

Poultry welfare Standards and Guidelines imminent



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Australian Eggs welcomes the public consultation process for the animal welfare standards and guidelines for poultry which is scheduled to commence in late November.

The public consultation process is expected to last for 90 days and provide all interested parties with an opportunity to comment on the impact of proposed options for regulation.

The draft standards and guidelines (S&G) have been developed over several years and Australian Eggs assisted the process by providing industry information alongside input from other poultry industries, government, scientists and animal welfare groups.

The S&G process has provided an opportunity to review farming practices with reference to current science and the regulatory structures through which animal welfare issues are addressed.

The most significant change proposed in the S&G is to move from the current voluntary code of practice for animal welfare to a set of standards that will make the key aspects of animal welfare legally enforceable.

Another benefit from the process is the opportunity to create nationally consistent legislation that will be easier for farmers to comply with and for regulators to enforce.

Egg industry representative bodies have supported these steps as an opportunity to demonstrate current best practice to the public and ensure consistent animal welfare outcomes across the industry.

Australian Eggs recently released a revised quality assurance standard – Egg Standards of Australia (ESA) - which requires all participating egg farms to be independently audited. The ESA program will complement the S&G by providing greater transparency over farming practices than enforcement alone.

The animal welfare standards in ESA are based on the current model code and will be updated to incorporate the outcome of the S&G process.

ENDS

Attachments

Animal welfare standards & guidelines for poultry factsheet