

Summary of meeting outcomes

Egg Industry Consultative Committee

12 August 2020

The Egg Industry Consultative Committee held a meeting via video conference on Wednesday 12 August 2020. Specific issues considered at the meeting are detailed below.

Attendees

Egg Industry Consultative Committee: Raymond Chia (Australian Eggs), Jodie Dean (NSW Farmers Association), Melinda Hashimoto (Egg Farmers of Australia), Peter Matuszny (Manning Valley Free Range Eggs), Rowan McMonnies (Australian Eggs), Paul Pace (Pace Farm), Franko Pirovic (Pirovic Enterprises).

NSW DPI – Biosecurity & Food Safety: Lisa Szabo - Chair (Director Food Safety & CEO NSW Food Authority), Peter Day (Director Compliance & Integrity Systems), Mark Mackie (Manager, Audit Systems & Verification), David Cusack (Manager, Food Standards & Programs), Suzanne Robinson, (Director Animal Welfare), Ryoko Uchida (Senior Industry Analyst, International Engagement), Amanda Black (Senior Veterinary Policy and Project Officer), Rachel Gordon (Policy and Project Officer), Joanna Blunden (Development Officer (Poultry Eggs), Jenine Ryle (Senior Policy and Programs Officer), Jaime Garcia (Secretariat).

Apologies: Ian Sanders (Director International Engagement Unit), Sarah Britton (NSW Chief Veterinary Officer and Group Director Animal Biosecurity), Anne McIntosh (Manager Food Incident Response & Complaints), Annabel Johnson (NSW Farmers' Association), Kim Filmer (Chief Animal Welfare Officer), Brett Langfield (NSW Farmers' Association).

Industry updates

Members provided updates on key and emerging issues, with COVID-19 remaining a focus of discussion. Members discussed the recent outbreak of avian influenza (H7N7) in Victoria and the importance of having good biosecurity practices in place to protect birds from the disease. Members noted that avian influenza is a notifiable disease in NSW and thanked DPI for its preparedness planning and industry resources available for this threat.

Members were provided with a Resource Paper with key links to published COVID-19 information to support the NSW food industry including [advice for businesses](#) on food safety aspects of COVID-19, workforce management and regulatory obligations.

- The COVID-19 Primary Industries Liaison Team can be contacted by emailing covidinfo@dpi.nsw.gov.au
- online resource COVID-19 advice can be accessed at dpi.nsw.gov.au/home/covid-19

Food safety program compliance report

The Committee noted a report on egg industry compliance activities for the 2019-20 financial year. Members noted that 58% of the licensed egg industry recorded an acceptable audit and/or inspection result. In comparison, the compliance rate in the egg industry sector for the previous financial year was 88%. This 30% compliance drop for this period was largely attributable to the increased surveillance and monitoring required under the Biosecurity *Salmonella* Enteritidis Control Order.

During the 2019-20 financial year, Authorised Officers inspected licensed egg production and processing facilities to determine baseline compliance with the Control Order. At the

conclusion of the inspection, each licensed facility was issued with a Biosecurity Direction outlining the areas of the Control Order and any additional requirements that required corrective action. Follow-up inspections are scheduled six months after the initial inspection to check if the licensed premises has complied with requirements outlined in the Control Order and food safety provisions.

Animal welfare update

Suzanne Robinson updated the Committee on animal welfare issues including:

- The Department is analysing feedback in response to the [Animal Welfare Reform Issues Paper](#). The Paper identifies areas of reform to modernise the policy and legislative framework for animal welfare in NSW.
- A [NSW Parliamentary Inquiry into the Use of Battery Cages for Hens in the Egg Production Industry](#) was established in June 2019. The final report was released on 30 October 2019. The NSW Government response was released on 30 April 2020. There were five recommendations of which four were supported in principle and one was noted.
- A [NSW Parliamentary Inquiry into Animal Cruelty Laws in NSW](#) was established in August 2019 to inquire into and report on the effectiveness of the arrangements for the administration and enforcement of *Protection Of Cruelty to Animals Act 1979*. The final report was released on 4 June 2020. The NSW Government is considering the recommendations and will provide a response by 4 December 2020. Development of the [Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for Poultry](#).
- Continuation of drought support packages which can be found on the [NSW Drought Hub website](#).

Amendments to the *Salmonella* Enteritidis Control Order

Amanda Black outlined amendments to the [Biosecurity *Salmonella* Enteritidis \(SE\) Control Order](#). Members noted that NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI) recommends that licensed egg businesses participate in the National SE Monitoring & Accreditation Program (NSEMAP). For licensed egg businesses that do not become members of the NSEMAP, the NSW Food Authority will fund the cost of testing one pooled sample every 12-15 weeks for the next two years. Sampling must be done in accordance with NSW DPI provided instructions and by DPI approved laboratories.

Members noted that egg producers in NSW will be given a three-month grace period to consult with private veterinarians, NSW DPI, Local Land Services district veterinarians and others to implement mandatory testing for SE, with testing to be conducted by 1 October 2020.

International Engagement update

Ryoko Uchida outlined work being done by the International Engagement Team including the use of webinars to communicate with industry groups to discuss issues regarding the challenging operating environment imposed by global COVID-19 restrictions.

The next meeting of the Egg Industry Consultative Committee is to be advised