

# EGG FARMERS ANSWER SOUTH KOREAN CALL FOR HELP

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Help from Australian egg farmers will soon be on its way to South Korea as the country fights one of its worst avian influenza (*bird flu*) epidemics in recent times.

Up to 30 million hens are reported to have been culled in South Korea as it grapples with the avian influenza outbreak, leaving the country short of about 15 million dozen eggs per week.

The Australian Government and the Federal Department of Agriculture and Water Resources have finalised a new export agreement with South Korea, allowing Australian eggs to be sold in that country. The South Korean Government has also recently announced it was removing import tariffs on eggs until at least June 30 2017. The agreement's implementation takes immediate effect.

As a result, up to \$20 million worth of Australian eggs could be exported to South Korea this year.

Australian Egg Corporation Limited Managing Director, Rowan McMonnies said "this is a huge opportunity for Australian egg farmers who are set to provide some of the 180 million eggs South Korea needs each week as a result of their avian influenza crisis."

"Australian farmers work hard to ensure our hens, eggs and farming practices are among the best and safest in the world and this is reflected by the fact that South Korea has opened its doors to us in its time of need," Mr McMonnies said.

"We are happy to be helping South Korean consumers and welcome the opportunity to demonstrate Australian egg farmers' ability to step up and play a leading role in the long term food security of the Asia Pacific region," he said.

Eggs are an important part of the South Korean diet and are a core ingredient in its national dish *Bibimbap*, as well as being a rich source of protein and nutrition. South Koreans consume slightly more eggs per capita than Australians at 250 eggs per person in 2014 compared to Australia's 227.

Australian egg farmers are ideally positioned due to South Korea's growing preference for brown eggs as opposed to white eggs.

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