NATIONAL Poultry NEWSPAPER

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Uninterrupted access to fuel is fundamental to effective poultry operations.

Fuel security critical to keeping chicken meat on Australian supermarket shelves

THE Australian chicken meat industry is working closely with governments to manage the impacts of global fuel market disruptions, as rising diesel prices and ongoing supply uncertainty place pressure on one of Australia's most time-critical food supply chains.

Ongoing conflict in the Middle East continues to place upward pressure on global energy markets, resulting in higher fuel prices and increasing concern among producers about diesel availability and the cost and reliability of access to critical inputs.

In response, peak industry bodies representing essential food producing sectors have come together to advocate for a coordinated approach with Commonwealth and State governments to map anticipated requirements for fuel, fertiliser, pharmaceuticals and other critical inputs across key agricultural sectors over the coming months.

The objective remains supporting continuity of our national food supply and strengthening our overall preparedness in the event of fuel disruptions and ongoing market volatility.

Remote and regional areas have experienced particular challenges in securing access to critical inputs

☛ continued P2

What we could learn from Japan

■ Strengthening Australia's defences against H5 bird flu

Egg Farmers of Australia

by **MELINDA HASHIMOTO**
CEO

AUSTRALIA'S egg industry stands at a critical point in its biosecurity journey.

While we remain free from H5 highly pathogenic avian influenza on the mainland, global outbreaks continue to escalate, reinforcing the need for vigilance, preparedness and coordinated action.

Through my 2025 Churchill Fellowship, I travelled to Japan to examine how a country with repeated exposure to H5 manages, responds to and recovers from outbreaks.

My report 'To investigate Japan's biosecurity approach to H5 avian influenza to support Australia's egg industry' provides a practical roadmap for strengthening our preparedness.

You can read the full report by scanning the QR code on the next page.

Japan presents a compelling case study.

Unlike Australia, it has experienced multiple H5 outbreaks and as a result has developed a highly coordinated multi-layered response system.

What stood out most to me was that Japan's strength was not only in its technical systems but in its culture of shared responsibility across government, industry and producers.

One of the most striking observations during my fellowship was the consistency of on-farm biosecurity practices.

Japanese producers adopt simple but non-negotiable daily measures – strict entry protocols, hygiene controls and disciplined routines – that are embedded into everyday operations.

Biosecurity is not something that is heightened during a crisis, it is constant.

This is an area where I see a clear opportunity for Australia to continue strengthening, normalising biosecurity as a core part of doing business every day.

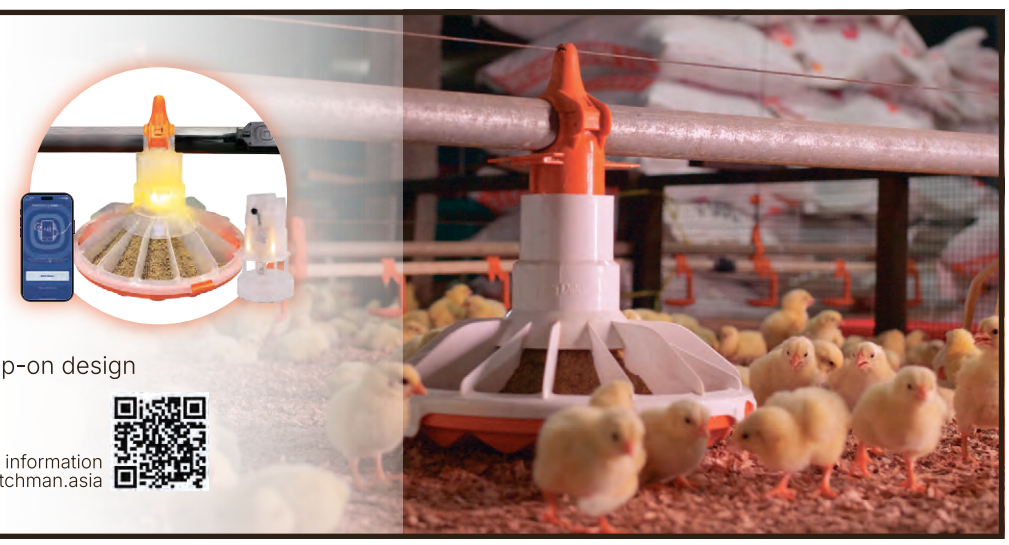
I also observed a high level of integration across all levels of government.

Japan's central, prefectural and local authorities operate in a tightly aligned way, enabling rapid communication and decision-making during outbreaks.

Importantly, these relationships extend to industry bodies and producers,

☛ continued P2

Through her Churchill Fellowship, the author travelled to Japan, coming away with key learnings to support Australia's biosecurity against H5 highly pathogenic avian influenza.



NATIONAL Poultry NEWSPAPER

Poultry Industry Calendar of Events

2026

MAY 12-14 – Food with Purpose - PIX, AMC and APL event, Gold Coast, Australia. https://www.pix.au/conf26

MAY 13-14 – British Pig and Poultry Fair, Birmingham, UK. https://pigandpoultry.org.uk

MAY 16 – Rare Poultry Breeders Association Annual Show, Maitland Showground NSW, Australia. president@rarepoultrybreedersassociation.com

MAY 30 – The Soft Feather Poultry Club Annual Poultry Show, Maitland Showground NSW, Australia. brodvallance@yahoo.com.au

JUN 2-4 – 14th International Coccidiosis Conference, Ghent, Belgium. https://icc2026.eu/register-for-the-icc2026/

JUN 2-4 – VIV Europe, Utrecht, The Netherlands. https://europe.viv.net

JUN 13 – Hamburgh Club of NSW Annual Show, Mudgee, Australia. hamburghclubnsw@gmail.com

JUL 4 – Hamburgh Club of NSW Annual Photo Show, digital. hamburghclubnsw@gmail.com

JUL 10-13 – Poultry Science Association Annual Meeting, Toronto, Canada. https://www.poultryscience.org/opportunities/conferences

JUL 14-17 – World's Poultry Congress, Toronto, Canada. https://www.wpc2026toronto.com

JUL 28-30 – American Association of Aivan Pathologists Annual Meeting, Orlando, USA. https://www.aaap.info/future-annual-meetings

NOV 10-13 – EuroTier, Hannover, Germany. https://www.eurotier.com/en/

How to supply event details:
Send all details to National Poultry Newspaper, PO Box 162, Wynnum Qld 4178, call 0450 672 553 or email design@collins.media

poultrynews.com.au

0450 672 553

Fuel security critical to keeping chicken meat on shelves

☛ from P1

as a result of global supply chain disruptions.

This in turn presents a heightened risk to national food security, given that many of Australia's major food producing operations are predominantly located in these regions.

Such conditions further support the need for ongoing monitoring and active management to maintain the resilience and capacity of Australia's food supply chains.

While the government has indicated that overall fuel availability isn't under immediate threat, industry has continued to advocate for prioritisation of agricultural sectors – specifically the poultry industry – in order to maintain our national food security if supply pressures were to intensify.

These measures are particularly important for industries with fine-tuned and highly streamlined operating models, such as the chicken meat sector.

As a just-in-time producer of fresh food, the industry operates within a much shorter production cycle than other livestock sectors, with much higher volumes of product produced within those periods.

Approximately two million birds are processed each day across Australia to meet domestic market demand, with production scheduling and logistics predicated on the continuity of freight movements and uninterrupted processing operations.

As a result, any disruption to transport or processing operations – such as those caused by fuel shortages – can have immediate impacts on product availability at the retail level, often felt within 48 hours or less.

Therefore, as Australia's most consumed animal protein with approximately 97 percent of production supplied to the domestic market, disruptions of this nature have immediate and direct implications for our national food security.

In its engagement with government, Australian Chicken Meat Federation has also emphasised that fuel access is essential to not only bird movements, cold storage and product distribution, but also a wide range of critical upstream and downstream operational inputs, including feed manufacturing and essential on-farm processes that support animal welfare.

As modern poultry farms rely on climate-controlled sheds, diesel-powered backup generators are critical to maintaining ventilation and temperature control during power outages.

Uninterrupted access to fuel is therefore fundamental to effective poultry operations and contingency planning.

Any disruptions across farms and processing facilities would therefore have consequences that extend beyond immediate food availability, with broader implications on animal welfare outcomes.

In response to these challenges to the fuel supply, the Commonwealth Government has activated a range of emergency and resilience measures under the National Fuel Security Plan, including temporary reductions to fuel excise, adjustments to the heavy vehicle road user charge and the release of minimum stockholding obligations.

These measures are intended to provide relief in the shorter term to fuel availability and their associated cost pressures.

ACMF will continue to work closely with peak industry bodies and key stakeholders to advocate for Commonwealth and State governments to commit to forward mapping and quantification of fuel and other critical input requirements.

These efforts are essential to support effective planning and the prioritisation of fuel access for Australia's food producing industries.

For more information, the latest updates and resources, visit Middle East regional conflict on the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry website.

ACMF

Scan for DAFF Middle East regional conflict information.

Learning from Japan

☛ from P1

creating a unified response that limits disease spread and supports recovery.

Innovation also plays a critical role.

Japan has invested in testing technologies, surveillance systems and data sharing that provide greater insights to review in the way to shape policy and assist with future impacts.

Combined with clear operational manuals and ongoing training, this ensures that everyone from government to farm level understands their role well before a crisis occurs.

Through this work, I developed 10 recommendations focused on strengthening Australia's preparedness.

These include improving communication pathways, enhancing collaboration between industry and government, increasing the uptake of practical on-farm biosecurity measures and exploring models that better support producers during outbreaks.

A consistent theme throughout my report is mindset.

In Japan, biosecurity is viewed as a shared responsibility that underpins animal health, food security and public confidence.

Maintaining Australia's H5-free status will depend on embedding that same mindset across our entire poultry sector.

The reality is this – preparedness is not built in the middle of a crisis.

It is built over time through consistent effort, discipline and collaboration.

My fellowship reinforced that we have a strong foundation in Australia, however we cannot afford complacency.

If we take the lessons from Japan seriously and apply them in a practical way, we put ourselves in the best possible position to protect our industry.

Biosecurity must remain a daily priority, a shared commitment and a national imperative.

Scan for the author's report.

Aussie Atlas Mark II reduces clean-up time.

Big Aussie blaster cuts cleaning time

AUSSIE Pumps' new Atlas Mark II super heavy-duty 5000PSI pressure cleaner can make a significant difference to shed clean up times.

The company – manufacturers of the Aussie Atlas – have seen the extra grunt.

The machine offers to cut cleaning time down.

The Aussie Atlas is built around a 5000PSI Big Berty Bertolini TripleX pump, with gearbox drive through a Hatz air-cooled diesel engine.

Aussie Pumps chief engineer John Hales said: "Components are built for the toughest applications where long shifts are sometimes required to meet deadlines."

Aussie Pumps is the country's leading manufacturers of high-pressure water blasters, with a complete range that starts with both hot and cold machines in single-phase configuration.

The engine-drive machines offer considerably more capability, with 4000PSI class A machines being particularly popular with the poultry industry.

"Our blasters are built to last – our ergonomically designed frames are all stainless-steel," Mr Hales said.

"The pumps are designed for slow speed and are gearbox driven."

The company prides itself on safety features of the machines.

"Understanding how the machine works helps the operator avoid errors and aids in their confidence and safety," Mr Hales said.

"We're complimented on a regular basis by people in the poultry industry who've taken the trouble to do our free safety training program."

It's gratifying to see people taking advantage of the opportunity for their workers to be safe.

The training course warns against boredom and fatigue as two of the major problems that can create potential for injuries.

A free safety training program is a gift to anyone using pressure cleaners in big sheds.

It's a certificate course and relates to class A pressure-cleaner operators.

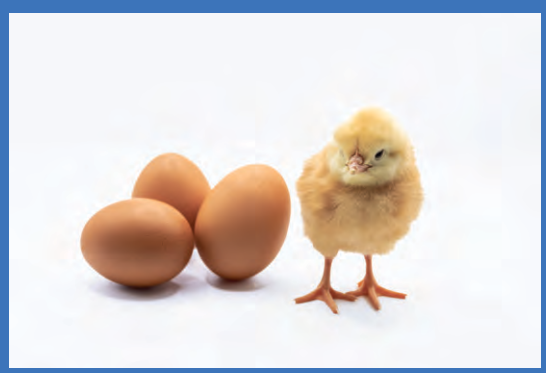
For further information about Aussie's free safety training program, scan the QR code below or visit aussiepumps.com.au

Aussie Pumps

BREEDING PROGRESS. DELIVERING PERFORMANCE.

Where strong performance begins.

Performance begins with strong foundations. Through careful breeding, strong biosecurity, and practical on-farm support, SBA works alongside you to help unlock your flock's genetic potential.



SBA is taking the next step in the Australian layer industry

FOOD with PURPOSE
A PIX, AMC and APL Event
12-14 May **2026**

MEET US AT PIX | STAND 153 & 154

Food with Purpose 2026

12–14 May 2026
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New requirements for Victorian chicken egg producers.

New requirements for Victorian poultry producers and owners

STARTING in mid-2026, there will be new regulations for how to care for and manage all types of poultry in Victoria.

The following are excerpts taken from the Agriculture Victoria website and edited for this publication.

The new regulations will align with the nationally agreed standards in the Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for Poultry (Poultry Welfare Standards).

The new requirements will improve poultry welfare and provide certainty to industry, the community and markets.

Industry will have confidence to update infrastructure and practices, while the community and markets will have improved confidence in the Victorian poultry industry welfare standards.

If you are a poultry producer or backyard poultry owner in Victoria, you must comply with the regulations that are relevant to you once they commence.

Key changes being introduced in Victoria from mid-2026

Any new cage infrastructure for chickens must have furnishings.

These include:

- Perches or platforms
- Nest areas
- Abrasive devices or an area for scratching – in Victoria, cages must have either scratch areas, claw shortening devices or substrate (such as litter).

Any new cage infrastructure for hens must also meet new space allowance requirements:

- Meet a minimum height to allow hens to stand naturally
- Have a minimum floor space of 1000sq cm for a single chicken
- Have a minimum floor space of 750sq cm per chicken when there are two or more in a cage.

There will be new space allowance and furnishing requirements for most poultry species.

This is to allow birds to perch, nest and scratch.

Most poultry species must be provided with substrate for foraging, scratching and pecking.

Ducks must have access to water facilities to preen and clean their eyes and nostrils.

Any new infrastructure for breeder ducks must have facilities to allow ducks to dip their heads or shower.

All poultry have new requirements for the minimum light intensity and periods of darkness.

This includes a minimum of six hours of darkness a day, with some exceptions.

Producers with poultry housed in sheds must monitor and record ammonia levels.

Corrective action must be taken if levels exceed the permitted amount.

Induced moulting will be banned for all poultry, except under specified circumstances.

Infrared beak trimming will only be

☛ continued P5

New requirements for Victorian poultry producers and owners

☛ from P4

permitted within a specified timeframe from hatching.

Hot blade beak trimming will be banned, except in specified circumstances and under veterinary advice.

Key changes being introduced in Victoria from 2032 to 2036

By 2032, all breeder ducks must have access to facilities to allow ducks to dip their heads or shower.

All cages must have furnishings and meet new space requirements.

The national standards propose that all cages meet the new requirements by 2036.

Conventional cages will no longer be permitted.

More information about the implementation of these requirements in Victoria will be available shortly.

The above is an overview of the key requirements in the Poultry Welfare Standards that are being introduced in Victoria.

For all standards, view the Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for Poultry.

Note, the amount of change will differ for each producer and owner, based on their current infrastructure and practices.

The standards allow for a choice of egg production systems for producers, including larger cages with furnishings (also known as furnished cages), barn and free range.

New requirements for chicken egg producers

The Poultry Welfare Standards set out a range of practice and infrastructure changes for chicken egg producers.

They include new furnishing and space allowance requirements for hens in cages.

These changes will allow hens to perform natural behaviours, such as standing at full height, perching and nesting.

The new requirements will allow farmers to choose from various egg production systems.

These include larger cages with furnishings, barn and free range.

Cage infrastructure for laying chickens

When the new regulations commence, any new cage infrastructure for hens must have furnishings.

These include:

- Perches or platforms
- Nest areas
- Abrasive devices or an area for scratching and cages must have at least one of the following – scratch areas, claw shortening devices, substrate (such as litter).

Note, in Victoria, caged-egg producers can choose the scratching option that best suits their set up.

Any new cage infrastructure for hens must meet new space allowance requirements.

Cages must:

- Meet a minimum height to allow hens to stand naturally
- Have a minimum useable space of 1000sq cm for a single chicken
- Have a minimum useable space of 750sq cm per chicken when there are two or more in a cage.

Note, useable space does not include nest boxes, perches or feeder and water lines.

Specific requirements for furnishings are listed below.

Furnishings for laying chickens

These changes apply across the different egg production systems.

The timing for introducing them depends on the type of system.

Perches and platforms

By 2032, existing flat deck barns must meet the requirements.

Note, 'existing' refers to infrastructure that was in place before Victoria's new regulations begin.

By 2036, all cages must meet the requirements (as proposed in the national standards).

All other systems must meet the requirements when Victoria's new regulations begin.

Laying chickens must be provided with:

- Perches and or platforms from 8 days of age
- They must have a minimum of 15cm perch or platform space per chicken – this is a current recommendation, which will be mandatory (legally required) in Victoria
- Perches and platforms must be constructed, positioned and maintained to be raised and not flush with the floor, allow birds to always access them – except during the first week of their life – on the day of pick-up or during litter conditioning, allow birds to perch in a normal posture and provide appropriate support for their feet, minimise the risk of injury to birds, minimise vent pecking by birds below and behind, and soiling of birds below.

Scratch areas and claw-shortening devices

Layer chickens must have access to abrasive devices or areas for scratching.

Hens in free-range systems already meet this requirement.

This is because they have access to an outdoor area where they can scratch.

Hens in barn systems must be provided with scratch areas or claw-shortening devices.

For scratching requirements for hens in cages, see above.

Nest areas

Once the new regulations commence, layer chickens in all systems must be provided with nest areas that they can access from point of lay.

This excludes hens in existing cages, which will be required by 2036 (as proposed in the national standards).

If there is a single nest area, there must be enough space for the bird to enter, sit, turnaround and exit.

There must be a minimum of one nest area for every seven birds or a 1sq m nesting area for every 120 birds from point of lay.

More information is available by scanning the QR codes provided, or contacting the Customer Service Centre on 136 186 or poultry.standards@agriculture.vic.gov.au

Agriculture Victoria

Scan for information about changes for other types of poultry.

Scan to subscribe to updates about Victoria's poultry regulations and receive resources as they are released.

Once the new regulations commence, layer chickens in all systems must be provided with nest areas that they can access from point of lay. Photo: Australian Eggs

Focus on how chickens see humans

While this rooster kept a close watch on his hens, he also warily eyed off the photographer, yours truly, while perhaps perceiving that his free ranging time was about to come to an end.

Studying how chickens look at humans can inform how they are wired.

Cant Comment

by **BRENDON CANT**

ENTHRALLED but not surprised was how I felt when reading a piece in April's RSPCA *Animal Welfare Science Update*, which was headlined 'Chicken perceptions of humans matter for their welfare'.

While long aware that appropriate gentle careful stock handling was important across all farmed animals for the betterment of productivity and welfare, I had not previously given much thought to quite how much animals, in this case chickens, perceived human behaviour.

Essentially the RSPCA piece briefly reviewed a published scientific paper by France-based researchers Ludovic Calandreau, Victor Ferreira and Lea Lansade, which has effectively deepened the understanding of the chicken-human relationship while showing that some chickens perceive humans as more than neutral stimuli.

Domestic chickens are often thought to have limited cognitive abilities, a misconception that contributes to low levels of concern for chicken welfare by society.

However research shows chickens have the capacity for complex cognitions, including episodic-like memory, social learning and behaviours indicative of empathy.

Historically, limited attention has been paid to how chickens perceive and are impacted by the humans around them.

Considering the prominent role humans play in chicken husbandry and farming, understanding the human-chicken relationship may provide valuable avenues for improving chicken welfare.

Their paper reviewed decades of research on how chickens interpret and respond to human behaviour, while examining the socio-cognitive abilities of chickens towards humans and discussing how human-chicken interactions influence husbandry and production outcomes.

It also considered the direct consequences of these interactions for chicken welfare, with a particular focus on fear responses, physiological markers of stress and the potential for positive interactions.

The authors concluded that chickens have more complex perceptions of humans than previously assumed, showing sensitivity to human attentional states, discriminating between individual human faces and voices and demonstrating social learning about humans by observing flock mates.

Regular positive human contact reduces chicken stress and fearfulness, improving immune function and boosting fertility, growth and egg production.

Because chickens are capable of social learning, farmers who interact in a calm and positive manner with individual chickens may also improve welfare across the entire flock.

These findings have considerable practical and ethical implications and provide promising avenues for future research to improve animal welfare practices and broaden our understanding of interspecies social cognition.

Depending on prior interactions, chickens may view humans as social buffers,

☛ continued P7

Optimised Plasson feeder pan design supporting uniform access and consistent bird performance.

Not all equipment is created equal

■ See the difference at PIX 2026 - Stands 136, 137, 176, 177

IN modern poultry production, growth is increasingly being driven by system design and consistency within the shed.

While genetics and nutrition have advanced significantly, the performance of a flock still depends on how effectively water, feed and climate are managed on a daily basis.

Equipment should therefore not be considered in isolation.

Water delivery, feed distribution and climate control are interdependent and variation in one area can directly influence overall performance outcomes.

At PIX 2026, Plasson will be showcasing a range of solutions designed to support reliable and consistent production across these key areas.

Water delivery remains a critical starting point.

Plasson's waterline systems are engineered to provide stable pressure and consistent flow.

Their widely used nipple drinkers are designed for precise water release with minimal wastage, supporting improved litter quality and uniform water intake.

The 'Water on Demand' system further enhances control by supplying adequate water pressure when birds are actively drinking.

This supports more consistent water management and helps maintain stable shed conditions.

Consistent feed distribution is fundamental to achieving uniform growth and efficient production.

Plasson offers systems suited to different production types.

For broilers, feeder pans are designed to promote uniform feed access while reducing waste, supporting consistent growth across the flock.

For breeders, the chain feeder system provides reliable and even feed distribution along the entire line, ensuring all birds receive equal access to feed.

System components also play an important role in maintaining consistency.

The T drop with spherical joint, used within feeder lines, supports correct alignment and ensures equal feed delivery across all lines, contributing to uniform feed distribution throughout the shed.

Effective bird distribution is another key factor.

While migration fencing is widely used within the industry, Plasson's 'PlassFence' system is designed to be lightweight, easy to handle and simple to install.

This allows for more efficient management of bird movement and better utilisation of shed space.

While each of these solutions contributes individually, their combined effect is where the greatest value lies.

Consistency across water, feed and bird distribution ultimately supports improved flock uniformity and performance.

At PIX 2026, visitors will have the opportunity to see these systems up close and gain a clearer understanding of how design and functionality translate into practical on-farm outcomes.

Visit the Plasson stand to see the difference for yourself.

Plaus Agency

Plaus Agency partnering with Plasson Livestock to deliver trusted poultry solutions to the Australian market.

Plasson's integrated feeding and drinking systems are engineered for efficiency, control and performance. Come and see it on full display at PIX 2026.

Focus on how chickens see humans

☛ from P6

particularly in stressful situations, as indicated by their increased calm behaviours in a human's presence.

Breed-specific differences highlight the need for tailored evaluations, as traditional reliance on approach/avoidance behaviours may not accurately reflect relationships in breeds less inclined to approach humans.

Instead, calm behaviours such as foraging, exploring or engaging with humans should be validated as universal proxies across breeds.

Moreover, chickens with positive human experiences were better at associating human-given cues with rewards, suggesting that humans can actively foster positive welfare in chickens.

While this study remains within the fundamental realm of scientific research, it paves the way for envisioning a future where positive human interactions are integrated into welfare programs.

Such a shift could redefine the management of chicken welfare, emphasising active improvement through human involvement and fostering more humane and productive farming practices to benefit both chickens and farmers.

If interested in learning more, scan the QR code below for the full paper in *Poultry Science*.

Managing yolk colour consistency under cost pressure

AS feed and input costs remain elevated, Australian egg producers are focusing on efficiency while maintaining yolk colour standards that underpin consumer confidence and brand value.

Yolk colour remains a key quality attribute for eggs at retail, making consistency essential for producers operating in a tight margin environment.

Natural pigment solutions continue to play an important role in helping achieve target colour levels while supporting cost control.

Quantum GLO 40Y is a natural yellow pigment derived from marigold extract, developed to deliver reliable yolk colour performance aligned with market expectations.

Formulated using micro emulsion technology, Quantum GLO 40Y is designed to improve pigment absorption and utilisation, allowing producers to achieve consistent colour at lower inclusion rates while helping reduce overall pigmentation costs.

Alongside pigmentation performance, objective measurement of yolk colour is becoming increasingly important.

8SCAN technology allows yolk colour to be monitored accurately and consistently, supporting verification of colour targets across production cycles and helping protect egg value through the supply chain.

The Australian-based Kemin team works closely with nutritionists, egg producers, feed mills and premix manufacturers to support the best possible outcomes for Australian egg producers, with a continued focus on balancing performance, cost efficiency and consumer expectations in a challenging operating environment.

Kemin

A fully certified free range broiler farm with a substantial capacity of 165,000 birds.

Prime poultry investment opportunity

FOR poultry growers seeking a scalable income-generating operation in Victoria, this Gippsland offering stands out as a high-performing and future-ready investment.

The property at 641 Mountain View McDonald's Track delivers a rare combination of established broiler infrastructure, secure contract income and expansion potential in a tightly held region.

High-yielding free range broiler enterprise

Set across 102 ha on contiguous titles, the property operates as a fully certified free range broiler farm with a substantial capacity of 165,000 birds.

Purpose-built and recently upgraded, the broiler facilities are designed for efficient large-scale production, with three modern sheds – each about 154m × 17m – complemented by adjoining free ranging areas.

The operation is underpinned by a six-year growing contract (five years remaining) with one of Australia's leading poultry suppliers, providing consistent and reliable income – an important consideration for both owner-operators and investors entering or expanding within the poultry sector.

Advanced automation systems manage climate, feeding and lighting, ensuring optimal bird performance while minimising labour inputs.

Supporting infrastructure includes a back-up generator, alarm and control systems and dedicated staff amenities such as kitchen, shower and wash facilities.

Proven infrastructure and operational efficiency

The farm is equipped with high-quality infrastructure designed to support continuous production.

A 52-tonne silo with grain crushing capability ensures feed efficiency, while a breezeway barn 18m × 12m adds operational flexibility.

Water security is a key strength, with 250,000 litres of storage, a filtration system and reliable supply supporting both

☛ continued P9

Purpose-built and recently upgraded, the broiler facilities are designed for efficient large-scale production.

On adjoining titles across 102 ha.

Prime poultry investment opportunity

☛ from P8

poultry and broader farm needs.

The property's location – within close proximity to major poultry processing facilities – further enhances logistical efficiency and contract viability.

Accommodation and lifestyle appeal

In addition to its commercial strengths, the property offers excellent living and accommodation options.

The main homestead has been thoughtfully renovated and features three bedrooms, open-plan living and established gardens with an inground pool, providing a comfortable base for owner-operators.

A separate three-bedroom residence and additional staff accommodation, including a two-bedroom dwelling and a one-bedroom bungalow, allow for flexible workforce arrangements or multi-generational living.

Diversification and long-term value

While the focus is clearly on poultry production, the property also includes substantial additional infrastructure that supports diversified income streams or future enterprise flexibility.

This adds resilience and optionality in a changing agricultural market.

Strategic location

Positioned about 26km south of Warragul, 23km north of Korumburra and 123km east of Melbourne CBD, the farm benefits from strong regional connectivity while maintaining the advantages of a productive and well-regarded agricultural district.

A turnkey opportunity for poultry growers

For growers targeting scale, efficiency and secure returns, this property represents a turnkey free range broiler operation with proven performance and modern systems already in place.

The combination of a long-term supply contract, quality infrastructure and expansion capability makes it a compelling acquisition for those serious about establishing or growing their presence in Victoria's poultry industry.

For more information, contact 0407 161 797 or drewnewpark@outlook.com

The farm is equipped with high-quality infrastructure designed to support continuous production.

NFF statement on fertiliser from Indonesia

THIS is a very welcome step and will go a long way to restoring confidence for farmers heading into the winter growing season.

Securing an additional 250,000 tonnes of urea provides some much-needed certainty.

This is around 20 percent of the remaining fertiliser needed for the season ahead.

Farmers have been especially concerned about access to in-season fertiliser and what that could mean for yields.

NFF president Hamish McIntyre.

It's a clear demonstration of how important our international trading relationships are, with Indonesia stepping up at the right time.

We acknowledge the government has worked closely with industry to get to this point.

The establishment of a fertiliser taskforce, underwriting of fuel and fertiliser imports, streamlining border processes and the deferral of increased export cost recovery have been a direct result of member driven advocacy by the National Farmers Federation and important steps in easing pressure on farmers.

There is still more work to do.

This only fills part of the gap, and farmers are still facing tight supply and high costs.

We will continue working with government to close that gap, not only on fertiliser but on fuel as well, because both are critical to keeping food and fibre growing and moving.

We also want to see financial support for regional small to medium businesses who are doing it tough as a direct result of this conflict.

This issue poses a real and immediate threat to business viability.

At the same time, we need to lift our sights to ensure this is the last time we find ourselves so vulnerable to global shocks.

We must use this moment to strengthen Australia's sovereign capability, so we're not back in this position again and farmers have the certainty to keep producing the food and fibre we all rely on.

Hamish McIntyre
President NFF

The cockerel breeding dark Brahma hen has indistinct pencilling and is used to produce exhibition-quality males, while she herself is not exhibition quality.

A deep dive into double mating

THE various breeds of exhibition fowls and bantams are bred to a standard that outlines details of type, comb, plumage, colour and more.

In Australia, the standards are authorised by the Australian Poultry Standards Committee and published in the *Australian Poultry Standards Second Edition* and the *Addendum* to the *Second Edition*.

Many of the breeds that are popular in Australia have a standard that is based on the British poultry standards and, until the Australian poultry standards were formalised, Australian fanciers used the British standards for the majority of breeds that were exhibited in this country.

A peculiarity of the British standards and therefore the Australian standards is that many breeds and varieties have a colour standard that is not compatible in both male and females of the same breed.

An example of this is the colour known as 'partridge', which in most cases requires the female's body plumage to have concentric rings of pencilling – usually black on a bay ground colour on each feather.

The standard for the male requires his breast colour to be a solid black, with any indication of reddish-brown feathers on his breast being a fault.

However, to breed a female with the sharp pencilling required by the standard, nature dictates that the male must have some reddish-brown interspersed with the black.

Likewise, to breed a male with the solid black breast required by the standard, the females to do so usually do not have the sharpness of pencilling that is required in exhibition quality females.

Therefore, exhibition males are bred from females that are not standard coloured, while exhibition females are bred from males that are not

☛ continued P11

This partridge Brahma cock is good example of a bird with the solid black breast required by the standard.

A pullet breeding partridge Brahma cock with brown/red feathers showing through the black breast feathers – a bird that would be used to produce exhibition-quality females, while he himself is not exhibition standard.

A deep dive into double mating for exhibition birds

☛ from P10

standard coloured.

In essence, the one colour standard requires two very distinct lines of birds to be kept in order to produce exhibition quality fowls – this phenomenon being known as 'double mating'.

Varieties such as the Partridge Brahma and the Partridge Wyandotte require this practice to produce exhibition quality birds.

The same applies to birds that are silver-pencilled in colour, where silvery-grey replaces the gold and red of the partridge variety – examples of which are the Silver Pencilled Wyandotte and the Dark Brahma.

This has led in some cases to one sex being far more commonly shown than the other and it is very rare to find exhibition quality males in large Partridge and Silver Pencilled Wyandottes.

Another incompatible colour combination occurs with breeds that have black plumage coupled with yellow legs.

The standard requires that both sexes should be a solid black with green sheen in evidence, but if birds of both sexes with this quality are mated together, there will generally be a certain amount of black pigment that extends into the leg colour, thus resulting in a bird that does not conform to the standard.

To overcome this, breeders use a system whereby males with a little white in their tails are mated to exhibition-quality females to produce more exhibition-quality females but males that do not conform to the standard requirement.

Likewise, to produce exhibition quality males, females lacking the green sheen which the male must have and legs which may be dusky are used in the breeding pen.

Examples of breeds in this category are Black Leghorns and Black Wyandottes and, once again, the necessity to double mate in these breeds has resulted in large males of exhibition quality being quite rare.

Several other instances of double mating are practiced with other breeds and varieties to best produce birds that conform to their required standard.

This includes breeds in which the male has an upright comb but in which the female has a comb that falls gracefully to one side, such as the Leghorn and other Mediterranean breeds.

It is common in such breeds to mate an exhibition-quality male to hens whose combs tend to be more upright than the standard requires, and to mate exhibition-quality females to a cock whose comb falls to one side.

In the past it has been a common practice to dub such males, that is to remove their comb, so that their comb does not interfere with their vision and therefore their ability to mate successfully.

Unfortunately, while the employment of a double-mating system enables fanciers to produce exhibition-quality birds, the technique has resulted in some colours amounting to two different breed varieties, with the result that in many instances the cockerel breeding line has become rare, due to the reluctance of people living in urban areas to keep roosters.

Grant Andrews
Rare Poultry Breeders Association

The dark Brahma hen shows the distinct pencilling on each feather required by the standard.

PIX 2026 developing our future

THE Poultry Information Exchange continues to play a central role in supporting the Australian poultry industry, built on a simple but enduring principle – practical knowledge shared by industry, for industry.

The PIX 2026 theme 'Developing our future' reflects the industry's focus on building capability, resilience and innovation across all parts of the poultry supply chain.

It recognises that the future of the industry is shaped not only by new technologies and systems but by the people, knowledge and collaboration that underpin them.

At the core of Food with Purpose, PIX maintains a clear and deliberate focus on poultry, alongside the Australian Milling Conference and the Australasian Pork Limited program.

This structure enables connection with related sectors where it adds value, while ensuring the poultry industry remains the priority.

What underpins the strength and scale of PIX is the depth of support from its sponsors, partners and exhibitors.

Their involvement is not incidental – it is a direct investment in the future of the industry.

From global suppliers to local service providers, this collective backing ensures that the latest advancements in production systems, automation, animal welfare, biosecurity, feed innovation and processing efficiency are not only developed but shared, tested and understood within an industry context.

More than 160 companies and organisations contribute across the event, representing the full supply chain and reinforcing the role of PIX as a meeting point between innovation and application.

This level of engagement is a clear signal of industry confidence in the value that PIX delivers.

Importantly, this support enables PIX to remain grounded in its original purpose – creating an environment where information flows both ways, where experience is valued alongside research and where the outcomes of discussion have practical relevance on farm and across the supply chain.

We extend our sincere thanks to all sponsors, partners and exhibitors whose ongoing commitment ensures PIX continues to deliver for the industry.

Their contribution is fundamental, not only to the success of the event but to the continued progress of the Australian poultry sector.

As the industry continues to evolve, PIX remains a constant – a place where challenges are addressed, ideas are tested and progress is driven through collaboration.

Environment and agriculture must work together

AUSTRALIA'S farmers understand that productive agriculture and a healthy environment are interdependent, not competing priorities.

For generations, they have managed land, water and biodiversity with a long-term view because the sustainability of their businesses depends on it.

That's why recent reforms to the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act have raised genuine concern across the agricultural sector.

While there is broad support for strong environmental outcomes, many producers are uneasy about the pace of change and the lack of consultation or clarity around how the reforms will operate on the ground.

Queensland farmers are global leaders in environmental stewardship.

Across Queensland Farmers Federation membership, industry-led and science-based programs deliver improvements in soil health, water and energy efficiency, biodiversity and emissions reduction.

These initiatives demonstrate that strong environmental outcomes are best achieved when policy builds on proven practical approaches.

The challenge with the current EPBC reforms is not their intent but how they will be applied.

Fixed regrowth timeframes and national standards risk oversimplifying complex landscapes, leaving producers questioning the evidence behind these settings and how local conditions will be accommodated.

QFF supports an environmental framework that delivers strong outcomes while supporting sustainable food and fibre production.

Achieving that balance requires trust, transparency and ongoing dialogue.

Queensland agriculture, environment and production must be considered together, with policy informed by the realities of those who manage the land every day.

Queensland cannot meet its environmental and climate commitments without farmers and farmers cannot fully participate without clear trusted on-the-ground support.

Done well, environmental initiatives and markets can deliver strong outcomes while supporting farm profitability, resilience and long-term sustainability for regional communities.

Done poorly, ill-informed policy risks unintended consequences for future generations.

QFF welcomes Minister for the Environment and Water Murray Watt's willingness to participate in on-farm engagement before standards are finalised.

This is a positive step and reinforces the value of policy being informed by practical boots-on-the-ground experience.

QFF, Cotton Australia and our other members join AgForce, National Farmers' Federation and other industry bodies in calling on the Federal Government to work with the sector to get this right.

QFF

Breeder flock housing systems and breeder shed design shape fertility, hatchability and flock uniformity by enabling stable environments and consistent management.

Unique practical systems for breeder flocks

BREEDER flocks are the genetic and biological foundation of every poultry supply chain.

Their performance sets the standard for fertility, hatchability and chick uniformity across the entire production system.

Managing breeders is a complex balance of engineering, biology and management disciplines where small deviations in temperature, feed allocation or humidity can translate to measurable losses in reproductive performance.

Unlike commercial broilers, breeder birds must be carefully conditioned rather than pushed for growth.

The focus lies on controlled feeding, environmental stability and operational consistency.

Effective breeder systems are built on precision, regulating environmental parameters, maintaining flock uniformity and aligning every process with welfare and regulatory requirements.

Underlying all of this is infrastructure.

The physical design of a breeder facility determines how effectively environmental, nutritional and operational systems can function.

Layouts that support clean-to-dirty traffic flow, controlled ventilation zoning, access management and service redundancy are not simply construction preferences, they are the backbone of compliance, welfare and efficiency.

Modern breeder operations use a systems-based approach that integrates engineering control, nutritional design and real-time monitoring to create the stable conditions required for reproductive efficiency.

The result is an operation that performs

☛ continued P13

Unique and practical systems for breeder flocks from Paxoma

☛ from P12

predictably, protects genetic integrity and meets the increasingly strict welfare and compliance standards of today's industry.

Well-planned poultry breeder infrastructure systems also support biosecurity flow, service access and reliable data capture across production cycles.

Housing and environmental controls

Temperature and humidity remain two of the most critical performance variables.

Optimal conditions for adult breeder flocks sit between 18-24C with humidity in the 55-65 percent range.

Temperatures above 28C can suppress mating behaviour and reduce fertility by up to 10 percent, while humidity below 45 percent causes excessive egg moisture loss, weakening shell integrity.

Proper airflow is equally vital.

Air speed should be maintained between 0.3-0.6sq m across the bird level to provide cooling without creating drafts.

Ammonia levels should remain below 20ppm, as prolonged exposure above this threshold can reduce hatchability by 15 percent.

Modern breeder sheds use sensor-driven ventilation systems to maintain air quality, balance temperature and reduce humidity build-up.

These systems link to environmental controllers that automatically adjust fan speeds, inlet ratios and heater cycles.

Data-logging platforms, such as SKOV or Hotraco, record all key variables and issue alerts when parameters move outside tolerance.

Backup power and redundant fan systems are now considered essential infrastructure, ensuring airflow is maintained during outages – an especially critical safeguard during hot or humid conditions.

Light intensity and photoperiod directly influence hormone cycles and reproductive activity.

Hens typically require a 14-16-hour photoperiod with light levels between 60-80 lux, while slightly dimmer light around 50 lux helps control male aggression.

Programmable LED systems are preferred, as they allow precise wavelength control and gradual dawn and dusk transitions that reduce stress and synchronise oviposition.

Hybrid flooring systems – typically 60-70 percent slatted and 30-40 percent litter – have proven effective at balancing hygiene with natural bird behaviour.

Automated nesting systems further reduce floor eggs by up to 30 percent, improving hatchery hygiene and labour efficiency.

Timed nest-closure systems and occupancy sensors prevent overnight roosting, helping maintain egg quality and shell strength.

The success of these systems depends heavily on how the building itself is engineered.

Correct siting, orientation, insulation, air inlets and concrete apron design all contribute to environmental consistency.

Poor structural sealing, inadequate eave ventilation or uneven flooring can undermine even the most advanced automation systems.

Infrastructure and system design must therefore evolve together from the earliest project stages.

Nutrition and feed management

Breeder birds are managed under strict feed restriction programs to control body condition and promote consistent reproductive performance.

Both daily restricted feeding and skip-a-day regimes are used, depending on strain and management preference.

The goal is uniform intake, not volume feeding.

Overfeeding increases fat deposition and suppresses fertility, while underfeeding reduces ovulation and egg size.

Energy density should remain around 11.2-11.6MJ ME/kg with protein levels near 14-16 percent, adjusted for breed, season and production phase.

Feed distribution and equipment:

Uniform feed distribution is vital to maintaining flock uniformity.

Chain or pan feeding systems are preferred over open troughs to ensure each bird receives equal access.

Modern spin feeders can also be used.

Line lengths should deliver feed within two minutes of system start to prevent social dominance behaviour.

Regular calibration of feeders and augers is essential, even a 5 percent variance in distribution can lead to measurable uniformity decline.

Feed distribution infrastructure – feed silos, auger systems and line placement – should be designed early in project planning to ensure efficient routing, access and serviceability.

Poor silo placement or inconsistent line gradient can result in feed flow variability, wasted energy and compromised nutritional precision.

Monitoring and bodyweight control:

Weekly weighing of at least 2 percent of the flock (minimum 100 hens and 20 males per house) provides data for uniformity calculations.

The target uniformity coefficient should be less than 10 percent by 20 weeks.

Automatic weighing platforms or RFID-based scales can provide continuous monitoring.

Research shows flocks achieving less than 10 percent CV at onset of lay deliver up to 5 percent higher hatchability compared with flocks above 12 percent CV.

Feeding strategy case data:

In a controlled study, the implementation of skip-a-day feeding with consistent nutrient delivery increased fertility by 7.1 percent and improved hatchability by 4.5 percent within 10 weeks of adjustment.

These gains were attributed to improved male mating activity and reduced stress during feed transitions.

Operational systems and governance

Technical systems alone cannot guarantee consistent results.

Performance depends on procedural discipline, where every process must be measurable, repeatable and auditable.

Standard operating procedures should define each task, its measurement tolerance and the corresponding corrective action.

Daily records should include shed temperature, humidity and gas concentrations (carbon dioxide and ammonia) along with feed and water consumption, hen-day egg production, fertility, hatchability, mortality and routine equipment calibration logs.

Automated data capture and sensor-based reporting reduce operator bias and allow multi-day trend analysis.

Integrating these readings into central dashboards provides early detection of performance deviations.

Flocks are typically graded between four and seven weeks of age to separate over or under-weight birds.

Grading ensures that each sub-group follows an appropriate feeding curve, preventing long-term size disparity.

Poor uniformity creates asynchronous sexual maturity, reduced mating success and inconsistent egg size.

Operational governance extends to biosecurity systems.

Defined clean-to-dirty pathways, dedicated staff by production area and vehicle wash bays all contribute to disease prevention.

Each production cycle should include a full dry-clean, detergent wash and verified disinfection, followed by a minimum 14-day downtime before restocking.

Infrastructure plays a central role here as well.

Facility layout determines how easily biosecurity protocols can be enforced, how data points are monitored and how maintenance or hygiene tasks can be completed without disrupting production.

Concrete aprons, internal partitions, access corridors and drain systems all contribute to an operator's ability to sustain compliance and operational efficiency over time.

Compliance, welfare and regulatory alignment (Australia)

Australian breeder farms operate under some of the world's most stringent animal welfare and biosecurity frameworks.

The Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for Poultry (2022) provide the national benchmark for housing, stocking densities, lighting and nest space.

Most states also require biosecurity entity registration under the Biosecurity Act for holdings with more than 100 birds, and property identification codes for disease traceability.

Stocking densities are typically maintained at 8-10 birds per square metre for breeders, with a minimum eight hours of darkness per 24 hours and at least one nest per four to five hens.

Audit readiness is now a baseline expectation.

Breeder operators must maintain detailed records of feed and water intake, production data, vaccination programs and mortality removal.

Increasingly, farms are adopting digital compliance systems that automatically archive sensor data and operational logs, simplifying both internal reviews and third-party audits.

Critically, infrastructure design determines how easily these compliance frameworks can be met.

Access segregation, staff flow patterns, waste management systems and vehicle control are all compliance enablers.

Poor design can turn routine biosecurity measures into daily inefficiencies.

Conclusion

Breeder performance is ultimately a reflection of system control.

Temperature, air quality, feed precision and operational governance each influence fertility and hatchability in measurable ways.

Infrastructure underpins all of these systems, providing the framework through which environmental stability, feed accuracy and biosecurity can function reliably.

Technical data show that even small deviations – a degree of temperature, a few parts per million of ammonia or a 5 percent variance in bodyweight – can materially change reproductive results.

Consistency is achieved only when design, equipment and management operate as one integrated system.

At Paxoma, these principles guide how breeder projects are scoped, designed and delivered.

The data and performance relationships outlined above are embedded into our feasibility and design phases to ensure infrastructure supports every operational system from day one.

This integration then carries through into construction, where each structural, mechanical and environmental element is aligned with the compliance, welfare and productivity outcomes that define long-term breeder performance.

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Letter to the Editor Letter to the Editor Letter to the Editor

It is the responsibility of those making submissions to ensure the correctness of their claims and statements. The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the publisher.

How free range is being marketed.

The reality of free range.

VICTORIAN egg farmers are being told – by people who have never farmed or cared for poultry – that starting mid-2026, there will be new regulations for how to care for and manage all types of poultry in Victoria.

We are also being told that industry has been consulted and that the new requirements will improve welfare and provide certainty to industry, the community and markets.

I want to begin by saying that Victorian egg farmers have never been consulted or had any input into these new regulations and that this whole process has been railroaded by animal activist groups, big business and now government, and all have their own agendas.

As farmers, we know how to manage our farms to get the best animal welfare outcomes, no matter the farming system, as it is critical to the success of our businesses – these proposed changes will not improve the standard of welfare for our hens, as they state.

This government has become fixated on phasing out a farming system that was designed for volume production while improving animal welfare, food safety and biosecurity in this country and at the same time gave Australian families food security and food affordability.

Big business has also become focused on profits rather than animal welfare and it is important to point out that free range is no longer as most people would imagine and that marketing has gotten in the way of reality.

Though I am now a caged-egg farmer, I have farmed in free range, barn and caged systems over the 55 years of my farming life and have marketed my eggs accordingly to meet the needs of my customers.

However, it is becoming obvious that the consumer is being misled when it comes to free range eggs.

Most people would not know that the free-range eggs they are buying are coming from large commercial farms where disease is difficult to control at best and antibiotic and chemical use continues to increase.

In the past 20 years we have seen an increase in disease outbreaks on egg farms, and it is not a coincidence that it has come as the number and size of our non-caged farming systems have grown.

Every avian influenza outbreak in this country since 2000 has begun on a free-range farm and these disease outbreaks have become more frequent as these farms get bigger.

The reality is that the free-range farming system was not designed for volume production.

The egg industry understands that there has been an increase in demand for free-range eggs and has responded to meet these demands.

Yet it is important to note that there is still a strong demand for caged eggs and farmers will continue to meet these demands as well.

There is enough science to support both sides of the argument, therefore rather than quoting science, let us stick to the facts:

- The nutritional value of caged, barn and free-range eggs is the same
- Farmers know that none of our systems is perfect
- Wild birds, in particular migratory birds, carry and spread disease
- Getting the best outcome for your animals depends on farm management
- The caged-egg system was specifically designed for volume production and gives the best results when farming birds in volume
- Free range can be done very well if kept to small scale, but was not designed for large-scale farming.

Thanks to big business and the desire to increase profit margins, this industry is being pushed in a direction that is not sustainable long term – if you do not believe me, simply look at what is happening around the world with avian influenza and more recently in Australia in 2024.

It is being proposed that we vaccinate for AI, unfortunately there are so many variants of the virus it is not certain how effective this will be.

Yet the solution is far simpler and does not involve the increased use of chemicals or antibiotics.

It is all about getting the right balance in our farming systems – caged, barn and free range – where we can produce the eggs safely and humanely and meet the diverse needs of the Australian consumer.

Many family-run farms in Victoria are generational and have been running for over 50 years, producing eggs to meet the needs of their customers.

They have invested heavily in the peri-urban areas of Melbourne to meet the needs of their customers and converting to free range is not an option.

The Australian consumer has the 'freedom of choice' and the Australian egg farmer has the right to continue producing the eggs to meet the needs of the Australian consumer – no government has the right to phase out any farming system, unless they are prepared to compensate those farmers to exit the industry.

Victorian caged-egg farmers will not accept this latest proposal.

And if the State Government does not consult with industry to find an acceptable position, they will need to prepare a compensation package – allowing these farmers to leave this industry with some dignity, as they will be closing down family farms that have been producing food to feed Australian families for decades.

Brian Ahmed
President Victorian Farmers Federation Egg Group

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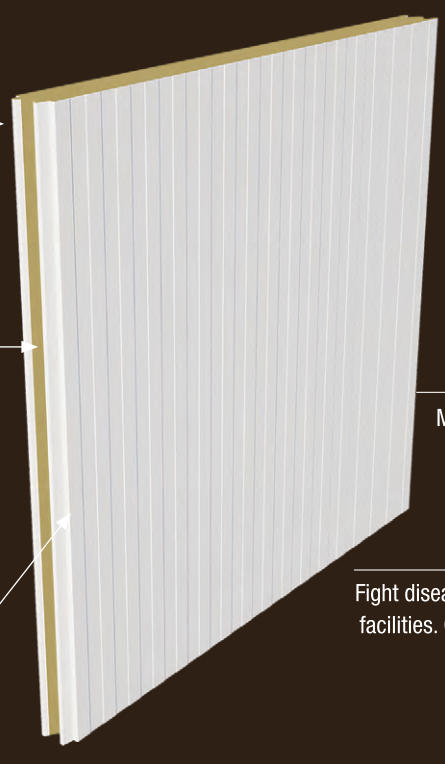

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