



CULL TRADERS REPORT
FOR THE PERIOD 1 APRIL TO 30 JUNE 2022 (2Q2022)

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1. INTRODUCTION

The informal economy provides livelihoods for thousands of South Africans, including many women, and is an important source of food for the poor. Chicken meat remains an affordable and healthy animal protein, with a per capita consumption of 38.0 kg in 2021. A thriving and lucrative live bird market exists in townships and rural areas and is part of the poultry value chain. However, the handling of live birds potentially exposes humans to viruses such as highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI).

After the recording of the first outbreak of HPAI in South Africa in June 2017, the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) regulated movement of live birds in an effort to manage the risk posed by their transportation. The task of monitoring the movement of live birds was delegated to the Poultry Disease Management Agency (PDMA). This was achieved by the registration of commercial farmers and cull buyers and the consolidation of monthly transactions to improve traceability.

The prescribed protocol requires farmers to submit a health permit signed by a veterinarian or animal health technician before live birds may be removed off any poultry farm. The permit is valid for five days and once that has elapsed a new one is required to be issued.

A summary of conditions that apply to the granting of removal permits are as follows:

- Farmers wanting to depopulate a flock must contact a registered veterinarian or animal health technician or other delegated authority.
- Flocks must be removed from the farm within five days of the date of the permit.
- The permit does not constitute a movement permit across provincial or international boundaries.
- If any unusual mortality is experienced after removal, the live bird buyer is obliged to stop selling these birds and consult the nearest state veterinary authorities without delay.
- Live birds and eggs on farms within a surveillance zone may not be moved without the express permission of the state veterinarian or other delegated authority.
- DALRRD allows all SAVC-registered veterinarians and animal health technicians to sign the health declarations.

With the announcement of a confirmed outbreak of HPAI H5N1 in Gauteng in April 2021, poultry producers were advised to familiarise themselves with the document issued by the Directorate: Animal Health, DALRRD entitled 'Protocol for the sale of live poultry'. Silverpath Consulting has been contracted by the PDMA to manage the system going forward.

The risk of further outbreaks of HPAI during the 2022 winter season remains high.

2. FARMER AND TRADER REGISTRATION

The online portal is accessible on the website address <http://www.poultrydiseases.co.za>. Producers are encouraged to assist traders with online registrations where needed.

During 2H2017, in the midst of the catastrophic outbreak of HPAI H5N8, a total of 284 poultry companies registered on the PDMA database. These included egg producers, pullet rearers, broiler producers, layer and broiler breeder operations, hatcheries, co-ops, poultry projects and research units. In addition, a total of 8210 active cull bird traders were listed on the database.

Table 1 provides a breakdown of the registrations for traders and farmers in each province for the current reporting period and for 1Q2022. The number of registered traders who submitted data increased by 27 (+1.0%) to 2 632, with the largest increase occurring in Mpumalanga. The number of registered producers who submitted data increased by 7 (+0.7%) to 1 042. Total registration increased from 3 640 in 1Q2022 to 3 674 (+0.9%).

Table 1: Registration census figures for live bird traders and producers				
Traders	1Q2022	2Q2022	Change	% change
Eastern Cape	77	77	0	0.0
Free State	46	49	3	6.5
Gauteng	602	606	4	0.7
KwaZulu-Natal	71	71	0	0.0
Limpopo	1 481	1 480	-1	-0.1
Mpumalanga	61	76	15	24.6
North West	140	146	6	4.3
Northern Cape	4	4	0	0.0
Western Cape	123	123	0	0.0
Total traders	2 605	2 632	27	1.0
Producers				
Eastern Cape	60	60	0	0.0
Free State	94	97	3	3.2
Gauteng	170	175	5	2.9
KwaZulu-Natal	132	130	-2	-1.5
Limpopo	53	54	1	1.9
Mpumalanga	175	172	-3	-1.7
North West	193	196	3	1.6
Northern Cape	8	7	-1	-12.5
Western Cape	150	151	1	0.7
Total producers	1 035	1 042	7	0.7
Total registration	3 640	3 674	34	0.9

3. LIVE BIRD SALES OFF FARMS

Table 2 shows the number of commercial layers and broiler breeder hens that were sold by poultry producers during 2Q2022. This information is obtained from the removal permits issued by the veterinarians and animal health technicians. (Note: These figures exclude point-of-lay pullets and broiler breeders transferred from rearing to laying farms.)

In total 286 261 cull birds were sold off commercial laying farms, compared to 97 500 in 1Q2022. According to SAPA's forecasting models, the estimated number of laying hens depopulated during 2Q2022 was 5 573 000; the number reflected here therefore represents 5.1% of the total (compared to 1.9% in 1Q2022). A total of 189 226 cull birds were sold off broiler breeder farms, compared to 61 448 in 1Q2022. The number of broiler breeder hens due for depopulation was forecasted to be 2 104 000; the sample here therefore represents 9.0% of the total (compared to 3.2% in 1Q2022). The increase in submission of data is encouraging.

Table 2: Summary of culls sold off farm

Month	Layers	Broiler breeders	Total
Apr 2022	99 701	23 612	123 313
May 2022	66 926	108 542	175 468
Jun 2022	119 634	57 072	176 706
TOTAL	286 261	189 226	475 487

4. LIVE BIRD DISTRIBUTION

Table 3 summarises the trader statistics for the quarter.

Table 3: Reconciliation of trader statistics for the 2Q2022

Province	Chickens at start	Chickens bought	Chickens sold	Chickens remaining	Number of deaths
Eastern Cape	0	233 159	231 080	0	2 079
Free State	0	7 990	7 568	380	42
Gauteng	28 827	609 919	610 819	22 574	5 353
KwaZulu-Natal	84 913	221 618	306 531	0	0
Limpopo	3	24958	24 603	11	347
Mpumalanga	0	5 750	5 663	0	87
North West	122	98 096	98 027	0	191
Northern Cape	0	0	0	0	0
Western Cape	1 521	41 254	41 282	924	569
Total	115 386	1 242 744	1 325 573	23 889	8 668

Based on the information received, a total of 1 242 744 live birds were purchased by cull traders and 1 325 573 birds were distributed into the market during this period. In total 8 668 birds (0.6%) died while in the possession of cull traders. Reasons given for the mortalities were cold weather, stress, heat during transport, natural death, prolapses and trampling.

Figure 1 shows the provincial distribution of purchases of cull birds from farms during 2Q2022. The greatest activity occurred in Gauteng, followed by Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal.

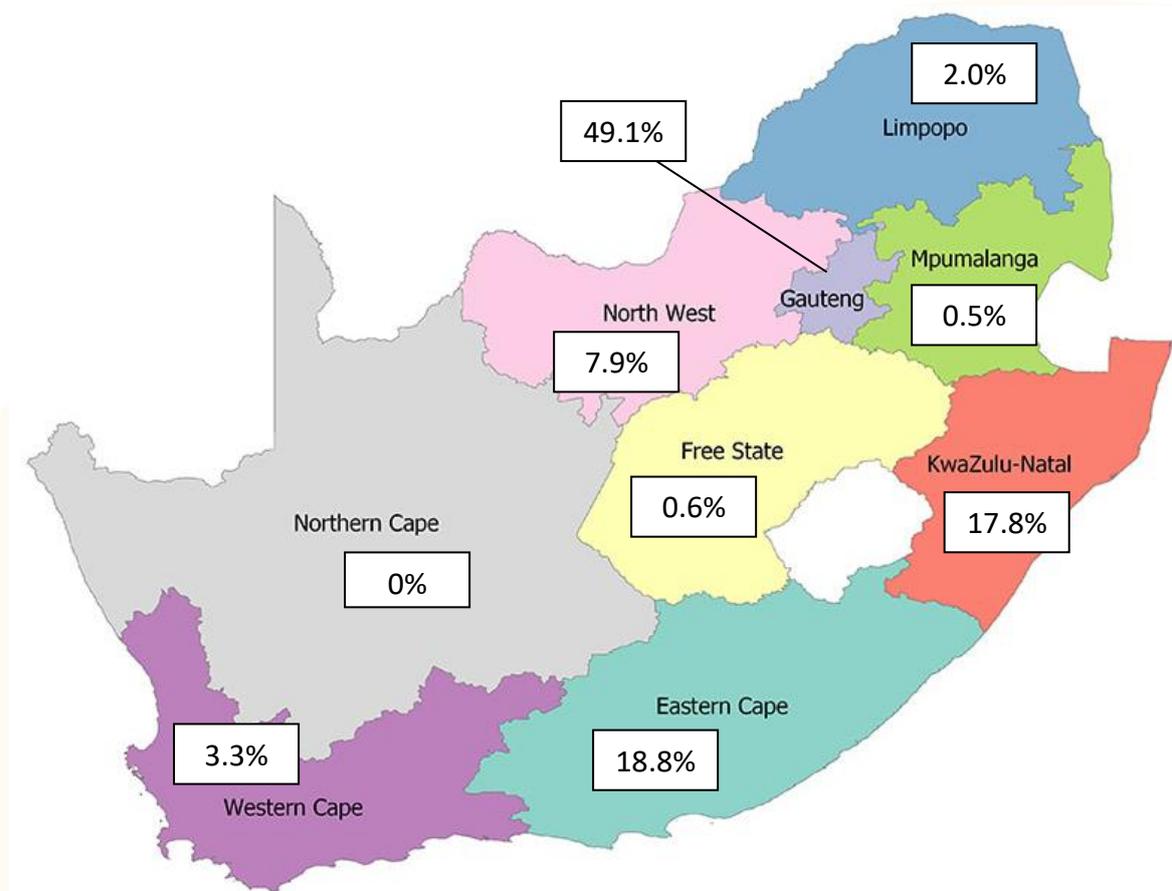


Figure 1: Provincial purchases of cull birds from farms in 2Q2022

Figure 2 shows the provincial distribution of sales of live birds by cull traders to their customers. Gauteng reported the highest number of sales, followed by KwaZulu-Natal and Eastern Cape.

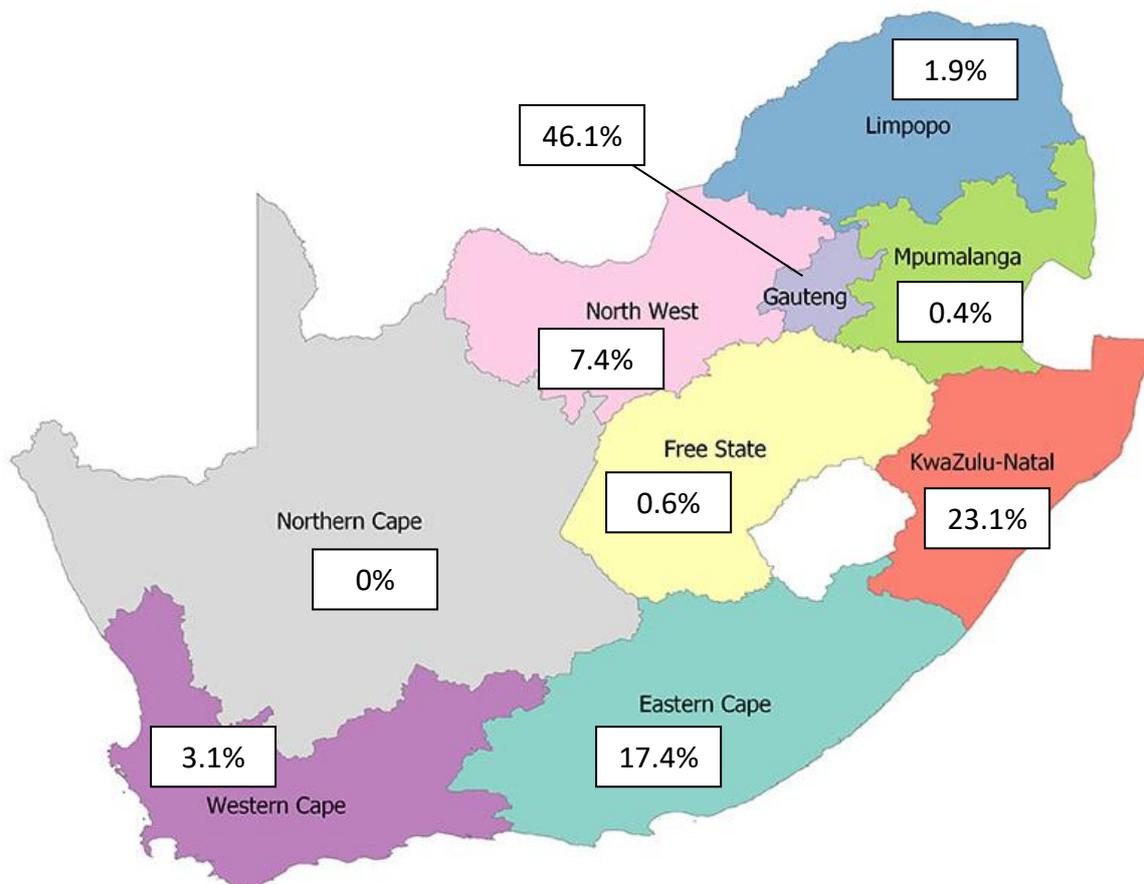


Figure 2: Provincial sales of cull birds by traders in 2Q2022

5. CHALLENGES

Several provinces appear to be under-represented in these statistics. With the large number of poultry flocks in North West, Mpumalanga, Western Cape and Free State, producers in these provinces are at high risk from further HPAI outbreaks.

6. REQUIRED ACTIONS

SAPA encourages all poultry producers and cull traders to continue complying with the protocols regulating the movement of live birds. Limiting the spread of disease is in the interests of the broader agricultural sector and members of the public.

Anyone needing assistance or more information is advised to contact Cynthia Ncube (cynthia@silverpath.co.za) or Louisa Nel (reception@sapoultry.co.za). The data is processed by Ireen and she may be contacted on 011 794 1842 or 067 198 3557.