

GUIDELINES FOR NEW ENTRANTS TO THE EGG INDUSTRY

The SA Poultry Association is a voluntary farmers' Association whose aim is to provide services to existing producers. See about us, organisational structure, on the main menu.

Various services are offered by the Association to its members, amongst others, a monthly Bulletin (See Bulletin under Industry)) which keeps members informed of the latest happenings in the industry and tries to fulfil certain information functions through the publication of technical articles.

Membership application forms and membership fees are downloadable.

The Poultry Association has a central body called the Management Committee who sees to the co-ordinating of activities of the different affiliates who see to the administrative affairs and also addresses certain matters of mutual interest via advisory committees. These committees are as follows:

- (a) Technical Committee
- (b) Feed Committee
- (c) Training Committee

The Management Committee is compiled from the following main committees, each operating as separate organisations:

- (a) Egg Organisation Committee
- (b) Broiler Organisation Committee
- (c) Chick Producers' Organisation
- (d) Chairman of the Advisory Committee

The Egg Organisation is a voluntary body.

SUPPLIERS OF PRODUCTION EQUIPMENT

Please find a copy of our Poultry Bulletin (see Bulletin under Industry) wherein you will find the names of suppliers who advertise. Please contact them for further information.

INFORMATION

Should you require specific information about the keeping pullets, please contact:

Animal Research Council
Private Bag X2
IRENE
1675
Tel No.(012) 672 9111

For specific information pertaining to disease control, please contact:

Central Reference Laboratory
Private Bag X04
ONDERSTEPSPOORT
0110
Tel No. (012) 529 8000

MARKETING

By the time you are ready to market your eggs, you must remember that you fall under the Directorate Plant and Quality Control, a division of the Department of Agriculture which administers the Marketing Act for the marking and packing of eggs.

Please contact them at:

Private Bag X258

PRETORIA

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Tel No. (012) 319 6000

FARM STALLS

It usually pays, depending on where you stay, to sell eggs at a farm stall direct to the public. It is a cash income and, if you are situated on a road to a black township, you can develop a flourishing business. You can only sell farm products produced on your own property at a farm stall. It would be wise if you obtained a copy of the specific regulations which governs the finer details regarding farms stalls.

FINANCING

No central source of financing exists for poultry producers. The normal agricultural financing, which boils down to the following, can be used as a guideline:

- (a) The Landbank will grant loans under Article 34 based on a promissory note for established small farmers who wish to expand in the egg operation. As it is based on a promissory note it is usually a lengthy procedure due to the fact that they do not obtain any direct bond for security of such loans.
- (b) Commercial banks. The average successful egg producer makes use of commercial banks for the financing of expansions.
- (c) The Small Business Development Corporation has, in some cases, helped to finance small broiler abattoirs. The Association is not aware of any financing of egg production units through the Small Business Development Corporation.

BREEDING LINES

Several breeding lines, as advertised in the attached Poultry Bulletin, are available as pullets and can be purchased as day-old or point of lay hens. To rear day-old chicks to point of lay is a highly complicated process, as day length manipulation, vaccination programmes and the need to ascertain that vaccinations have taken place, and several other aspects, make this a critical factor which influences the future performance of your bird. Thus we recommend that you buy point of lay hens from the various suppliers to the industry.

For egg production commercial layer lines, amongst others, as per the adverts in the attached Poultry Bulletin.

CULL HENS

Hens which have been in production for approximately one year are usually sold live to the black trade. They keep these live hens at their homes until they are ready to prepare and slaughter them. We, in South Africa, are fortunate to be able to sell

these hens (at times) at a marginally profitable price. It is a direct result of the above need that hens be kept alive until they are eaten that good cull prices are achieved.

The sale of cull hens at times leads to an appreciation of the hen. It is, however, not always the case and the cull hen price usually varies between 50-75 percent of the original purchase price of the point of lay.

ANIMAL WELFARE

Please note that a registered officer of the SPCA with a letter from the local magistrate is allowed to enter and inspect any poultry farm in the magisterial district.

Animal welfare groups have caused many problems overseas, therefore it is essential to ensure that your birds are well tended, your cages are not overstocked and high health standards are maintained. A shower and a disinfectant foot bath are a must before anyone is allowed entrance to a poultry farm – even an inspector! If you adhere to these health standards, your visitors will naturally follow this good example.

A Code of Practice has been compiled to encourage continued humane treatment of chickens. (Downloads).

DISEASE RISK

When poultry is kept intensively, the risk of disease is very high for the mere reason that the birds are close to each other. If one should become diseased, it is easy for it to spread, therefore potential poultry farmers must take note of very stringent health procedures.

In the case of broilers, one has to ensure that a proper vaccination programme is followed. If the correct procedure is not followed, you can suffer severe financial losses.

It would be advisable to attend the annual SAPA Congress and Exhibition which includes a sector on poultry health, in order to upgrade your knowledge of poultry disease and how it should be handled.