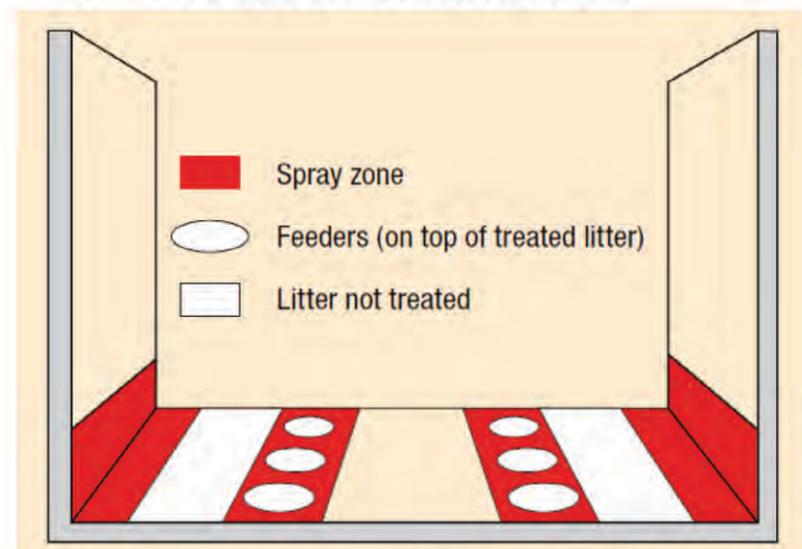


Darkling beetles are often found in the litter material of broiler sheds, hiding under feeders when the birds are present, and in the floor and insulation material. They can cause a lot of structural damage<sup>8</sup>, but also serve as vectors of several infectious organisms such as *Salmonella* and *E.coli*, certain poultry viruses, as well as coccidia oocysts<sup>9</sup>.

Apply Elector PSP to the sheds as a pre-flock treatment. Make sure you do so as close to the birds' placement as possible in order to maximise the control period. The product will still be active when the broilers arrive in the broiler house and the beetles come out of their hiding places. Elector PSP's residual effect is a big advantage here in terms of continued control.

Apply as follows:

- 1 meter over the litter under the feeding pan lines
- 1 meter over the litter along the side wall
- 1 meter off the lower part of the side wall



The sample treatment above shows the **banded application technique** for darkling beetle control during pre-flock treatment. Use enough water to cover the entire treatment area, especially the litter, along feed lines, walls and support beams. Low to moderate volumes of spray work best.

Keep in mind Elector PSP has a unique mode of action. There will be rapid paralysis, but delayed death due to loss of body fluid. The effect on the beetle population will be apparent after 3 days<sup>1,10</sup>.

#### Withholding Periods:

**POULTRY CHICKEN SHEDS:** Meat: 7 days after incidental spraying onto chickens and their sheds; Eggs 0 days after treatment.

**BEEF, DAIRY AND HORSE PREMISES:** Meat: 21 days after introduction of animals to treated areas in situations where animals have continual access to treated surfaces (e.g. with litter on floors or in nests, feedlots and stables); Milk: WHP not required when used as directed.

Good agricultural practice is essential for optimal control of flies and darkling beetles, and optimal poultry red mite suppression. For insecticide resistance management Elector PSP is a Group 5 insecticide.

#### Use as part of an integrated pest management system.

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## National Farmers' Federation calls for net carbon zero by 2050

AUSTRALIA'S peak farm body has thrown its weight behind an aspirational economy-wide target of net carbon zero by 2050.

At an online meeting in August, members of the National Farmers' Federation voted in favour of the landmark policy, which includes strict caveats regarding fair implementation and economic viability.

NFF president Fiona Simson said the strengthening of the Federation's climate goals was a strong reminder of

the role farmers already played in tackling emissions.

"Australia's farm sector continues to be a leader in reducing greenhouse gas emissions," Ms Simson said.

"In the past decade, agriculture has consistently reduced its emissions intensity and net emissions within the Australian economy.

"The red meat sector, for example, has a target of being carbon neutral by 2030 and is already making great headway on research and new

technologies that will enable the transformation."

However, despite progress in the farm sector, Ms Simson warned the goal of NCZ2050 would be just an aspiration without ongoing innovation and policy support.

"We need to equip farmers with far better tools for evaluating and reporting on individual business emissions," Ms Simson said.

"This will require new investment in research and development, so we have more robust

baseline information, new pathways to reduce emissions and fewer barriers to participation in carbon markets."

Action on climate change is a central part of the NFF's 2030 Roadmap, which sets a vision for agriculture to reach \$100 billion in farm gate output by 2030.

"There is a huge potential for Australia to be a global leader in low-emissions agriculture," Ms Simson said.

To view the NFF's climate change policy, visit [nff.org.au](http://nff.org.au)

## Traceability project answers chicken and egg questions

EGG supply chain integrity is being enhanced through an Australian Government-backed project that supports farmers to adopt a consistent approach to traceability.

Minister for Agriculture David Littleproud said Australian Eggs Limited is using \$325,200 in Traceability Grants Program funding to develop a software tool and educational material.

"The project will deliver a simple way for farmers to support on farm egg accounting as well as provide a mechanism for supply chain traceability.

"A series of workshops in every state and territory will guide farmers in the use of the tool and explain the benefits enhanced traceability has for them and the industry.

"These workshops will also provide communication materials to farmers to help educate their customers about the safety and premium quality of Aussie eggs.

"It's important all links in the egg supply chain are aware of the critical relationship traceability has with consumer trust and market opportunities.

"Eggs are a regular part of the diet for millions of Australians, and we consume about 17.2 million of them every day.

"In a global market where premium food commands a premium price, trust is our greatest asset," Minister Littleproud said.

A trade-level communications strategy will identify key influencers inside retailers, food distributors, food service and food

manufacturing and test key messages with them.

Australian Eggs' managing director Rowan McMonnies said egg farmers recognise that traceability delivers consistently high food safety and product integrity outcomes.

"This project will enhance our traceability systems and enable the industry to meet its promise to Australian egg consumers," Mr McMonnies said.

The program supports projects that enhance our agricultural supply chain traceability systems including technologies that digitise information flow.

The Traceability Grants Program will invest \$7m in grants over two rounds until June 2023.

For more information on the Traceability Grants Program, visit [agriculture.gov.au](http://agriculture.gov.au)



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## AI Victoria update

AGRICULTURE Victoria has confirmed avian influenza H7N7 has been detected at an additional egg farm in the Golden Plains Shire, and avian influenza H7N6 has been detected at an emu farm near Kerang in the Gannawarra Shire.

AI H5N2 was detected in poultry at a property in Lethbridge, and another near Bairnsdale. A total of six farms have been affected by AI since the first farm detection on July 31, 2020.

On rare occasions, H7N7 avian influenza has been known to infect and cause disease in humans who have had close contact with infected poultry.

AI viruses can be classified into two forms based on the severity of the disease they cause in poultry:

- Low-pathogenic AI (LPAI)
- Highly pathogenic AI (HPAI).

Most AI strains are classified as LPAI and cause few clinical signs in infected birds.

In contrast, HPAI causes a severe and extremely contagious illness and death among infected birds, with a high mortality rate of up to 100 percent in domestic chickens and turkeys.

In some cases, if LPAI is allowed to circulate in poultry populations, the virus can mutate into the

highly pathogenic form.

This is why the presence of an H5 or H7 virus in poultry is always cause for concern, even when the initial signs of infection are mild.

Agriculture Victoria has ensured that movement controls are in place and the affected properties have been quarantined.

These controls prohibit the movement of birds, equipment and products within and out of the restricted area until further notice.

Staff and other persons who may have been exposed to infected poultry are being contacted by the Department of Health and Human Services, and provided with relevant information to monitor their health and seek medical assistance if they develop symptoms.

Only people who come into close contact with infected birds, their secretions or are close contacts of confirmed cases are considered at risk.

Most people who are infected with H7N7 show no symptoms, mild conjunctivitis or flu-like illness.

Spread from humans to humans has been documented mostly in close contacts of confirmed cases.

No human cases of AI H5N2 or H7N6 have ever been reported.

# New requirements to house poultry

IN order to control the spread of avian influenza within the designated Restricted and Control Areas, Victoria's Chief Veterinary Officer issued a Housing of Livestock clause for 30 days from August 7, 2020, legally requiring all poultry owners – even those with only two or three chickens or birds – to keep their birds housed.

The new legislation states that any owner or person in charge of poultry must ensure:

- All poultry are kept in a building or enclosure separate from wild birds and wild or domesticated animals
- Any dead poultry are not left where they may be accessible to wild birds and wild or domesticated animals
- Any dead poultry which had experienced clinical signs consistent with AI prior to death must immediately be reported to Agriculture Victoria on 1800 675 888

• Feed and water for all poultry must not be accessible to wild birds and wild or domesticated animals

- The entry of wild birds and wild or domesticated animals is prevented into any building or enclosure where poultry are kept
- A disinfectant solution such as soapy water, detergent, bleach or chlorine – appropriate for destroying AI virus – must be made available for use and be used by any person

before entering a building or enclosure used for poultry.

### What is a Housing of Livestock clause?

A Housing of Livestock clause is a requirement for all poultry owners within the Restricted and Control Areas to house their flock for an initial period of 30 days.

The Housing of Livestock is a temporary requirement designed to minimise the risk of poultry and captive birds from becoming infected with AI.

This is a precautionary measure that applies to both commercial and backyard poultry owners.

This means that you must, where possible, move birds into a suitable building, such as a shed or outbuilding adapted to house them, or a new temporary structure.

Place netting over openings to stop wild birds getting in and remove any hazardous substances.

Where housing is not practicable, steps should be taken to separate poultry and their food and drink from wild birds that may be carrying AI, by using netting or similar.

### Why was the housing order issued?

Housing poultry and birds is an effective method of minimising direct contact with wild birds, which can be a vector for AI.

The requirement will reduce the likelihood that

more poultry and birds will contract AI – however it will not eliminate the risk of spread.

### How long do I need to house my poultry?

The initial housing requirement will remain in place for 30 days.

It will be extended until the Chief Veterinary Officer determines it can be safely lifted.

### What do I do if I suspect avian influenza?

Bird owners should be vigilant for signs of disease especially where multiple deaths occur in poultry, or if many birds are unwell.

Avian influenza is a notifiable disease.

Suspicion of infection must be reported to Agriculture Victoria on the Emergency Animal Disease hotline 1800 675 888 or to your local Agriculture Victoria Animal Health and Welfare staff.

### How is the virus spread?

Wild birds are considered the natural host for AI.

Certain water birds act as reservoirs of influenza viruses by carrying the virus in their intestines.

Infected birds shed the virus in saliva, nasal secretions and faeces.

The exposure of wild water birds to domestic birds – particularly poultry – or to their feed and water supply, can lead to the emergence of AI, and it is not unusual to have 'spill over events' of AI take place from wild

birds into domestic poultry flocks.

### What are the symptoms?

Symptoms associated with severe forms of the infection include sudden death, respiratory distress, swelling of the head, purple discoloration of the comb and wattles, coughing, sneezing or rasping breathing, rapid drop in feed intake, water intake and egg production and typical sick bird signs such as ruffled feathers, depression, closed eyes, diarrhea and occasionally nervous signs.

Symptoms of the mild form of the disease include respiratory distress, coughing, sneezing or rasping breathing, rapid decrease in feed or water intake and egg production and typical sick bird signs including ruffled feathers, depression, closed eyes and deaths of up to 15 percent of the flock.

### How do I protect my birds from AI?

Implement good biosecurity measures to prevent wild birds from gaining access to the same food and water supplies as your poultry.

This may include:

- Preventing domesticated poultry from accessing open ponds, lakes, creeks or other watercourses
- Purchasing poultry and birds, litter and feed from accredited sources
- Quarantining new birds until comfortable

they are disease-free

• Separating poultry and their food and drink from wild birds, by using netting or similar

• Storing litter and feed securely to avoid contamination by wild birds

• Practicing good hygiene at all times

• Not permitting visitors to areas where poultry are kept

• Maintaining facilities such as poultry sheds to ensure safe and hygienic containment.

Water supplied to poultry should not originate from sources where wild birds frequent.

The following water sources are less likely to be contaminated:

- Treated chlorinated mains water
- Bore water that has been tested and is suitable quality for poultry – poultry have a low tolerance to saline water.

### Restricted area and control area maps

Access up-to-date maps of the Restricted Area and Control Area at [agriculture.vic.gov.au/biosecurity/animal-diseases/poultry-diseases/avian-influenza-bird-flu](http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/biosecurity/animal-diseases/poultry-diseases/avian-influenza-bird-flu)

### Where can I get more information?

More information on AI and the Golden Plains situation is available on the Agriculture Victoria website [agriculture.vic.gov.au/biosecurity/animal-diseases/poultry-diseases/avian-influenza-bird-flu](http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/biosecurity/animal-diseases/poultry-diseases/avian-influenza-bird-flu)

Information from Agriculture Victoria.

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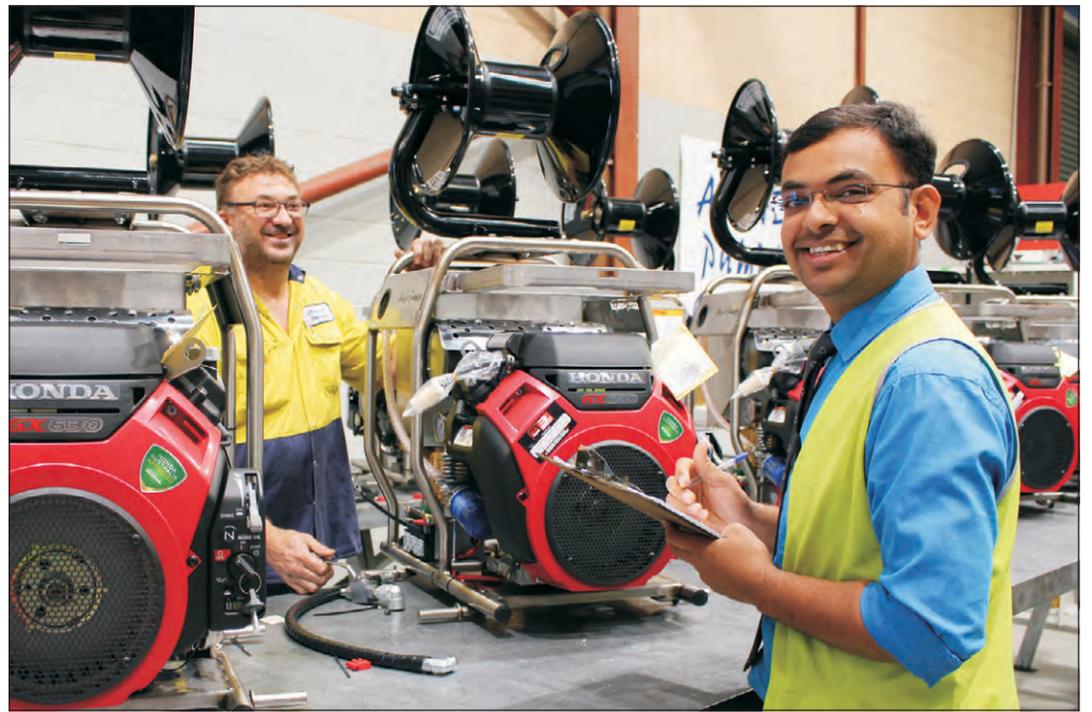
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Aussie Pumps increases production of drain jetters in response to demand from industries converting to high-pressure water jetting.

## Clean-up better with a jetter

CHICKEN sheds with issues of blocked pipes and drains often rely on local plumbers to clear those chokes.

Unfortunately many plumbers are still clearing drains using old mechanical methods, which are dangerous, slow and ineffective.

What's more, using old methods means the longer the job takes, the more expensive it is.

Aussie Pumps sales manager Brad Farrugia said: "We're out to educate poultry producers and processors that jetters are a fast and effective

alternative to clearing drains."

"For example, some producers are now buying their own jetter equipment, so they can take control of the issue rather than relying on external help when they have a blocked pipe."

Drains can easily become blocked when effluent, feed and debris are washed into them.

Aussie Pumps' range of drain-cleaning jetters with high-pressure water jets unblock drains in minutes.

These not only clear blockages but flush pipes

at the same time.

The jetters are available in both 4000 and 5000 psi options as Class A machines, which means that operators do not need to be certified to use them.

The range uses Honda and Vanguard petrol engines, with diesel-drive versions for remote communities.

Each unit is fitted with a heavy-duty steel reel with 60m of Aussie Pumps' high-pressure sewer cleaning hose.

An 'Aussie nozzle box' is supplied as part of the kit to tackle virtually any drain-cleaning task.

The nozzle selection includes a turbo mulcher for stubborn chokes.

"The bonus for poultry operators is that a drain-cleaning jetter can also double as an extremely effective pressure washer too," Mr Farrugia said.

"So, you're getting two machines for the price of one."

Further information on Aussie Pumps' Cobra range of drain-cleaning jetters is available from [aussiepumps.com.au](http://aussiepumps.com.au) and Aussie Pumps' gold distributors in Australia and throughout the South Pacific.

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ALIS Chirpy Sensor measures bird distress calls.

# Cutting-edge technology to transform chick welfare

NEW research has emerged from the University of Plymouth in the UK, highlighting that listening to the sounds of newly hatched chicks is cornerstone in the early detection of welfare.

The study found that in nature, when a chick is uncomfortable or distressed, they call out a distinct distress call to their mother.

While this is mimicked in a commercial farming situation, it's hard to pin-

point where the issues lie due to large batch numbers.

Listening to your newly hatched chicks will become a very powerful tool to improve well-being from the beginning of their life.

It could predict flock-level behaviour, future growth and even mortality rates.

With welfare needs central to progress in precision livestock farming, we are introducing the ALIS Chirpy Sensor

– a vocalisation sensor that measures bird distress calls.

It functions with a sensor cord extending down from the ALIS unit to slightly above bird height.

The sensor is located in the perspex probe at the bottom of the cable.

The bird calls are then converted via an algorithm into a known value of 0-10 for scoring the birds level of stress.

With increasing consumer awareness about

food provenance, welfare and the environment, the new ALIS sensors will correlate important production and welfare parameters.

These sensors conveniently clip onto our ALIS lighting systems, which eliminates any retrofitting costs.

For more information please visit our website [stockyardindustries.com/poultry-lighting-sensors](http://stockyardindustries.com/poultry-lighting-sensors) or contact one of our friendly sales representatives on 07 4697 3344.

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# Anpario Orego-Stim trial summary

OREGO-STIM is a high quality, plant based eubiotic, containing 100 percent natural oregano essential oil.

Eimeria is ubiquitous in the environment and there is no cross protection between eimeria.

Traditionally coccidiosis control has been via the use of chemicals, ionophores and vaccines.

The global cost of coccidiosis, including drug related treatment, is estimated to be \$2-3 billion annually.

A study was conducted at Southern Poultry Re-

search Inc in Georgia in the US.

Birds – Cobb 500 – were reared from 0-42 days in floorpens on reused litter (see Table 1 for details).

On Day 0, all birds were spray-vaccinated in the hatchery with a commercial coccidiosis vaccine – Coccivac-B, Merck Animal Health USA.

On Day 21, five birds per pen were transferred

to cages, challenged with eimerial and six days later euthanised for lesion scoring.

A positive control of cage-reared, naive, coccidia-free birds were included to confirm an eimeria challenge.

Weight gain over the challenge period was determined.

### Summary

Orego-Stim did not interfere with the devel-

opment of immunity to eimeria following anticoccidial vaccination as shown by lesion scoring following coccidial challenge.

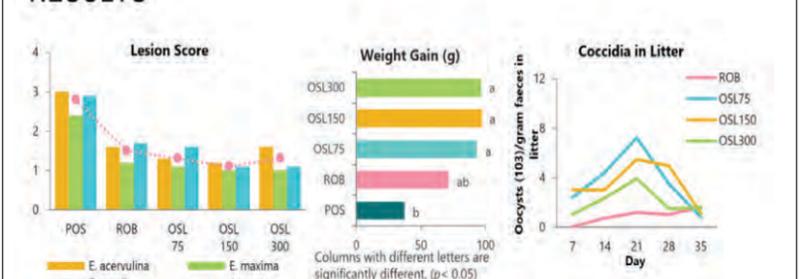
Orego-Stim administered in water lessened the intestinal damage from coccidia leading to increased weight gain and lower lesion scores during challenge compared to Robenidine treatment.

Table 1. Treatment details

Treatment	Floorpen phase		Challenge phase	
	No. birds/pen	No pens	No. birds/cage	No. cages
Positive control [POS] <sup>2</sup>	–	–	5	8
Robenidine (Robenz, 33 ppm) [ROB]	55	8	5	8
Orego-Stim (75ml/1000l) [OSL75]	55	8	5	8
Orego-Stim (150ml/1000l) [OSL150]	55	8	5	8
Orego-Stim (300ml/1000l) [OSL300]	55	8	5	8

<sup>1</sup> Per dose, approximately 100,000, 75,000, 50,000 oocysts of *E. acervulina*, *E. maxima* and *E. teniella* respectively; <sup>2</sup> Challenge phase only.

## RESULTS



ROB and OSL groups reduced gut lesions compared to POS. All OSL groups had lower lesion scores than ROB, with OSL 150 treatment having the lowest. Weight gain was significantly higher in all OSL groups over the challenge period compared to POS. Coccidial oocysts circulated in the litter at higher levels with OSL compared to ROB, allowing birds to build natural immunity to Orego-Stim Liquid administered in water supports bird performance during periods of intestinal stress, such as anticoccidial vaccination or coccidial challenge.

Orego-Stim trial results.

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The alternative is to go for a smaller, faster-run-

ning pump that claims to be 'super heavy-duty' or similar to promote the pump's supposed effectiveness on meat-processing plant wastewater.

But when a pump is less than half the weight of the market leader and needs to run twice as fast to deliver the same performance, alarm bells should start ringing.

Ear tags, pieces of twine and bits of baling twine are not going to be kind on these fast running, so-called, "semi-trash" pumps.

And it's not only heavier construction that engineers look for.

They are also after features that enable operators to safely maintain their pumps over decades of use.

The following are pump features engineers may include on their checklist:

- A wear plate that can be replaced without disconnecting the pump from piping or driver
- An impeller that can pass a full 76mm solid
- A self-cleaning wear plate that enables units to handle stringy materials such as rags, wipes and baling twine
- Parts available in hardened iron materials – twice as hard as cast iron

or 316 stainless steel – to resist the effects of sand and grit in pumped effluent

• A suction flap valve that can be inspected or replaced without disconnecting suction piping

• A burst disc in the flap valve to vent excess pressure back to the wet well if the pump inadvertently runs against a closed head – protecting operator and machine.

• Double lip seals to protect pump bearings in case of a seal failure.

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look for a pump tailored to meet their needs, a US designed, built and pre-tested pump from Gorman-Rupp will prove to be a reliable investment, and not a risk.

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## Disinfectants for avian influenza virus

AVIAN influenza is a highly infectious disease affecting many bird species including pet and farmed chickens and can result in significant deaths on poultry farms.

Following good biosecurity and hygiene practices are essential to protecting poultry and people from avian influenza.

Wild birds can carry avian influenza without showing any signs.

Biosecurity practices should be focused on separating wild birds from domestic birds, and good hygiene measures taken as people move between different flocks.

Cleaning and disinfection are important parts of biosecurity.

To be effective against AI virus, the following two-step process is recommended.

First, clean poultry housing, boots and equipment thoroughly to remove any organic matter such as soil, mud and faeces, using water – preferably hot – and detergent.

Second, apply a chemical disinfectant to cleaned surfaces and leave it on for the required contact time to destroy the virus.

Contact times will vary between chemicals and different surfaces, that is porous surfaces such as wood versus non-porous surfaces such as metal.

### Disinfectants for AI

Avian influenza virus is a Category A lipid enveloped virus, and it is stable over a pH range of 5.0-8.2.

The following options will be effective in destroying AI virus on surfaces:

- Soapy water and

detergent will strip the fatty envelope and kill the virus

- Acid and alkaline chemicals
- Disinfectants, including bleach, chlorine and citric acid.

Whichever product you choose to use must be used as directed by the manufacturer.

Remember, chemicals may be toxic to poultry and other animals, even in very small doses.

Care should be taken to determine the safety of disinfectants prior to using them near poultry, and they should always be stored well away from poultry houses.

If using a footbath at the entrance of a poultry enclosure, place it outside the enclosure and in an area where other animals including pets cannot access and drink from it.

### Decontamination

If vehicles, livestock trucks and trailers, animal yards and equipment need to be decontaminated, the following two-step cleaning and disinfection process should also be used.

First, remove all visible organic matter such as faeces, urine, dirt, mud and such by washing the surface with water under pressure.

When using a cleaning agent or detergent, follow the manufacturer's instructions – in particular the right concentration of cleaning produce for the amount of soiling and organic matter present.

Also, follow personal protective equipment recommendations of the manufacturer.

Second, apply an effective disinfectant as directed by the manufacturer.

It is wise to ensure that the disinfectant being used will not damage the product being cleaned and is not corrosive at the dilution rate being used.

Follow all the safety recommendations of the manufacturer.

### Further advice

For advice on chemicals effective against AI virus and their safe use around poultry, contact your veterinarian or the product manufacturer.

### Where can I get more information?

More information on AI and the Golden Plains situation is available on the Agriculture Victoria website [agriculture.vic.gov.au/biosecurity/animal-diseases/poultry-diseases/avian-influenza-bird-flu](http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/biosecurity/animal-diseases/poultry-diseases/avian-influenza-bird-flu)

Information from Agriculture Victoria.

## AI work progresses but threat remains

AGRICULTURE Victoria has now completed work on depopulating the four poultry farms confirmed to have avian influenza in the Golden Plains Shire and East

Gippsland areas. Victoria's Chief Veterinary Officer Dr Graeme Cooke said, "We're urging everyone to remain vigilant and be alert to the presence of sick or dead

birds, either in backyard hens or flocks, and in wild birds."

"Avian influenza is present in our wild birds and environment, so it can occasionally spill into our

domestic bird populations.

"It is crucial we identify these cases quickly, so we can stop it spreading.

"Report sick or dead birds anywhere in the state to the 24-hour Emergency Animal Disease Watch Hotline on 1800 675 888 to help eradicate avian influenza."

A strain of highly pathogenic avian influenza H7N7 virus was first detected at a free range egg farm near Lethbridge on July 31, with a second affected farm confirmed to have the virus on Thursday August 6.

Turkey farms in the Golden Plains Shire and at Bairnsdale were found to have the low pathogenic strain H5N2 of avian influenza on August 10.

"With no live birds remaining on the infected properties, work is now underway to thoroughly decontaminate the sites to ensure we eliminate all remnants of the virus," Dr Cooke said.

Movement of domestic birds, bird products and equipment into, out of or within the Restricted and Control Areas spanning all of the Golden Plains Shire and the specified area near Bairnsdale, is not allowed without a permit from Agriculture Victoria.

"These controls will re-

main in place until we are confident the disease has not spread further and has been eradicated.

"This includes controls on buying, selling or moving eggs, manure and chickens, whether on the side of the road, from your property, your local store, online such as through Gumtree or Facebook or at markets.

"Purchases of eggs and chicken meat from retail food outlets and supermarkets are not restricted," Dr Cooke said.

In addition, a housing order is in place for Golden Plains Shire requiring all bird owners – pet, backyard and commercial – in the area to house or keep their birds in an enclosure for a minimum of 30 days from August 7.

The Department of Health and Human Services has confirmed the H7N7 and H5N2 strains of avian influenza are not a risk to the public as they rarely affect humans unless there is direct and close contact with sick birds.

There are no food safety issues identified – properly cooked chicken meat and eggs are safe to eat.

More information, including applications for permits, is available on the Agriculture Victoria website at [agriculture.vic.gov.au/avianflu](http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/avianflu) or call 03 4334 2715.

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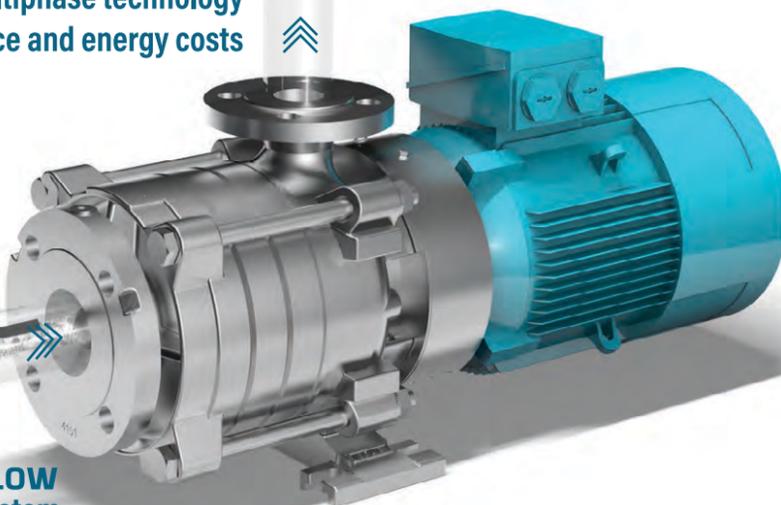
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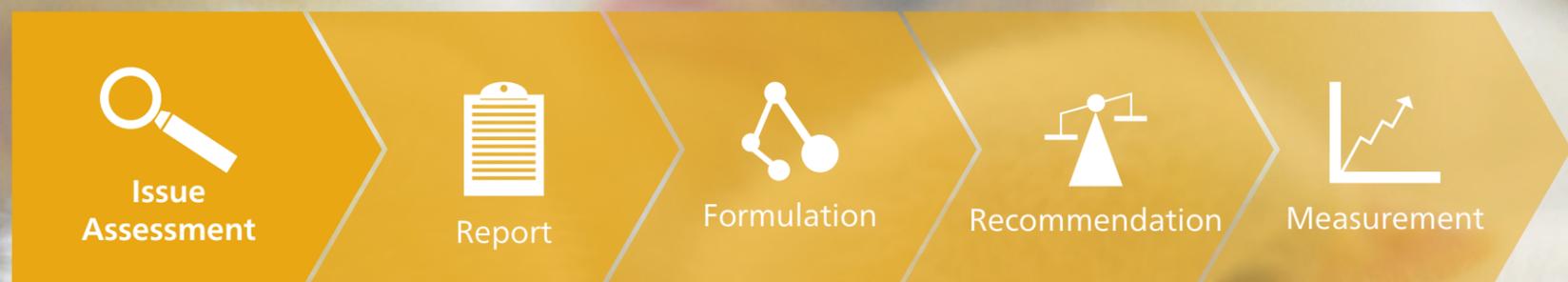
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# Bird flu outbreak confirmed in Victoria

AN additional egg farm near Melbourne has tested positive to avian influenza, prompting the state's agriculture department to order all commercial free range egg farms in the area to house their flocks indoors for 30 days.

It comes soon after the bird flu outbreak was identified at another free range egg farm in Lethbridge.

That farm was placed under quarantine, had birds destroyed and had a restricted buffer zone established around it.

It was the eighth highly pathogenic avian influenza outbreak on an Australian poultry farm in the past 44 years.

Consumers are being told there are no food safety issues, and properly cooked chicken meat and eggs are safe to eat.

But experts say the outbreak is a reminder to all bird owners, including people with backyard chickens, of the importance of good biosecurity.

An initial notification from the World Organisation for Animal Health advised the first farm identified in the outbreak had two separate sheds, and all 21,750 birds in one shed were affected.

But before you panic, Victoria's Department of Health and Human Services believes the H7N7 avian influenza virus,

which is the strain detected on both Lethbridge properties, is not a risk to the public.

The DHHS said: "On rare occasions, this strain of avian influenza has been known to infect and cause disease in humans who have had close contact with infected poultry."

"Only people who come into close contact with infected birds or their secretions, or are close contacts of confirmed cases, are considered at risk."

All workers and biosecurity officers at the affected properties will be wearing personal protective equipment.

Both properties will remain under quarantine without birds until it is safe for them to restock.

Victorian Farmers Federation egg group president Brian Ahmed said the carriers of the virus were "more than likely wild birds."

An associate professor of veterinary epidemiology and public health from the Graham Centre for Agricultural Innovation at Charles Sturt University Marta Hernandez-Jover said the move to more free range egg farming had increased the risk of avian influenza outbreaks because there were more chances for farmed animals to interact with wild birds.

She said that of the eight

highly pathogenic avian influenza outbreaks on Australian poultry farms since 1976, three had occurred in the past eight years.

There has also been an increase in the number of low pathogenic avian influenza outbreaks.

"Free range production poses a higher risk because it is more likely that the virus can be introduced from wild waterfowl to domestic poultry in these types of properties, when compared to conventional indoor poultry raising."

"Modelling suggests there's a 6-7 percent increase in the risk of an avian influenza outbreak in the country for each 25 percent shift from indoor to free range systems," Assoc Prof Hernandez-Jover said.

Agriculture Victoria said all previous outbreaks had been successfully eradicated. The current controls implemented by Agriculture Victoria only apply to bird owners in Victoria's Golden Plains Shire, and ban the moving of birds, related equipment or products without a permit.

A restricted area buffer zone has been put in place around both infected farms in Victoria.

Domestic bird and backyard chicken owners in Golden Plains are also advised to keep their

flock separate from all other birds, and report any cases of unexplained bird deaths to the Emergency Animal Disease Watch Hotline on 1800 675 888, their local vet or Agriculture Victoria animal health staff.

Victoria's Chief Veterinary Officer Graeme Cooke advised all bird owners to practise good biosecurity.

"Keep your poultry sheds, yards, aviaries and equipment clean."

"Restrict contact between your poultry and wild birds and limit visitors to your flock."

"Ensure footwear is clean when re-entering your property, always wash hands before and after handling birds or eggs, and quarantine new birds before integrating with existing ones," Dr Cooke said.

Recent research suggested more information was needed to ensure biosecurity was better understood and implemented, particularly among smaller, free-range producers.

While research identified larger producers with well-developed biosecurity management systems in place, it also identified the diversity of decisions and degrees of biosecurity awareness at farm level for smaller producers, particularly in the free range sector.

Agriculture Victoria reports H7N7 is a "highly contagious disease that predominantly affects chickens, ducks, geese, turkeys, guinea fowl, quail, pheasants and ostriches."

Signs of the disease in birds may include:

- Sudden death
- Birds with difficulty breathing, such as coughing, sneezing or rasping
- Swelling and purple discoloration of the head, comb, wattles and neck
- Rapid drop in eating, drinking and egg production
- Ruffled feathers, dopyness, closed eyes
- Diarrhoea.

Many species of wild birds, including waterfowl and seabirds, can also carry the virus.

Most people show no symptoms, or have mild conjunctivitis or flu-like illness if infected with AI, according to the DHHS.

Humans do not transmit the infection to others easily – it appears to take close contact with a sick person over several days before contraction.

But the World Organisation for Animal Health reports that while most AI viruses do not infect humans, several strains have caused serious and even fatal infections in people.

First appeared on abc.net.au

## Philippines bans Australian poultry imports due to AI

RECENTLY the Philippines's poultry industry has temporarily banned the importation of domestic and wild birds and their products from Australia, after the presence of the highly pathogenic H7N7 avian influenza virus was detected at an egg farm.

Australia, which accounts for less than one percent of the Philippines' poultry imports, has confirmed the outbreak at the egg farm in Victoria.

The ban covers poultry meat, day old chicks, eggs and semen the Department of Agriculture said in its August 14 order.

Avian influenza can infect humans, though there is limited evidence of human-to-human transmission, according to health experts.

Human infections are primarily acquired through direct contact with infected animals or contaminated environments.

Agriculture Secretary William Dar said all incoming ship-

ments from Australia with import clearance issued on or before August 6 will be allowed entry.

"This is provided the birds were slaughtered or processed on or before July 3, or 21 days prior to the outbreak," Mr Dar said.

The Philippines has seen its own outbreaks of avian influenza, with the latest involving the highly infectious H5N6 subtype of the virus detected at an egg farm in San Luis town in Pampanga Province in July.

The Southeast Asian country also declared a temporary ban on Brazilian poultry meat products, after two cities in China found traces of the new coronavirus in cargoes of imported frozen food, including chicken wings from the South American country.

Brazil has the world's second worst COVID-19 outbreak after the US, recording more than 3.4 million cases and deaths of close to 110,000 since the pandemic began.

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