



CULL TRADERS REPORT
FOR THE PERIOD 1 APRIL TO 30 JUNE 2024
(2Q2024)

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1. INTRODUCTION

South African poultry farmers have a ready market for their cull birds. Laying hens and broiler breeders that reach the end of their production cycles are sold live off the farms into the informal economy. These transactions create many jobs in townships and rural areas and also contribute significantly to food security. The handling of live birds potentially exposes humans to zoonotic diseases (caused by the spread of pathogens from animals to people). Isolated cases of the transmission of avian influenza to humans continue to be reported globally, with some deaths. Of equal concern is the fact that diseased birds circulating in an area can accelerate the spread of viruses to surrounding small-scale and commercial poultry flocks.

Following the first outbreak of HPAI in South Africa in June 2017, the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) introduced regulations to control 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).

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.

2. FARMER AND TRADER REGISTRATION

The online portal is accessible on the website address <http://www.poultrydiseases.co.za>. Cull traders are required to register on the database and to upload transactional data on a monthly basis. Alternatively, completed sales reconciliation forms can be emailed to Silverpath Consulting (admin@silverpath.co.za). Producers are encouraged to assist traders with online registrations if needed. Producers are requested to email completed removal permits to Silverpath Consulting.

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 8 210 active cull bird traders were listed on the database. These numbers have changed over the years.

Table 1 provides a breakdown of the registered traders and producers in each province for the previous and current reporting periods. The total number of registrations increased by 327 (+12.3%) during the quarter. Of the 1 956 traders

on the database, only 177 (9.0%) submitted data in 2Q2024. Similarly, of the 1 027 producers on the database 105 (10.2%) were involved in transactions reported during 2Q2024.

Table 1: Registered live bird traders and poultry producers

Traders	1Q2024	2Q2024	Change	% change
Eastern Cape	79	89	10	12.7
Free State	48	54	6	12.5
Gauteng	375	417	42	11.2
KwaZulu-Natal	56	76	20	35.7
Limpopo	696	907	211	30.3
Mpumalanga	79	90	11	13.9
North West	185	198	13	7.0
Northern Cape	5	5	0	0.0
Western Cape	110	120	10	9.1
Total traders	1 633	1 956	323	19.8
Producers				
Eastern Cape	57	57	0	0.0
Free State	91	92	1	1.1
Gauteng	176	178	2	1.1
KwaZulu-Natal	136	137	1	0.7
Limpopo	60	60	0	0.0
Mpumalanga	159	159	0	0.0
North West	189	189	0	0.0
Northern Cape	7	7	0	0.0
Western Cape	148	148	0	0.0
Total producers	1 023	1 027	4	0.4
Total registration	2 656	2 983	327	12.3

The distribution of registered cull depots per local municipality is shown in Figure 1. The depots are concentrated in City of Cape Town (6), eThekwinini (6), City of Johannesburg (4), City of Tshwane (4), Ekurhuleni (3) and Midvaal (3). In total 44 cull depots are registered on the database, and 23 (52.3%) were active participants during 2Q2024.

Figure 2 shows the distribution of cull traders per local municipality. The greatest number of traders are to be found in Polokwane (537), followed by City of Johannesburg (114), Rustenburg (96) and Ekurhuleni (91). At this stage 1 826 of the 1 958 cull traders listed on the database have provided their gps coordinates.

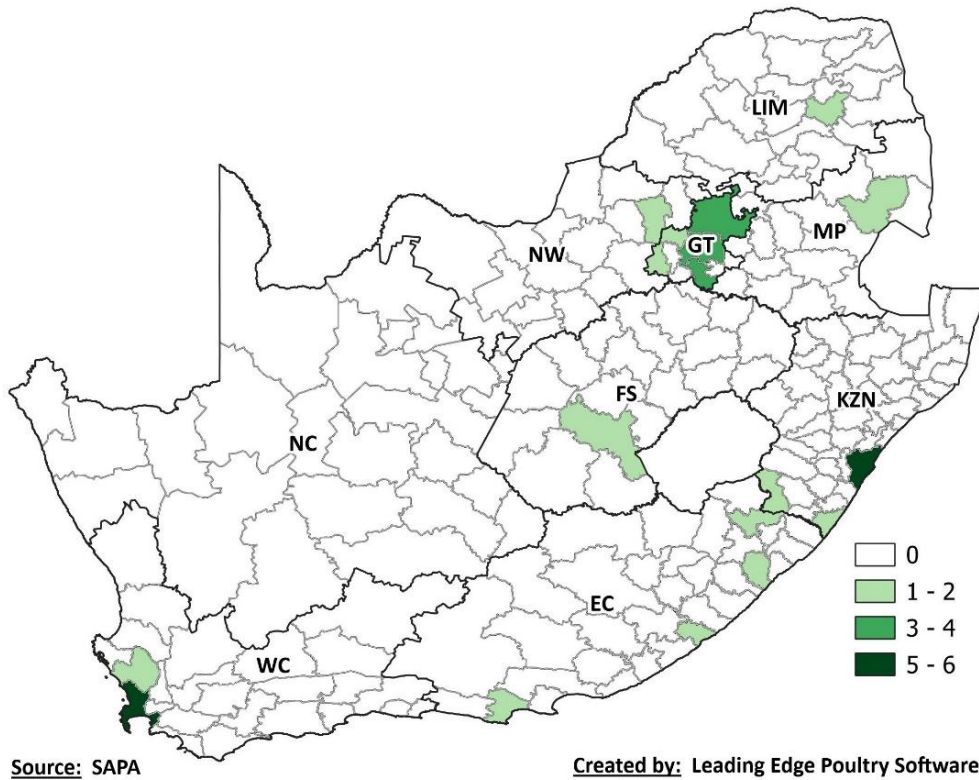


Figure 1: Distribution of cull depots per local municipality

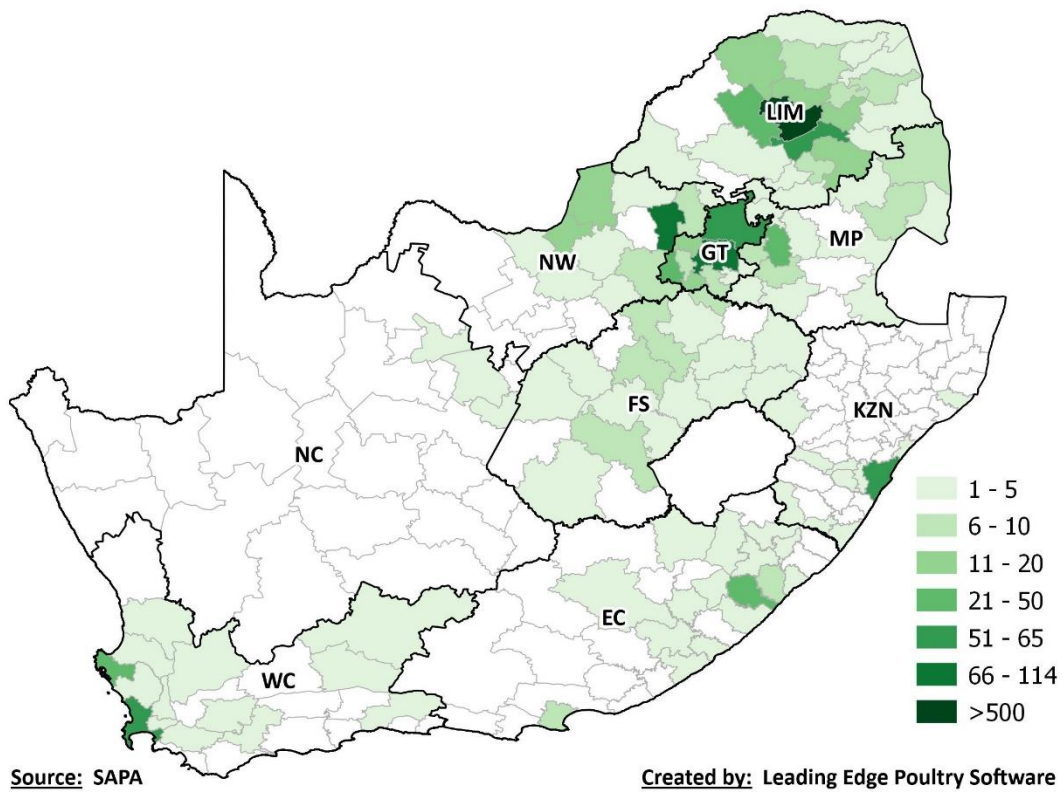


Figure 2: Distribution of cull traders per local municipality

3. LIVE BIRD SALES OFF FARMS

Table 2 shows the number of cull birds that were sold by poultry producers during 2Q2024. This information is obtained from the removal permits issued by the veterinarians and animal health technicians. These figures exclude point-of-lay pullets and broiler breeders transferred from rearing to laying farms.

Table 2: Summary of culls sold off farms

Month	Layers		Broiler breeders		Total
	Number	Age (weeks)	Number	Age (weeks)	
Jan-24	34 500	86.2	29 980	65.7	64 480
Feb-24	0	0.0	29 240	65.8	29 240
Mar-24	41 100	83.9	0	0.0	41 100
TOTAL	75 600	84.9	59 220	65.8	134 820

4. LIVE BIRD DISTRIBUTION

Table 3 summarises the trader statistics for the quarter. The data in Table 4 shows there was considerable movement of cull birds across provincial and municipal boundaries. The reported causes of death are given in Table 5.

Table 3: Reconciliation of trader statistics

Province	Chickens at start	Chickens bought	Chickens sold	Chickens remaining	Number of deaths
Eastern Cape	66	245 844	240 703	3 659	1 548
Free State	609	9 346	9 938	0	17
Gauteng	56	259 284	257 867	123	1 350
KwaZulu-Natal	66 475	285 016	351 343	0	148
Limpopo	20	10 585	10 463	0	142
Mpumalanga	0	8 960	8 834	0	126
North West	150	26 310	22 140	4 200	120
Northern Cape	0	0	0	0	0
Western Cape	524	34 436	34 130	637	193
Total	67 900	879 781	935 418	8 619	3 644

Table 4: Movement of culls between boundaries

Sales channel	Within province (%)	Outside province (%)	Total	Within municipality (%)	Outside municipality (%)	Total
Farms to traders	14.0	86.0	100.0	3.6	96.4	100.0
Traders to consumers	98.8	1.2	100.0	52.1	47.9	100.0
Farms to depots	35.2	64.8	100.0	0.7	99.3	100.0
Depots to traders	45.6	54.4	100.0	42.6	57.4	100.0

Table 5: Suspected causes of death

Cause	Number of birds	%
Avian influenza	11	0.3
Distance travelled	20	0.5
Hot weather	293	8.0
No sign of illness	1 478	40.6
Prolapse	105	2.9
Slaughtered	46	1.3
Stress	17	0.5
Trampling	0	0.0
Undiagnosed disease	498	13.7
Other	1 176	32.3
Total	3 644	100.0

Figure 3 illustrates the provincial distribution of purchases of cull birds from farms during 2Q2024. Figure 4 shows the provincial distribution of sales of live birds by cull traders to their customers.

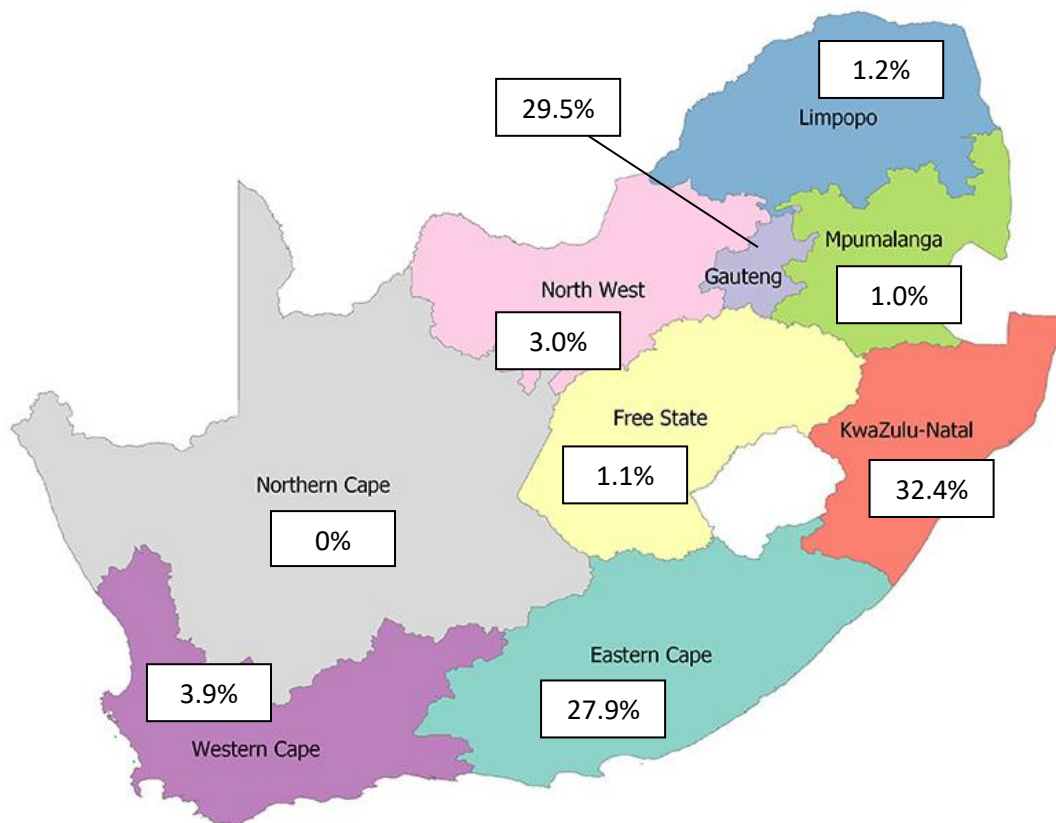


Figure 3: Provincial purchases of cull birds from farms

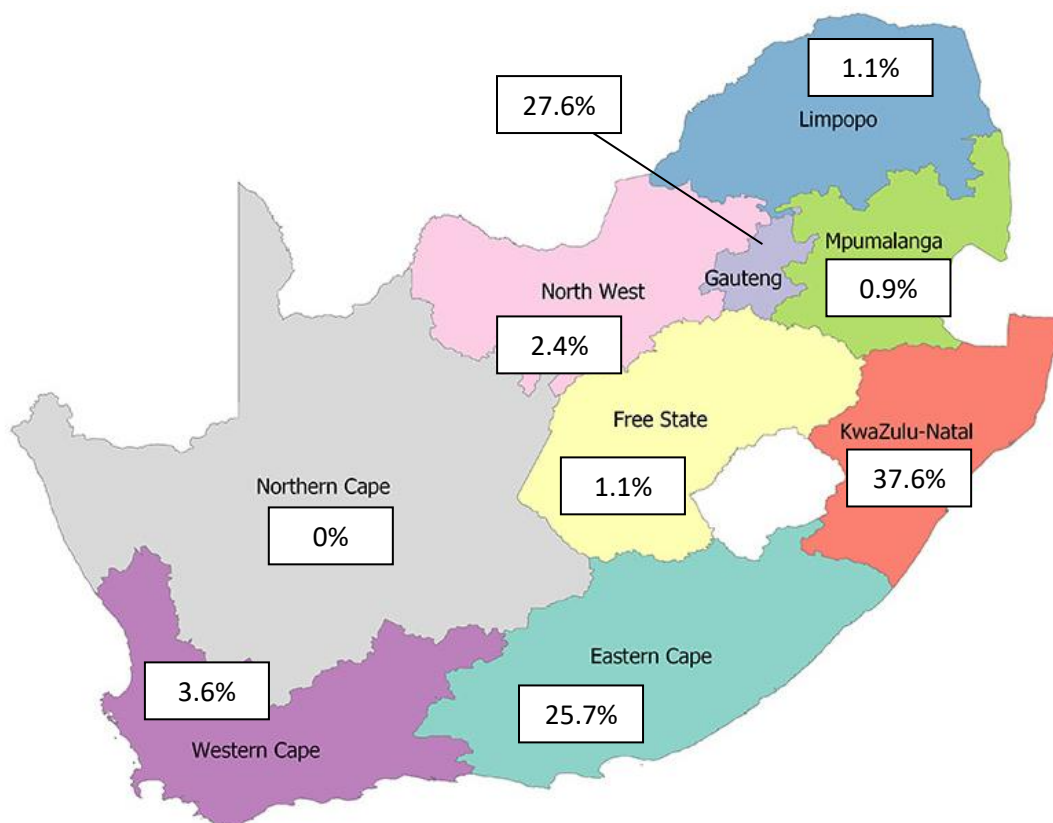


Figure 4: Provincial sales of cull birds by traders

5. CHALLENGES

It remains a challenge to increase participation in the cull trader monitoring system and to improve the flow of information to SAPA. The objectives are to limit the spread of viruses and contain outbreaks of avian influenza. This is of particular importance because there is evidence that birds are being moved in large numbers across provincial borders.

Silverpath Consulting continues to engage with traders and depots in efforts to expand and improve the database.

6. REQUIRED ACTIONS

SAPA encourages all poultry producers and cull traders to comply with the protocols regulating the movement of live birds.

Persons needing assistance may contact Cynthia Ncube (cynthia@silverpath.co.za) or Louisa Nel (reception@sapoultry.co.za). The data is processed by Ireen Lekabe, who may be contacted on 011 794 1842 or 067 198 3557.

*Data collated by Silverpath Consulting
Report compiled by Leading Edge Poultry Software cc*

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