

RDC Industry Representation



RDC Industry Representation Proposal

At the request of egg industry representative bodies, Australian Eggs is preparing a proposal for the Minister of the Australian Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment to consider allowing Australian Eggs to broaden its activities to undertake industry representation. This would involve Australian Eggs engaging in activities currently provided by Egg Farmers of Australia.

The key benefit of Australian Eggs undertaking industry representation would be to provide secure funding for policy development and advocacy through the levy system.

Proposal Conditions:

To meet conditions set by the Minister, the proposal has been prepared on the following basis:

- 1** Australian Eggs would undertake policy development and advocacy only, and could not engage in agri-political activity. This would prevent Australian Eggs from challenging decision makers or supporting the position of a particular political party.
- 2** Australian Eggs would need to ensure its primary focus remained providing industry services through its mandate as a Research and Development Corporation.
- 3** Policy development and advocacy could only be funded through Australian Eggs marketing levy.
- 4** Australian Eggs would need to maintain a skills-based board, as it currently does, including directors elected by egg farmers. There would be no ability to include industry representatives on the Board of Australian Eggs.
- 5** Australian Eggs governance framework would have to be strictly applied so that Australian Eggs could only pursue industry policy that was consistent with its current activities.

EFA has confirmed that its current and past operations are consistent with these conditions. It is important that egg farmers understand that these conditions would limit the flexibility of Australian Eggs in conducting industry representation to a greater extent than is undertaken currently.

Industry Support:

To ensure that levy payers have an opportunity to understand the proposal, a briefing session will be held by zoom video conference at 3pm AEDT on Tuesday 1 December 2020. Details for how to attend this session will be shared via email.

The Minister will only approve a proposal of this nature if there is strong industry support. To test this, an electronic poll will be conducted between

Tuesday 1 and Friday 11 December 2020 to capture the views of levy payers.

Egg farmers that would like further information on the RDC industry representation proposal, or for those who did not receive details for the briefing session, should contact Australian Eggs on contacts@australianeggs.org.au

RDC Industry Representation Q&A

What is the purpose of the proposal?

To enhance the sustainability of the Australian Egg industry by:

- providing the resources required for consistent industry representation and more effective engagement with industry, government and public stakeholders; and
- remove duplication and costs to industry by providing for greater efficiency in the delivery of industry services and industry representation.

What representation activities could Australian Eggs undertake?

Australian Eggs could undertake strategic policy development on behalf of the egg industry, which includes:

- the collection of information (including consultation within the Industry, and with other industries, government, other stakeholders or the public);
- the balanced analysis of that information in the context of the industry environment;
- the development of a strategic policy position within the Industry; and
- the advocacy of that position (including within the industry, and with other industries, government, the public or other stakeholders).

What is agri-political activity?

Australian Eggs Funding Contract would continue to prohibit agri-political activity that involves engaging in any form of intended, partisan political influencing and includes:

- encouraging, supporting or opposing a campaign for the election of a candidate, person or party for public office;
- providing briefings to candidates during the election caretaker period;
- promoting a particular political party's policy; and
- representing the views of industry as those of the Australian Government.

Depending on the final terms of Australian Eggs new Funding Contract, it may be necessary to amend the Australian Eggs Constitution to align with a new definition of agri-political activity and implement the proposal.

How would industry policy be developed?

Australian Eggs would need to implement processes for industry policy development, in line with the final terms of the new Australian Eggs Funding Contract.

The current structure of EFA would be replicated through the creation of a Policy Advisory Committee to provide input and advice to Australian Eggs.

Like EFA, each of the five state-based egg industry bodies would nominate a representative to the Policy Advisory Committee.

The final decision on policy and advocacy would be the responsibility of Australian Eggs.

Membership

The membership arrangements under the Australian Eggs Constitution would remain unchanged, so that membership remained open at no cost to all levy payers holding laying hens as at 30 June 2021.

Would Australian Eggs current services change?

Australian Eggs would continue to implement a range of industry consultation processes in the development of Strategic Plans and Annual Operating Plans, including engaging with industry representative bodies.

Will my levies increase?

The proposal does not involve an increase to Australian Eggs levies. Levies will continue to be reviewed at the request of levy payers.

Who would be the voice of the egg industry?

Australian Eggs would continue to take responsibility for managing the reputation of the egg industry.

Industry media would be managed through the Australian Eggs Marketing & Communications Program.

All industry media would need to be consistent with Australian Eggs mandate and governance framework.

More information, further Q&As and updates on the consultation process can be found on the stakeholder consultation section of the Australian Eggs website at www.australianeggs.org.au/who-we-are/strategic-plan/