

Summary of meeting outcomes

Egg Industry Consultative Committee

12 April 2019

The Egg Industry Consultative Committee (EICC) held a meeting in Sydney on Friday 12 April 2019. Specific issues considered by the Committee at its meeting are detailed below.

Attendees

Egg Industry Consultative Committee: Raymond Chia (Australian Eggs), Annabel Johnson (NSW Farmers' Association), Peter Matuszny (Free range egg producers' representative, Manning Valley Free Range Eggs), Rowan McMonnies (Australian Eggs), Paul Pace (large egg processors' representative, Pace Farm), Franko Pirovic (large egg producers' representative, Pirovic Enterprises).

NSW DPI – Biosecurity & Food Safety: Lisa Szabo - Chair (Group Director Food Safety & CEO NSW Food Authority), Sarah Britton (NSW Chief Veterinary Officer and Group Director Animal Biosecurity), Emily Rucker (Director Customer Service & Engagement), Mark Mackie (Manager, Audit Systems & Verification), Craig Shadbolt (Manager Food Incident Response & Complaints), David Cusack (Manager, Food Standards & Programs), Ryoko Uchida (Senior Industry Analyst, International Engagement), Jenine Ryle (Secretariat).

Guest Attendees: Andrew Jones (Managing Director, Jones Brothers Family Farm), Kim Filmer (Chief Animal Welfare Officer).

Apologies: Bede Burke (NSW Farmers' Association), Bruce Christie (Deputy Director General, Biosecurity & Food Safety), Peter Day (Director Biosecurity & Food Safety Compliance), Geneveive Bonello (Manager, Stakeholder Engagement & Communications), Ian Sanders (Director International Engagement Unit), Matt Campbell (Team Leader Metro Region, Regulatory Operations Unit).

Salmonella overview

Members were provided with an overview of *Salmonella* statistics in NSW. There has been an increase in *Salmonella* Typhimurium with 153 confirmed cases since October 2018 with the eggs from one producer being consistently implicated.

Salmonella Enteritidis was the focus of discussion for the remainder of the meeting. Members were updated following a steady increase in the number of cases of *Salmonella* Enteritidis in humans in NSW since May 2018. It was indicated that usually illness is linked to people who have travelled overseas and come in contact with the organism; however, there are now around 173 cases in Australia with no history of overseas travel (as at 10 April 2019).

NSW government agencies have worked collaboratively to identify the source of this *Salmonella*. As a consequence, *Salmonella* Enteritidis has been found on six poultry layer farms in NSW. The properties are interconnected in that people, eggs or equipment were moving between the properties.

Steps taken to minimise consumer exposure to *Salmonella* Enteritidis risks from these infected premises include movement restrictions, farm depopulation, decontamination and disinfection, consumer level and trade level recalls, product withdrawals, consumer advisories and media.

The Department is continuing to be very proactive with increased surveillance and biosecurity directions in place. The properties are now under quarantine and eggs are not moving from them. Stringent biosecurity and food safety standards will need to be met before any poultry return for production.

Rowan McMonnies provided an overview of the discussion at yesterday's (11 April) National Egg Industry Food Safety Meeting convened by Australian Eggs. The meeting was well attended and brought together state health and agriculture regulators and egg industry stakeholders.

Three broad areas emerged from members' discussion including feedback from yesterday's meeting as opportunities for biosecurity and food safety improvements within the NSW egg industry –

1. Overview of the licensing framework in NSW including minimum NSW egg industry standards
2. Biosecurity protocols and compliance including SE surveillance
3. Traceability arrangements across the sector including strengthening stamping requirements.

The NSW Farmers Association Egg Committee are meeting next Tuesday 16 April. The Association will formally write to the CEO Food Authority with an outline of its proposals following the 16 April meeting, including participation in the Australian Eggs quality assurance scheme (ESA).

It was noted that the national Food Safety Risk Priority profiling framework was the basis by which NSW food businesses are classified with appropriate level of regulation implemented for businesses commensurate with food safety risk. Application of the framework to the egg industry and development of associated food safety standards occurred when there was no evidence of SE in Australian flocks.

The Food Authority undertook to examine the priority classifications applied to some NSW egg businesses and determine whether they remain fit for purpose (given the change in risk created by SE), along with other proposals put forward by the NSW Farmers Association and other industry bodies.

Remaining agenda papers

It was agreed that due to the extensive discussion of *Salmonella* Enteritidis, members would note the following papers out of session and direct any follow up queries to the author of the paper or to the Committee Secretariat (food.industrycommittees@dpi.nsw.gov.au):

1. Egg Industry Food Safety compliance report
2. NSW antimicrobial stewardship and resistance policy
3. National traceability project update
4. Draft export egg and egg product control orders.

The next meeting of the Egg Industry Consultative Committee will be held on Wednesday 7 August 2019.