

30 June 2017

AVIAN INFLUENZA COMMUNICATION

Dear valued poultry farmer and other concerned parties,

You will by now be aware that there has been an outbreak of Avian Influenza in certain parts of the country. You will also be aware from press releases that there are certain restrictions on the sales of live poultry.

Implications for farmers and traders:

These restrictions require sellers and resellers of grown live chickens to register as such with the PDMA (Poultry Disease Management Agency) and to have your stock inspected and certified as healthy by the necessary authority and to record all your sales interactions where more than 5 live birds were involved in a transaction. Kindly forward the completed forms and any other information required in respect of this registration to info@pdma.co.za alternatively malesedi@sapoultry.co.za. For enquiries contact Malesedi on 012 529 8298. The required forms are on our website.

How this is going to work in reality is unknown considering the amount of small producers and traders out there. Whether the Department of Agriculture, Forest and Fisheries will have enough man power to monitor and enforce these restrictions remains to be seen. What controls will be put in place by the department to ensure that producers don't just declare all their sales as transactions of five or less chickens is also unclear. In reality these requirements will be very difficult to police. It is also not clear at this point in time what legislation is being used to implement these requirements. At the time of writing neither the DAFF or PDMA were answering our calls and the PDMA's website was down.

The chick supply side:

Please be assured that the threat is being taken very seriously on the supply side of day old broiler chicks and the following procedures are in place to prevent and detect any infection of day old chicks that are being supplied to you:

1. All breeder flocks are being tested for Avian Influenza at least every 4 weeks as a standard practice.
2. Breeder flock mortalities and egg production are checked on a daily basis and if there are any deviations from the norm the flock is immediately tested for Avian Influenza.

3. Bio-security on the breeder farms and at the hatcheries has been stepped up and no visitors are allowed on the farms let alone in the production facilities (layer cages and hatcheries).

What you as poultry producer should be doing:

1. Allow no visitors near your cages or onto your farm.
2. Move all livestock to be sold to a location outside your farm or yard so that traders do not need to enter your premises.
3. Ensure everyone who works in your cages does not visit other production sites.
4. Ensure your cages are bird proof and that no wild birds can enter your cages.
5. Ensure that there are no other animals/birds roaming around the cage.
6. Ensure that anyone entering the cage wears properly disinfected and washed clothing and boots that have not left the production site.
7. Make sure that you have your nearest state vets contact details and report anything untoward, such as extremely high mortalities. For enquiries contact Malesedi on 012 529 8298.
8. Read the Procedural Manual for the sale of Live Birds version 2 as provided by the DAFF. A copy is available on this website.