NATIONAL Poultry NEWSPAPER

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MANE workshop participants.

Initial MANE workshop launched by ACMF as High5 Project strengthens national HPAI preparedness

AUSTRALIA'S chicken meat industry reached a significant milestone on May 29, with the launch of the first modified atmosphere nitrogen euthanasia workshop in Launceston, Tasmania – marking the beginning of a national roadshow to strengthen preparedness and response capability for emerging emergency animal disease threats.

Over the past 18 months, the development of MANE – an innovative and humane destruction method for commercial poultry – has been a strategic priority for the Australian Chicken Meat Federation.

The initiative is focused on ensuring response approaches are scalable, practical and highly effective in managing emergency animal disease outbreaks.

This work forms part of ACMF's High5 Project, a broader initiative aimed at strengthening the sector's preparedness for emerging threats such as H5N1.

Given the potential for such highly pathogenic strains to severely disrupt production systems, these efforts are critical to safeguarding Australia's sovereign food production capability.

In less than two years, ACMF – through the High5 Project – has led the development of MANE as a new biosecurity capability from the ground up.

This has been achieved by leveraging international

☛ continued P2

Poultry Hub Australia update

by **PROFESSOR STEVE WALKDEN-BROWN**
Interim Director

THE past six months have been a busy period for Poultry Hub Australia as we continue to support research, education and industry engagement across the Australian poultry sector.

A key focus during this period has been planning for the future of PHA following the departure of Professor Tamsyn Crowley and changes to the funding model for it.

The recruitment process for a new professor in poultry science at the University of New England, who will also take on the role of Director of Poultry Hub Australia, is progressing well and we look forward to welcoming the successful candidate.

Following discussions with the PHA Industry Committee, we introduced two new initiatives for 2026.

The first was a Project Co-investment Program, which replaced the previous open funding call.

We were pleased with the strong response received, with a large number of high-quality applications submitted.

After careful consideration, two projects were selected for support and we look forward to seeing these progress.

The second initiative was a Student Placement in Industry Scheme, designed to provide both undergraduate and postgraduate students with valuable industry experience while helping build future workforce capacity.

PHA staff attended several major industry events during the period, including the Australian Poultry Science Symposium in Sydney and the Poultry Information Exchange on the Gold Coast.

These events provided valuable opportunities to connect with researchers, students and industry stakeholders, discuss current challenges and share information about PHA activities and opportunities.

We were also pleased to host representatives from AgriFutures Australia at UNE.

The visit provided an opportunity to showcase UNE's poultry research and training facilities, discuss current research activities and explore future opportunities for collaboration and investment in the Australian poultry industry.

Together with poultry researchers at the University of New England, we recently developed a poultry research and training facilities booklet that provides an overview of UNE's poultry research facilities, staff expertise, research capabilities and education and training opportunities available to industry and researchers.

Scan the QR code to view the booklet.

Research and training continue to remain at the heart of PHA's activities.

We have continued to support a range of industry-focused research projects and were pleased to open enrolments for the 2026 Master Course on Poultry Nutrition.

Final reports of the research projects we have funded are available under re search/pha-funded-projects on our website.

I would like to thank our members, industry partners, researchers and students for their ongoing support and engagement with Poultry Hub Australia.

We look forward to continuing to build connections, support research and training and contribute to the future success of the Australian poultry industry.

The author receiving the 20 Year Sponsorship Award at APSS.

Poultry Industry Calendar of Events

2026

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 27-29 – 2026 Australian Women in Agriculture National Conference. Orange, NSW. https://agrifutures.com.au/events/2026-australia-women-in-agriculture-national-conference/

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

AUG 12 – 2026 National Renewables in Ag Conference – Orange, NSW. https://renewablesinagconference.com.au

SEP 1-3 – Shell Egg Academy 2026, Indiana, USA. http://shelleggacademy.org/

SEP 22-24 – Poultry Asia 2026, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. https://www.poultryasia.com/

SEP 27-30 – Mediterranean Poultry Summit 2026, Split, Croatia. https://www.mpn-wpsa.org/split2026/home/index.php

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

Initial MANE workshop launched by ACMF as High5 Project strengthens national HPAI preparedness

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expertise, industry knowledge and strong support from research and development corporations and government.

MANE – a whole-of-shed depopulation technology – works by vaporising liquid nitrogen and introducing it into poultry sheds, where it rapidly displaces oxygen and creates a low-oxygen environment that renders birds unconsciousness and then euthanised.

As an inert gas, nitrogen does not cause the aversive respiratory sensations associated with some other gases, supporting a more humane depopulation process and improved animal welfare outcomes.

The system uses relatively simple deployment equipment, including T-lance technology, and can be rapidly mobilised during an EAD response.

Liquid nitrogen also expands significantly when vaporised (about 700-fold), enabling large shed volumes to be treated efficiently from relatively small quantities of liquid product.

Furthermore, nitrogen is readily available as it is produced from atmospheric air, meaning it is feasible to deploy during large scale EAD events.

The technology is already demonstrating strong potential as a nationally adopted depopulation tool by addressing longstanding operational challenges, including scalability, deployment and cost-efficiency, while maintaining the highest possible standards of bird welfare.

Government and industry workshop participants in Launceston received hands-on exposure to the technology and the operational frameworks that support it.

The program demonstrated how coordinated planning between industry and government can improve on-farm outcomes and strengthen national resilience.

Encouragingly, producers and government officials left with a strong understanding of both the technology and its practical application.

The success of the High5 Project has been made possible through strong partnerships and sustained investment.

ACMF takes this opportunity to acknowledge AgriFutures Australia for its ongoing support in progressing the extension of the technology, while the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry is recognised for its early backing.

ACMF also extends its appreciation to Biosecurity Tasmania, the Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania, the Tasmanian poultry industry and the Tasmanian Environment Protection Authority for their collaboration and participation in the workshop.

ACMF Board directors, industry experts and the ACMF team are also acknowledged for their leadership and commitment in delivering a world-class outcome for the sector.

Following the successful Tasmanian workshop, the MANE roadshow will continue across multiple states in the coming weeks, delivering training, innovation and enhanced preparedness to chicken meat regions across Australia.

ACMF

ACMF deputy chief executive officer Verity Price briefed workshop participants on MANE.

Australia's first in-ovo sexed chicks delivered in commercial layer industry

SPECIALISED Breeders Australia, the nation's leading supplier of commercial layer genetics, has successfully delivered the country's first commercial in-ovo sexed day old chicks to McLean Farms.

The inaugural placement was made in June 2026, making McLean Farms the first commercial egg producer in Australia to receive chicks produced using in-ovo sex determination technology.

In May, SBA announced that it had become the first company in the Asia-Pacific region to introduce in-ovo sexing for commercial egg producers through the use of Agri Advanced Technology's Cheggy system.

Cheggy uses a non-invasive hyperspectral light-based optical analysis to determine the sex of a chick prior to hatching at a commercially viable scale, enhancing animal welfare in egg production.

With the first commercial placement now complete, Australia joins a growing number of countries – including Germany, France, Brazil and the US – where the technology is being used commercially.

In the European Union, in-ovo sexing technology has reached 28 percent market penetration.

According to Innovate Animal Ag's Australian consumer survey, conducted by Ipsos in August 2025 with 1000 Australian consumers, there is strong market demand in Australia for eggs produced using in-ovo sexing.

Eighty-four percent of respondents expressed interest in purchasing in-ovo sexed eggs and 66 percent were willing to pay a premium.

Specialised Breeders Australia chief executive officer Eugene Viljoen said, "The delivery of Australia's first commercial in-ovo sexed chicks is a proud moment for SBA and a genuine milestone for our industry."

"As Australia's market-leading supplier of commercial layer genetics, we are investing in innovations that support the long-term needs of egg producers.

"Our belief is that Australian producers deserve access to the best technology the world has to offer and should be able to produce new products in response to changing consumer expectations."

SBA will produce in-ovo sexed chicks as an additional product offering available from June 2026, registered with the 'Certified Humane' trademark.

Egg Farmers of Australia CEO Melinda Hashimoto said, "Australian egg farmers work tirelessly to produce high-quality eggs while meeting the evolving expectations of consumers and the community."

"The commercial delivery of in-ovo sexed chicks is a positive development for our industry, that will provide greater high-welfare product options for layers and the end consumer.

"We congratulate SBA and McLean Farms on this milestone."

For more information, visit www.specialisedbreeders.com.au or call 03 5448 7165.

Specialised Breeders Australia

The McLean team welcomes the first delivery.

The SBA leadership team.

McLean Farms was the first commercial egg producer in Australia to receive chicks produced using in-ovo sex determination technology.

SPECIALISED BREEDERS AUSTRALIA

A LANDMARK FOR THE LAYER INDUSTRY

1 JUNE 2026

Australia's egg industry has a **new beginning.**

There is now a technology in Australia, capable of analysing an unbroken egg during the early stages of incubation, using advanced hyperspectral imaging to interpret reflected light and determine, with exceptional accuracy, whether the embryo is female or male.

No needles.
No chemicals.
No shell damage.
No physical contact.

Simply precise, non-invasive technology delivering answers that are transforming the future of the egg industry.

Powered by Cheggy technology, Specialised Breeders Australia is proud to offer Australia's first commercially available In-Ovo sexed chicks from 01 June 2026.

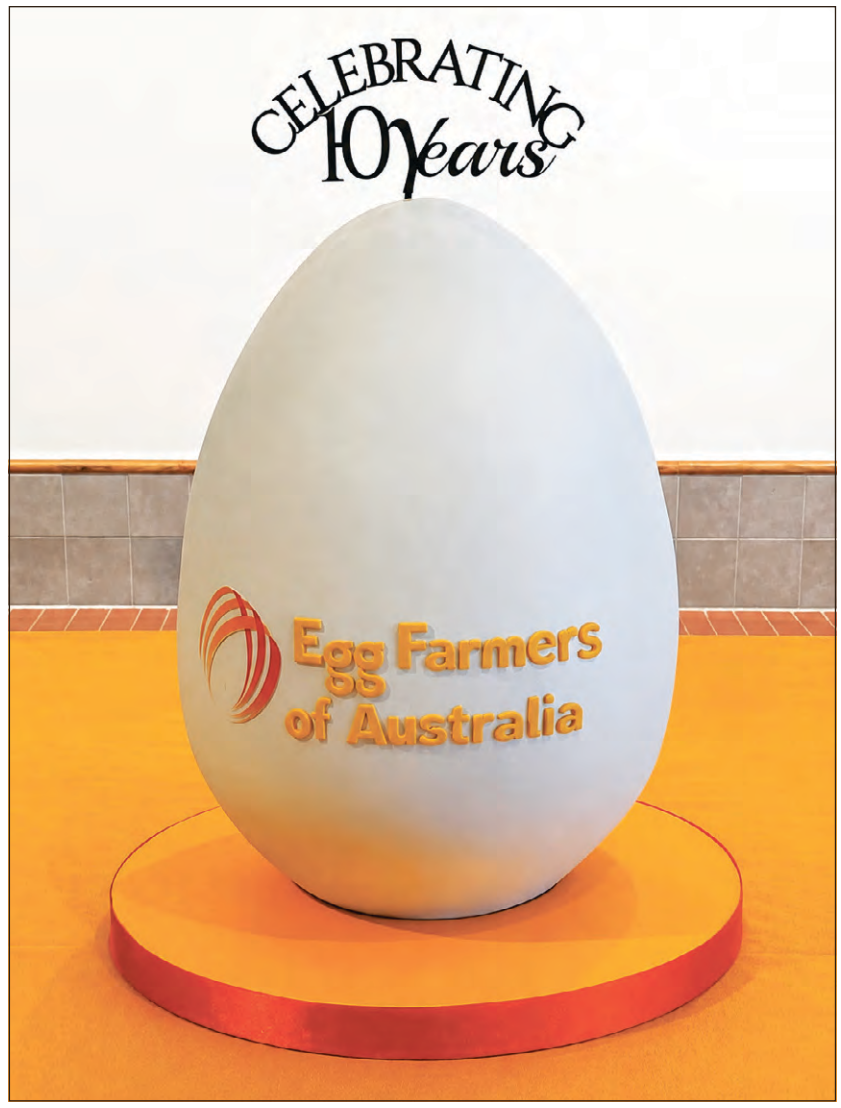
WWW.SPECIALISEDBREEDERS.COM.AU

AVAILABLE **1 JUNE 2026**
HY-LINE BROWN · LOHMANN BROWN

The event brought together partners and supporters.

EFA staff and board members.

Cutting the cake.



EFA celebrates its 10-year anniversary

Egg Farmers of Australia

by **MELINDA HASHIMOTO**
CEO

ON June 13, 2026, Egg Farmers of Australia acknowledged a remarkable milestone – its 10-year anniversary – with a vibrant and unforgettable celebration in Sydney.

Bringing together farmers, industry leaders, partners and supporters from across the country, the evening was more than a celebration, it was a powerful reflection on a decade of resilience, innovation and unity within Australia's egg industry.

From the moment guests arrived there was an undeniable sense of pride in the room.

This is an industry built on hard work, family values and a shared commitment to feeding the nation.

Egg Farmers of Australia has played a critical role in shaping a sustainable and transparent future for the sector.

The anniversary event captured that journey – honouring how far the industry has come, while energising everyone for what lies ahead.

The evening unfolded with warmth and excitement.

Farmers who had spent decades on the land stood alongside the next generation of leaders, symbolising the strength and continuity of the industry.

Stories were shared of challenges overcome and of the innovation that continues to drive the sector forward.

There was a strong sense that, despite the hurdles, the industry has not only endured but thrived.

The event shone a spotlight on the future.

With younger members increasingly stepping into leadership roles, supported by initiatives such as Gen Egg – the industry is clearly investing in its next chapter.

This focus on development and connection ensures that egg farming in Australia remains progressive, innovative and responsive to changing expectations.

Beyond the formalities, the anniversary was a chance to reconnect as conversations flowed.

There was a genuine sense of camaraderie – an understanding that while farms may be spread across vast distances, the community is tightly knit.

As the night drew to a close, one message stood out – this was only the beginning of our organisation.

The past 10 years have laid a strong foundation but the ambition for the next decade is even greater.

With a continued focus on sustainability, transparency and excellence, Egg Farmers of Australia is well-positioned to lead the industry into a dynamic future.

The 10-year anniversary was not only a celebration of time but a celebration of people, progress and purpose.

And if the energy in the room was anything to go by, the future of Australia's egg industry is brighter than ever.

H5N1 bird flu detection in Australia

What Australian poultry producers need to know

AUSTRALIA entered a new phase of avian influenza preparedness on June 20, 2026 when authorities confirmed the first mainland detection of highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza in a wild bird in southern Western Australia.

The virus was identified in a dead brown skua near Cape Le Grand National Park, east of Esperance, with a second seabird – a giant petrel – also testing positive.

This was the first confirmed detection of the globally circulating H5N1 clade that has caused extensive losses in poultry and wildlife overseas, with another detection confirmed in South Australia on June 24.

Key points for poultry producers

What has been detected?

The virus detected is highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza, the same lineage responsible for major outbreaks across Europe, North America, South America, Asia and Antarctica since 2021.

Until now, mainland Australia had remained free of this strain.

The detection occurred in wild seabirds, not commercial poultry.

Is poultry infected?

As of June 25, 2026:

- No infections have been detected in commercial poultry flocks
- No infections have been reported in backyard poultry
- Authorities have found no evidence of spread into Australia's poultry industries
- No unusual poultry mortality events linked to H5N1 have been reported.

Why is this important?

Though the current detection is confined to wild birds, H5N1 has caused devastating poultry outbreaks overseas, often leading to large-scale depopulation programs, trade disruptions and production losses.

Australia's poultry industry has been preparing for this event for several years through surveillance, biosecurity upgrades and emergency response exercises.

Current government response

Federal and state governments activated established H5 preparedness plans immediately following confirmation.

Measures include:

- Increased surveillance of wild birds and poultry
- Enhanced testing around the detection area
- Coordination between federal, state and industry biosecurity agencies
- Ongoing tracing and monitoring of potential wildlife spread pathways
- Preparedness arrangements for rapid containment should poultry become infected.

The Federal Government has stated that more than $113 million has been invested in H5 preparedness activities in recent years, including surveillance, response planning and biosecurity measures.

Biosecurity actions producers should implement immediately

The risk to poultry remains low but has increased following confirmation of H5N1 on the mainland.

Producers should:

- Restrict contact between poultry and wild birds
- Ensure sheds, feed storage and water supplies are protected from wild bird access
- Minimise standing water that attracts waterfowl
- Strengthen visitor and vehicle biosecurity controls

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H5N1 positive birds in Australia.

The brown skua migratory bird that later died of H5N1 AI, pictured at Esperance Wildlife Hospital.

The infected brown skua was found on Le Grand Beach and a giant petrel on Wylie Beach.

H5N1 bird flu detection here and what Australian poultry producers need to know

☛ from P5

- Review staff procedures for cleaning and disinfection
- Monitor flocks closely for clinical signs
- Report unusual mortality or disease immediately.

Signs that require immediate investigation

Report immediately if birds show:

- Sudden increases in mortality
- Sharp drops in feed or water consumption
- Severe respiratory signs
- Swelling of the head, comb or wattles
- Nervous signs
- Significant reductions in egg production.

Western Australian guidance notes that mortality exceeding 0.5 percent per day for three consecutive days, persistent respiratory disease or neurological signs should trigger urgent veterinary investigation.

Market and trade implications

There are currently no restrictions on poultry products arising from this wildlife detection.

Australia's poultry and egg industries remain free from H5N1 infection.

However, industry participants should expect heightened surveillance, increased reporting requirements and close scrutiny from trading partners while authorities assess whether the virus has spread beyond the initial detection area.

Human health considerations

The public health risk remains low.

Human infections are rare and generally occur after close contact with infected birds or contaminated environments.

Poultry meat and eggs remain safe to eat when handled and cooked properly.

Producers and farm staff should continue using appropriate personal protective equipment when handling sick or dead birds.

Bottom line

The confirmation of H5N1 in wild seabirds in Western Australia and South Australia is a significant biosecurity event because it marks the first mainland detection of the globally circulating highly pathogenic strain.

At present, the virus has not been detected in commercial poultry or backyard flocks but the risk environment for Australian poultry producers has changed.

Enhanced biosecurity, rapid disease reporting and close flock surveillance are now critical to protecting Australia's poultry industry from potential spread.

For more information, scan the QR code below.

Slow Food Movement founder Carlo Petrini long led the way.

Slow Food Movement lives on

Cant Comment

by **BRENDON CANT**

A LONG-term fan and supporter of the Slow Food Movement, I was saddened to learn of the May 21 death of its founder, the enigmatic Italian activist and author Carlo Petrini, at 76 years of age.

The visionary leader behind the global movement for good, clean and fair food for all has left an enduring legacy.

Born in 1949 in the town of Bra in Piedmont, Petrini was a gastronome, journalist, writer and a tireless advocate for a food system that is sustainable and just.

On July 26, 1986, Arcigola was founded (later to become Slow Food Italy), an experience that quickly spread across the country and beyond.

On December 9, 1989 in Paris, the Slow Food Manifesto was signed by more than 20 delegations from around the world and Petrini was elected president, a role he held until 2022.

Thanks to his farsighted vision, Petrini played a decisive role in the development of Slow Food, inventing and promoting its projects, which have now acquired great international visibility.

From the outset, he played a decisive role in shaping Slow Food, not simply as an organisation but as a movement, articulating its guiding philosophy – food that is 'good, clean and fair' – as a unifying framework capable of bridging cultures and geographies.

This principle became the foundation for a new way of understanding food – not merely as nourishment but as a matter of environmental sustainability, cultural identity and social justice.

Under his leadership, Slow Food evolved from a small group of friends in the Italian countryside in the 1980s into an internationally renowned

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The author's appreciation of the Slow Food Movement is regularly evidenced by cooking fresh produce in his home kitchen with his slow cooker.

Slow Food Movement lives on

☛ from P6

global network active in more than 160 countries.

Petrini was instrumental in developing key initiatives that transformed the movement's vision into concrete action.

Among these, the organisation of Terra Madre in 2004 stands out as a milestone – a gathering of food communities bringing together farmers, fishers, artisans, chefs and academics – giving voice to those often marginalised in the global food system.

Terra Madre has continued to be the beating heart of Slow Food ever since, enabling the movement to spread far and wide in more than 160 countries.

Among his many achievements is the creation of the University of Gastronomic Sciences in Pollenzo, Italy – the first academic institution to offer an interdisciplinary approach to food studies.

Since its founding, the University of Gastronomic Sciences has trained approximately 4000 gastronomes from 100 countries.

Over the years, Petrini shared his vision through a series of influential books that helped bring the principles of Slow Food to a global audience.

Beginning with *The Reasons for Taste* (2001), his work consistently explored the cultural, social and environmental dimensions of food.

In *Slow Food Revolution* (2005), co-written with journalist Gigi Padovani, he recounted the origins and growth of the movement.

While *Good, Clean and Fair: Principles of a New Gastronomy* (2005) laid out the foundations of 'eco-gastronomy' – a concept that resonated worldwide and was translated into numerous languages.

On July 16, 2022, the eighth International Congress of Slow Food began a new phase of regeneration, which was strongly supported by its founder.

Congress delegates elected new global leaders to guide Slow Food into the future.

In the words of Carlo Petrini, "The role of food as the main culprit in environmental disaster is emerging ever more loudly and clearly."

"Our movement, which has been working for 30 years to ensure good, clean and fair food, must have the courage to take a leading political role in curbing this trend, which has catastrophic implications.

"We need governance that leaves space for new generations.

"We must be able to combine the new with our history.

"The path taken so far has allowed us to achieve goals that once seemed unattainable and has made us what we are.

"However, today's world is profoundly different from the one that saw the beginnings of our movement.

"We must therefore welcome and allow ourselves to be directed by the creativity and intuition of new individuals capable of interpreting the present and outlining the trajectory that will allow the achievement of future goals."

Never having been a fan or purchaser of fast foods, I love recalling that Petrini first came to prominence in 1986 for taking part in a campaign protesting against the fast-food chain McDonalds when it opened in Rome near the Spanish Steps.

Rather than carrying traditional signs, Petrini and his friends handed out bowls of penne pasta to protesters and passersby.

Their slogan, "We don't want fast food... we want slow food!"

It became known as the 'spaghetti protest'.

Despite the rallies and political efforts, the restaurant remained open and still operates today.

Decades later, Rome and other Italian cities continue to restrict fast-food chains near historical monuments (such as the Baths of Caracalla), prioritising local culinary heritage.

Buying and eating local, as best I can and as best as I can afford, has long been my culinary mantra.

Along with that, my slow cooker is the 'tool' that keeps my cooking (and eating) slow.

Australian Poultry Science Symposium 2027

THE Poultry Research Foundation, in conjunction with WPSA Australian Branch, cordially invites you to attend the thirty-eighth annual Australian Poultry Science Symposium to be held at the University of Sydney Business School, Belinda Hutchinson Building, Camperdown Campus Monday to Wednesday February 1-3, 2027.

APSS is the premier avian science conference in Australia, attracting delegates from across the country and around the world.

In 2027, our conference will focus on an overarching theme of 'Harnessing mechanistic science to drive performance'.

The symposium will return as an exclusively face-to-face event at the University of Sydney Business School, building on the record attendance and paper submissions of 2026.

The state-of-the-art venue features a spacious, tiered lecture theatre, breakout spaces and dedicated areas for informal networking and social interaction.

The 2027 official three-day scientific program will revert back to the traditional Monday morning start, with delegate check-in commencing from 7am – this will give us time in the program to be able to finish at afternoon teatime on the Wednesday for those needing to make flights.

Attendees can look forward to an exceptional program of invited speakers addressing high-priority topics under a unifying theme.

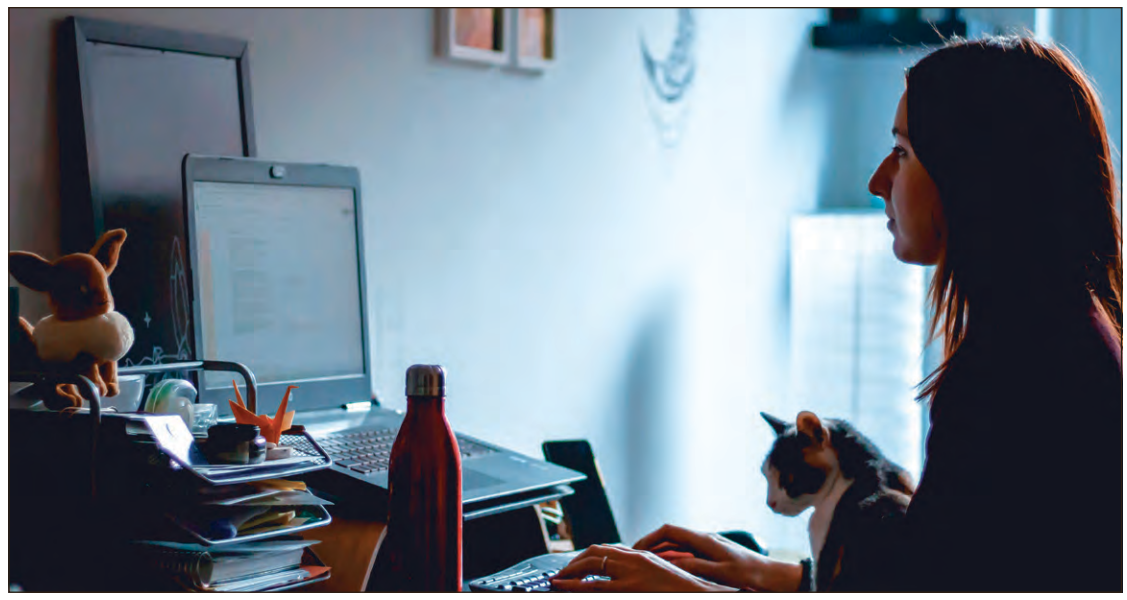
A comprehensive social program will run alongside the presentations, offering numerous opportunities to connect, collaborate and exchange ideas throughout the event.

For more information, scan the QR code.

APSS 2027

Women who identified as 'big-F Farmers' typically undertook day-to-day paddock work and saw farming as central to their sense of self.

The image of a farmer remains strongly associated with traditional symbols such as tractors, Akubras and paddock work. Many women don't see themselves reflected in that image.



Many women are bringing professional skills developed in other careers to help run multimillion-dollar businesses.

Women redefining what it means to be a farmer

A NEW Adelaide University study is challenging long-held assumptions about women in agriculture, revealing that many women involved in farming businesses do not identify with the traditional 'farmer' label, despite playing critical roles in the success of modern farms.

Published in the *Journal of Rural Studies*, the research found that while some women strongly embrace the title, others are rejecting it, wanting to be recognised for their business and professional skills.

From the School of Agriculture, Food and Wine, author Dr Emily Buddle said the findings highlight the growing complexity of contemporary farming businesses and the need to rethink how women's work in agriculture is recognised.

"When we talk about women's role in farming businesses, the default assumption is often that they simply want to be recognised as farmers in their own right," Dr Buddle said.

"My research suggests the reality is much more nuanced.

"Many women are not seeking the title of farmer.

"Instead, they want recognition for the important and often highly specialised work they contribute to farming businesses."

The study involved focus groups with 27 women from South Australian farming enterprises and identified a spectrum of identities, ranging from women who saw themselves as 'big-F Farmers' to those who described themselves as 'little-f farmers' or rejected the label altogether.

Women who identified as 'big-F Farmers' typically undertook day-to-day paddock work and saw farming as central to their sense of self.

Others felt their primary contribution lay elsewhere – managing administration, finance, compliance, human resources and business operations.

Several participants described these responsibilities as running the farm's 'control room' – work that is increasingly essential as farming businesses become larger, more complex and more heavily regulated.

"The nature of farming has changed dramatically over recent decades," Dr Buddle said.

"As farms have grown in size and become more reliant on global markets, the demands of administration, risk management, compliance and employment have also increased.

"Many women are bringing professional skills developed in other careers to help run multimillion-dollar businesses."

Historically, women often balanced domestic responsibilities alongside farm work.

Today, many are managing sophisticated business functions that underpin farm productivity and profitability.

"While women have long been responsible for the control room of the farm, the control room itself has changed," Dr Buddle said.

"No longer are women simply milking cows, preserving produce, raising children and completing the tax return.

"They are helping to manage complex businesses, yet much of that work remains unseen, unremunerated and under-appreciated."

The research also found that women overwhelmingly rejected the term 'farmer's wife', with participants expressing frustration at being defined by their husband's occupation rather than their own contributions.

Dr Buddle said the persistence of the label reflects broader social expectations that continue to shape life in regional Australia.

"Many women have their own professional identities, skills and expertise, yet the 'farmer's wife' trope remains surprisingly strong," she said.

"The women in our study wanted to be recognised as individuals contributing to the success of their farming businesses, not simply as supporters standing beside a farmer."

According to Dr Buddle, the findings have important implications for creating a more inclusive agricultural sector.

She argues that recognising women solely through the farmer lens risks overlooking the diversity of roles they perform and the different ways they experience life within farming businesses.

"The image of a farmer remains strongly associated with traditional symbols such as tractors, Akubras and paddock work," Dr Buddle said.

"Many women don't see themselves reflected in that image, even though they are essential to the operation of the business.

"If we want a more inclusive agricultural sector, we need to move beyond a one-size-fits-all understanding of what it means to contribute to farming.

"Recognition should reflect the diverse skills, expertise and identities that women bring to Australian farming businesses."

The study 'Little-f farmer, big-F Farmer, or not at all? Questions of identity amongst Australian farming women' is published in the *Journal of Rural Studies* and can be viewed in full by scanning the QR code below.

Adelaide University

Turning poultry poo into profit

■ Gippsland farmer leads the way on circular agriculture

FOR many poultry producers, litter is a by-product that requires careful management.

However, for Gippsland farmer Chris Freney it has become the foundation of a renewable energy and circular economy project that could reduce costs and diversify his business.

Chris is currently developing an ambitious anaerobic digestion facility through his business C-Loop, which will convert poultry litter into renewable electricity, industrial gases and valuable agricultural inputs, while addressing a growing environmental challenge facing the industry.

Chris is among a lineup of innovative producers and industry leaders speaking at the National Renewables in Agriculture Conference in Orange, NSW on August 12.

His experience offers a practical example of how renewable energy, circular economy principles and commercial agriculture can work hand in hand to create new opportunities for Australian farming.

Other speakers will cover battery storage, solar pumping, electric farm vehicles, biofuels, making money off the distribution network and making green nitrogen with renewables.

The event is so popular, it sold out each of the past two years.

Chris said, "I make about 10,000 tonnes of litter every year."

"The system has been designed for 35,000 tonnes, so we'll be looking to secure an additional 25,000 tonnes from other poultry farms in the region."

The project relies on technology and engineering expertise sourced from Germany, a country widely recognised for its leadership in biogas and anaerobic digestion systems.

"They are just so good at it," Chris said.

"The German engineering company has provided a performance guarantee for the digestion process.

"I'd rather rely on their knowledge and expertise because they've been doing this successfully for a long time."

Chris is optimistic that construction and commissioning will begin before the end of the calendar year.

The system has been designed around three separate revenue sources, creating a stronger commercial proposition.

The first revenue stream is electricity generation.

Methane produced through the digestion process will fuel an internal combustion engine, generating approximately 8.5MW of dispatchable electricity.

Around half of the electricity generated will be used on-farm, reducing costs across the poultry operation.

The remaining electricity will be sold through a retailer.

Importantly, the focus is on delivering electricity when the market needs it most.

"Our focus is a reliable 5pm-11pm supply," Chris said.

"We can provide this 365 days a year."

"We're focusing on the things solar and wind can't do.

"There is a premium in the market for reliable power during those evening peak periods."

The second revenue stream comes from carbon dioxide captured during the digestion process.

Rather than releasing the gas, it will be separated and sold into industrial markets.

Offtake agreements are already in place, with applications ranging from poultry processing through to food packaging and red meat processing.

The third revenue stream is perhaps the most unique.

Nutrients recovered from the digestion process will support algae and spirulina production, creating inputs for food dyes.

Together these three revenue streams have been critical in satisfying financiers that the project is commercially viable.

"For other farmers, energy alone often isn't enough to make these projects work," Chris said.

"The key is creating multiple products and having offtake agreements in place."

Notably, the project is proceeding without grants or subsidies, a point Chris believes demonstrates its commercial strength.

The business is also trialling the replacement of LPG heating systems with electric heat pumps in poultry sheds as part of a wider electrification program.

Preliminary results are encouraging.

The trial is expected to reduce LPG consumption by as much as 85 percent.

However, the farmer remains focused on commercial outcomes rather than simply adopting technology for technology's sake.

"The issue isn't whether I can save that amount of LPG," Chris said.

"The question is the capital outlay.

"Can I spend this much on a system and pay it off within five years?

"That's my threshold.

"If you throw enough money at something, you can do it, but it has to be commercial.

"I'm looking forward to sharing our story at the conference in August and hearing what other farmers are up to."

The conference website is renewablesinagconference.com.au

Chris Freney, a Gippsland poultry farmer, will speak about how renewable energy, circular economy principles and commercial agriculture can work hand in hand to create new opportunities for Australian farming.

Low AMR risk in Australian chicken

A NATIONWIDE surveillance program has found antimicrobial resistance levels in Australian retail chicken meat remain low, reinforcing confidence in the poultry industry's antimicrobial stewardship practices and regulatory controls.

The findings come from a comprehensive Food Standards Australia New Zealand surveillance report covering 2022-23, which assessed antimicrobial resistance in bacteria isolated from fresh retail meat.

The study examined 2005 chicken meat samples collected over a 40-week period from outlets across all Australian states and territories.

According to the report, the public health risk associated with antimicrobial-resistant bacteria in fresh chicken meat is considered very low when standard food handling and hygiene practices are followed.

The survey found high levels of susceptibility to tested antimicrobial classes among the majority of bacteria isolated from poultry meat.

Salmonella was detected in 8.7 percent of samples, with 92 percent of isolates fully susceptible to all antimicrobials tested.

Importantly, no multidrug-resistant salmonella isolates were identified.

Among key indicator bacteria used to monitor resistance trends, 65.6 percent of escherichia coli isolates and 47.1 percent of enterococcus faecalis isolates were fully susceptible to all tested antimicrobials.

Multidrug resistance levels remained low at 7.4 percent and 1.1 percent respectively.

The report also highlighted the continued effectiveness of Australia's approach to preserving critically important antimicrobials used in human medicine.

No resistance was detected in e coli or salmonella to several important last-resort treatments, including meropenem, colistin and amikacin.

Resistance to third-generation cephalosporins was also found to be negligible.

Similarly, enterococcus faecalis and enterococcus faecium isolates showed no resistance to critical human health antimicrobials such as vancomycin and teicoplanin.

The findings underscore the effectiveness of Australia's strict regulatory framework and responsible antimicrobial use practices throughout the poultry production chain.

One area identified for ongoing monitoring was campylobacter jejuni, which was isolated from 35.3 percent of chicken meat samples.

The bacterium showed a 16 percent resistance rate to ciprofloxacin, a fluoroquinolone antimicrobial.

Researchers noted that this finding mirrors trends observed internationally and is particularly noteworthy because fluoroquinolones have never been approved for use in food-producing animals in Australia.

This suggests the resistance is maintained through mechanisms unrelated to local antimicrobial use.

Overall, the report concluded that bacteria present on Australian retail poultry meat remain highly susceptible to antibiotics and pose a very low risk to public health, providing further evidence of the poultry sector's strong performance in antimicrobial stewardship and food safety.

Champion Rare Variety Bantam was a Blue Quail Barbu d'Anvers pullet.

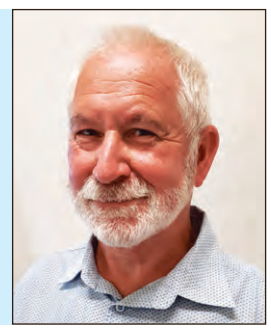
Reserve Champion Rare Breed large fowl was a partridge Welsummer cockerel, which also won the perpetual trophy for Reserve Champion Barnevelder or Welsummer.

Champion Bird in Show was a White Crested Black Polish bantam cockerel. This bird also won the Champion Rare Breed Bantam award for exhibitor Ben Westhead, who travelled from Queensland for the show.

Rare Poultry Breeders Annual Show 2026

Rare Breeds

by **GRANT ANDREWS**



MAY 16, 2026, saw the Rare Poultry Breeders' Association hold its twentieth annual show at Maitland Showground in NSW.

This year, the show attracted 575 entries, an increase of over 60 entries on last year, with exhibitors travelling from many areas of NSW, Queensland and ACT.

A special feature of this twentieth anniversary show was being able to obtain the services of one of the judges who adjudicated at the association's inaugural show in 2006.

This year's feature breed – the Leghorn – came from the rare varieties section of the show.

While most poultry people are familiar with the once ubiquitous White Leghorn, it comes as a surprise to many that the Leghorn is standardised in a large variety of colours, many of which are now rarely seen in large fowl and only occasionally seen in the bantam variety of the breed.

A Buff Leghorn cockerel was judged to be the best of the large fowl on display, while a Crele Leghorn cockerel was awarded the prize for best bantam Leghorn.

Among the outstanding birds on display this year were Araucanas, Dorkings, Polish, Sumatras and Cayuga ducks, while Belgian Bantams were shown in Barbu d'Uccle, Barbu d'Anvers and Barbu de Watermael varieties.

The Araucana is the only breed in the Australian standards having its origin in South America.

It is one of the few pure breeds noted for laying a blue or green shelled egg and occurs in both a large fowl and bantam form.

The Dorking is recognised as being one of the oldest purebred breeds in the standards, birds fitting the description of a Dorking having been recorded from Roman times in Britain.

The Sumatra has a long history of being present in Australia but, for all intents and purposes, had died out here in the latter half of the twentieth century.

It saw renewed interest with the importation of hatching eggs through the Spotswood Quarantine facility in 2014.

This breed sometimes sports a somewhat unique feature among the breeds present in Australia in that they can have multiple spurs on each leg.

The Cayuga ducks always attract attention with the beetle green sheen on their black plumage.

This breed originated in the US and was originally considered to be a table bird.

However, the black pin feathers left after plucking were against it in this regard, and ducks with white plumage came to dominate the table duckling sector, rendering the Cayuga to the ranks of a minority breed.

In Australia, the Belgian Bantams basically consist of three separate breeds, which are all united by a common origin in Belgium.

They are easily distinguished by the following characteristics – the Barbu d'Uccle is feather legged and has a single comb, the Barbu d'Anvers has non-feathered legs and a rose comb, while the Barbu de Watermael has a small crest and non-feathered legs.

An outstanding White Crested Black Polish bantam cockerel won the award for Champion Rare Breed in Show and went on to take the award for Champion Bird in Show, while a black Araucana cockerel was awarded the prize for Champion Rare Breed Large.

In the Rare varieties section, a Blue Quail Barbu d'Anvers won the Champion Bantam award, with a Blue Australorp winning the award for Champion Rare Variety Large and Champion Rare Variety Overall.

A Dusky Mallard Australian Call duck won the award for Champion Waterfowl, with a Cayuga winning reserve in this section.

Champion Goose was a Brown Chinese and Champion Turkey was a Black male.

The Juniors section was hotly contested with some excellent quality birds on display, with the winner being a Cayuga duck.

The Rare Poultry Breeders' Association annual show will be held again next year on Saturday May 15, 2027.

For more information about the association, visit our website at www.rarepoultrybreedersassociation.com or contact the club secretary at secretary@rarepoultrybreedersassociation.com

US develops vaccine for avian metapneumovirus

RESEARCHERS in the US have developed new vaccine candidates targeting avian metapneumovirus subtype B, a respiratory disease that has caused significant production losses across the US poultry sector.

Scientists from the Animal Disease Research and Diagnostic Laboratory at South Dakota State University announced they have successfully developed both live and killed vaccine candidates against the virus, which has affected commercial turkey and chicken operations in several major poultry-producing regions.

The research team, led by assistant professors Sunil Mor and Tamer Sharafeldin, was among the first to identify a rapidly spreading respiratory disease outbreak in US poultry flocks during early 2024.

The outbreak was linked to avian metapneumovirus subtypes A and B, marking the first detection of these highly pathogenic strains in the US.

While subtype C had been identified previously in the US, the emergence of subtypes A and B raised concerns across the industry due to their ability to cause significant respiratory disease and production losses.

"Emerging subtypes A and B are causing huge economic losses to the poultry industry," Prof Mor said.

"We are expediting our efforts to provide the first vaccine based on a US field strain that will provide better protection to birds, hence will be helpful in sustainability of US poultry production."

The researchers developed three live vaccine candidates with varying levels of attenuation and evaluated their safety and effectiveness in chickens.

The medium-passage vaccine candidate delivered the strongest protection, including complete clearance of the virus in trial birds.

Both the live and killed vaccine candidates also demonstrated strong safety and efficacy results in commercial turkeys.

Further laboratory studies and field trials are planned to confirm the vaccines' effectiveness against aMPV subtype A and to support future commercial development.

For poultry producers, the work highlights the ongoing importance of surveillance and vaccine development in managing emerging respiratory diseases that can impact bird health, flock performance and profitability.

Prof Sharafeldin said ongoing monitoring would remain critical even if vaccination becomes widely adopted.

"Developing vaccines is not going to be the only objective," he said.

"Continued monitoring of new variants due to vaccine pressure will ensure the preparedness for any future outbreak due to emerging variants."

The project has been funded by the US Poultry & Egg Association and the US-Poultry Foundation and will now move into pre-clinical evaluation and field testing.

The economic impact of the disease has been substantial.

According to the Minnesota Turkey Growers Association, producers in Minnesota alone lost an estimated 2.2 million turkeys to avian metapneumovirus during 2024, resulting in approximately A$158.5 million in losses.

While Australia has a different disease status and biosecurity framework to the US, the emergence of new aMPV strains overseas serves as a reminder of the importance of strong surveillance, biosecurity and preparedness programs across the poultry industry.

The development of effective vaccines against emerging respiratory diseases remains an important tool for maintaining flock health and supporting long-term productivity in commercial poultry production systems.

The growing focus on packaging highlights its importance not only as a food safety and product integrity tool but also as a key component of Australia's food security and manufacturing capability.

The roundtable explored both immediate plastic packaging supply chain challenges and longer-term solutions. Photo: DCCEEW

Packaging supply risks draw federal attention

AUSTRALIA'S pork and poultry industries are among the food sectors being closely watched as the Federal Government examines growing pressures on plastic packaging supply chains and the potential role of recycling and packaging reform in strengthening food security.

Federal Environment Minister Murray Watt, Agriculture Minister Julie Collins and Industry Minister Tim Ayres recently convened an industry roundtable involving representatives from the red meat, poultry, dairy, food and grocery, plastics and packaging sectors to discuss the impact of global supply chain disruptions on Australia's access to plastic packaging materials.

For pork and poultry producers, processors and retailers, reliable access to plastic packaging remains critical for product protection, shelf life, food safety and distribution throughout domestic and export markets.

The discussions were prompted by concerns that ongoing conflict in the Middle East is affecting global fuel, polymer and plastic resin supply chains, creating potential risks for industries that depend on packaging materials.

The ministers said the roundtable explored both immediate supply chain challenges and longer-term solutions, including the role that packaging reform and increased domestic recycling capacity could play in improving supply resilience.

The growing focus on packaging highlights its importance not only as a food safety and product integrity tool but also as a key component of Australia's food security and manufacturing capability.

Industry Minister Tim Ayres said the government was actively monitoring risks across several critical supply chains, including polymers and plastic resins used in food packaging.

"My department is very focused on monitoring supply chains – from urea stocks and risks in Australia's polymer and plastic resin supply – to make sure government has the information it needs to make good decisions in Australia's national interest," he said.

"Plastic packaging is critical for Australia's food security and we are keeping a close eye on supplies to make sure Australian industry, producers and consumers aren't caught short."

For the pork and poultry sectors, packaging is a vital link between processing plants and consumers.

Any disruption to packaging availability can have significant implications for production scheduling, inventory management, distribution and retail supply.

Agriculture Minister Julie Collins said collaboration between government and industry would be essential in addressing emerging challenges.

"We know plastic packaging is an important part of getting food to Australians and supporting our food security more broadly, which is why this kind of collaboration is critical," she said.

The discussion also reflected growing recognition that food production systems are increasingly dependent on secure access to manufacturing inputs beyond the farm gate, including packaging materials, transport fuels and processing infrastructure.

Environment Minister Murray Watt said the roundtable provided an opportunity for industry participants to share their experiences of current supply chain pressures.

"This roundtable facilitated an important conversation with industry to understand their firsthand experience of impacts being felt within Australia's plastic packaging supply chain," he said.

"Reducing and responsibly managing plastic waste through recycling is a priority for the Albanese Government and, where this can help increase food security for Australians, there is a double benefit."

The government highlighted a range of existing initiatives designed to strengthen supply chain resilience, including the $7.5 billion Fuel and Fertiliser Security Facility, expanded fuel reserves, fertiliser import arrangements and more than $200 million invested through the Recycling Modernisation Fund.

For Australia's pork and poultry industries, the roundtable signals increasing government recognition that packaging supply, recycling infrastructure and domestic manufacturing capability are becoming important components of national food security planning.

As supply chains remain vulnerable to global disruptions, industry stakeholders are likely to see greater attention placed on securing access to packaging materials and expanding Australia's capacity to recycle and manufacture packaging products domestically.

National egg farming body marks tenth anniversary

THE national body that represents farmers who produce one of Australia's most important food proteins has marked its tenth anniversary.

Egg Farmers of Australia advocates as the voice of the nation's leading free range, cage and barn laid commercial egg producers.

The organisation, which began in its current form in 2016, marked its tenth anniversary with an egg industry dinner in Sydney on June 13.

Egg Farmers of Australia chief executive officer Melinda Hashimoto said the body had grown from strength to strength in the past decade as consumer demand for eggs continued to rise.

"EFA advocates at a national level on keys issues including animal welfare, biosecurity, food safety, rising costs and government impositions that impact on egg production," she said.

Aussie egg farmers produce 18.8 million eggs a day.

That equates to 6.8 billion eggs a year.

"As the cost of living rises, eggs remain the most affordable sources of food protein available to Aussie families," Mrs Hashimoto said.

"Importantly, eggs also have the lowest carbon footprint of any animal food protein produced in Australia."

On average every Australian eats 259 eggs per year.

That is about 16kg each.

"In fact, as Egg Farmers of Australia celebrates its tenth year, Aussies now eat up to 40 percent more eggs than they did a decade ago," Mrs Hashimoto said.

A recent national survey showed more than 83 percent of Australians were happy to support sustainable commercial egg farming.

Currently in Australia, the national quantity of eggs produced by state are NSW/ACT with 34.1 percent, Victoria at 26 percent, Queensland 24.8 percent, Western Australia 9.1 percent, South Australia 5 percent and Tasmania 1 percent.

Egg Farmers of Australia

Nichols Poultry secures new owner following collapse of TasFoods

TASMANIA'S Nichols Poultry has been acquired by Ramp Tasmania Poultry Pty Ltd, securing the future of one of the state's best-known chicken businesses following the collapse of parent company TasFoods earlier this year.

The sale, overseen by administrators KPMG, ensures the continuation of operations and the retention of all Tasmanian employees.

For the poultry industry, the transaction highlights both the challenges posed by recent market conditions and the enduring value of strong regional brands.

TasFoods entered administration on March 11 after a difficult trading period that coincided with a nationwide oversupply of chicken meat, placing significant pressure on margins and profitability across the sector.

KPMG said the sale would allow the business to continue operating locally under new ownership, preserving jobs and maintaining continuity for customers, suppliers and growers.

New chapter for Nichols Poultry

As the main operating business within TasFoods, Nichols Poultry was central to efforts to find a buyer capable of maintaining the business as a going concern.

The successful acquisition by Tasmania-based Ramp Tasmania Poultry provides the company with an opportunity to reset under a new ownership structure focused on local markets, community connections and long-term growth.

Ramp chief executive officer Brad McAuliffe said the company intended to rebuild the Nichols brand while retaining its Tasmanian identity.

Mr McAuliffe said the business would return to its grassroots foundations while investing in future growth opportunities.

His commitment that Nichols will offer "Tasmanian food for Tasmanian people, and we mean it" reflects a strategy built around local provenance and strong regional connections.

For poultry producers, the acquisition demonstrates the continued value consumers place on locally produced food and trusted regional brands.

How TasFoods reached administration

TasFoods was listed on the Australian Securities Exchange in 1999 and built a portfolio of Tasmanian food businesses through a series of acquisitions.

The company purchased Nichols Poultry in 2015 for $9.4 million, making it a key part of its food production portfolio.

However, like many smaller food businesses, TasFoods faced increasing pressure from rising operating costs, competitive market conditions and cyclical industry challenges.

The national chicken oversupply became a major factor affecting profitability.

Increased production across the industry, combined with softer market conditions in some channels, contributed to significant margin pressure for processors and producers alike.

While Nichols Poultry remained a recognised and respected brand, the broader corporate structure ultimately proved unsustainable.

The sale highlights an important distinction often seen in agribusiness restructures – strong operating businesses can remain viable even when their parent companies encounter financial difficulties.

Oversupply lessons for the poultry industry

The collapse of TasFoods occurred against the backdrop of one of the most challenging periods the Australian chicken industry has experienced in recent years.

An imbalance between production and demand resulted in excess supply across parts of the market, placing downward pressure on returns throughout the supply chain.

For producers, the situation reinforced the importance of disciplined production planning and close alignment between supply and market demand.

While industry conditions have begun to stabilise, the experience serves as a reminder that poultry markets can shift rapidly and that businesses need sufficient flexibility to manage periods of volatility.

The TasFoods experience also illustrates how smaller operators can be particularly vulnerable during industry downturns, especially when operating within concentrated regional markets.

Importance of local brands

One of the key reasons Nichols Poultry attracted buyer interest was the strength of its brand and reputation within Tasmania.

Consumers continue to show strong interest in locally produced food, with growing demand for products that offer clear provenance, traceability and connections to regional communities.

For poultry businesses, this trend presents opportunities to differentiate products

☛ continued P15

Ramp intends to rebuild the Nichols brand while retaining its Tasmanian identity.

Ramp chief executive officer Brad McAuliffe.

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Nichols Poultry secures new owner following collapse of TasFoods

☛ from P13

beyond price alone.

Tasmanian food brands have traditionally benefited from perceptions of quality, environmental stewardship and local production, and Nichols Poultry has long been part of that story.

Under Ramp's ownership, strengthening the company's Tasmanian identity is expected to be a central part of its growth strategy.

The approach aligns with broader consumer trends that favour transparency and locally sourced food products.

Protecting regional employment

Beyond the poultry sector itself, the transaction has significant implications for regional Tasmania.

Nichols Poultry is an important employer and supports a broader network of suppliers, transport operators, contractors and service providers.

The retention of all staff under the new ownership structure provides certainty for employees and helps maintain economic activity in the communities connected to the business.

For regional food industries, preserving these employment networks is often as important as maintaining production capacity.

The continuation of Nichols Poultry also supports the wider agricultural supply chain that depends on the business' ongoing operation.

What new ownership could mean

New ownership often creates opportunities to reassess business strategy, operations and market positioning.

Ramp has signalled its intention to focus on rebuilding the Nichols brand and strengthening customer relationships while maintaining a strong Tasmanian identity.

Potential priorities could include investment in operational efficiency, product development, marketing and continued improvements in animal welfare and production standards.

Whether the company ultimately focuses on growing its presence beyond Tasmania or consolidating its position within the local market remains to be seen.

However, the immediate priority appears to be ensuring a smooth transition and building long-term stability for the business.

Industry takeaways

For Australian poultry producers, the Nichols Poultry sale offers several important lessons.

First, market cycles remain a reality for all participants in the chicken industry.

Periods of oversupply can place substantial pressure on businesses regardless of their size or reputation.

Second, strong brands and customer loyalty remain valuable assets.

Even when corporate structures fail, businesses with established market recognition and sound operations can attract investment and new ownership.

Third, local provenance continues to resonate with consumers.

As competition intensifies, regional identity and transparency can provide meaningful points of differentiation.

Finally, the transaction highlights the resilience of Australia's poultry sector.

While industry conditions have been challenging, the successful sale of Nichols Poultry demonstrates that viable businesses can emerge from difficult circumstances when supported by strong brands, committed ownership and a clear strategic direction.

For Tasmania's poultry industry, the acquisition marks the end of the TasFoods chapter but the beginning of a new era for Nichols Poultry under local ownership.

Industry stakeholders will be watching closely to see how Ramp delivers on its commitment to rebuild the brand and position the business for long-term growth.

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The course gives operators a solid understanding of how high-pressure cleaning equipment works.

It includes information about the relationship between pump pressure and flow knowledge that's particularly useful when tackling the tough organic matter and biosecurity residues common in the poultry industry.

It also covers:

- How to identify and minimise hazards in and around the shed environment
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A workplace injury during washdown doesn't only affect the individual.

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Investing a small amount of time in training can prevent costly downtime.

It pays to protect your team and give them peace of mind that everyone on the property is operating safely.

Aussie Pumps chief engineer John Hales said: "Our aim is to prevent injuries by training operators to identify hazards and understand how the equipment works."

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