



# Poultry Highlights

30/11/2012

Poultry Highlights is written by the NFU Poultry Team on a weekly basis. Please remember to quote the NFU as the source of the information if this email is forwarded on.

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## NFU disappointment over Morrisons' poultry meat decision

A decision by Morrisons to move away from stocking 100 per cent fresh British poultry meat is "extremely disappointing" for the industry, the NFU said today. It is understood that the supermarket chain is importing poultry meat from within Europe and marketing it under Morrisons' exclusive tertiary brand Hemsley's.

Within the last year Morrisons has introduced new standards for its own brand British chicken. As a result, British producers have shown their commitment to those standards by investing in environmental enrichment measures such as perches and windows in poultry houses. In addition, all producers will be meeting the requirements of the Red Tractor Scheme which will not be required by Morrisons for this imported meat. The NFU understands that this change has taken place this week.

NFU poultry board chairman Duncan Priestner said: "We understand the difficulties retailers are faced with in a competitive market where consumers are demanding a variety of price levels to suit their needs, but unfortunately that comes at the cost of animal welfare standards and British poultry meat."

"British poultry producers have committed and invested in their businesses in order to supply Morrisons so it is extremely disappointing that Morrisons has made this decision. It means fresh British chicken will now be displaced by cheaper produce from EU countries that will not have to meet the same welfare standards and it is a blow for the industry."

"Morrisons has always been a keen supporter of British farming and we want this to continue. We hope this is a short term move that Morrisons will review and reverse at the earliest opportunity."

## Free range egg price increases – market update

Over the past couple of weeks major egg packers have increased their free range egg price paid to producers as a result

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of the high feed prices facing the industry. In a letter to producers, market leaders Noble's Foods Farms Director Tom Willings said...

"The negotiations with many of our customers have been the most difficult any of our experienced senior team have ever witnessed, reflective of the fiercely competitive and pressurised conditions in the retail market," he said in a letter to producers.

"Though we have yet to satisfactorily conclude all of the conversations, we recognise that the pressure brought about by seemingly interminable inflation in costs associated with feed raw materials has reached a point at which we must respond."

Scottish egg packer, Glenrath Farms has raised its free-range egg price by 4 pence per dozen across the board whilst Sunrise Eggs and Fridays have announced an average increase of 5pence per dozen. Meanwhile, Oaklands Farm Eggs and Yorkshire Farmhouse Eggs have decided to pay more for large eggs, with producers now getting a premium for large eggs of around 15 pence per dozen above mediums, to compensate for higher feed prices required in producing larger eggs.

The retail snapshot which features in NFU's Poultry Forum magazine has shown very little increase in the price of free range eggs on the shelves during the past 6 months, whilst producers have seen their feed increase by around 30% over the same time period. This has placed even more pressure on the industry after a very tough two years where free range eggs have been in oversupply and margins have been very tight.

## VION to exit UK meat industry

Vion Food Group has announced that it will be returning to its core markets, focussing entirely on its food operations in the Netherlands and Germany and on its global ingredients business. The company, which employs 13,000 people in the UK across 38 sites, has announced plans to sell off its UK pork, red meat and poultry units. The company is based at Livingstone, West Lothian, supplies supermarkets with own-brand products.

Peter Barr, chairman of Vion UK said: "We have already started detailed discussions with a number of interested parties, including management, regarding the acquisition of the various parts of the UK business and these are progressing well.

"The sale process will be completed in a smooth and orderly fashion to ensure business continuity for our employees, agricultural and other suppliers and our customers."

NFU chief livestock adviser Peter Garbutt said: "This will be of obvious concern to Vion's poultry and livestock farmer suppliers, supermarket customers and I'm sure their staff as well.

Both NFU President Peter Kendal and Director General Andy Robertson are meeting with VION bosses to better understand the implications for our members.

FWI reported on Wednesday the 28<sup>th</sup> November that VION is in the process of drawing up a shortlist of potential buyers for its UK red meat, poultry and pig businesses and that they had received a large number of serious enquiries. To view the full Vion press release [click here](#).

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## Turkey boxes going fast

The UK Turkeys promotional and packaging materials are experiencing a surge in popularity and stocks are running out fast. To make sure of getting your turkey boxes, posters, carrier bags and leg tags etc., please visit <http://www.ukturkeys.co.uk/shop/> before too long. Due to high demand Large boxes are currently sold out. More have been ordered, although they will not be available until the 12<sup>th</sup> of December.

NFU members can get a free listing on [www.ukturkeys.co.uk](http://www.ukturkeys.co.uk) which thousands of consumers visit each Christmas to find a turkey from a local farmer. While we are talking turkeys the NFU would like to thank Cheshire turkey producer Michael Bailey for kindly donating a 12lb free range bronze turkey to the Farm Africa Appeal party raffle this year! The lucky winner will be drawn by Peter Kendall, NFU President, on Monday, 3rd December.

## All Party Group for Pigs & Poultry plans new report

The All Party Parliamentary Group for Pigs & Poultry, covering the egg, poultry meat and pork sectors, has announced that it intends to publish a report. Neil Parish MP, Chairman said:

“We are very pleased to have established a new All Party Group for eggs, poultry meat and pork. All three sectors are a great national asset and it is important that their message is heard. As part of this process the All Party Group intends to publish a report exploring the issues facing our egg, poultry meat and pork industries. This report will be focused on the need to ensure the UK continues to benefit from strong farming sectors delivering affordable, quality, high welfare British produce.”

Mr Parish, the MP for Tiverton and Honiton and formerly the Chairman of the influential Agriculture Committee of the European Parliament, added:

“All three industries face significant challenges from very high feed prices as well as significant costs imposed by farm animal welfare, environmental and food safety regulations agreed at the EU level. Whilst we support these we are particularly keen to ensure the UK is not in any way disadvantaged by an unlevel playing field with our EU partners or is burdening itself with ‘gold-plated’ legislation.

Mr Parish added:

“The All Party Group looks forward to receiving views on these matters. I hope we will be able to produce a worthy report that illustrates what a significant contribution these industries make to the UK’s agricultural industry and to the rural economy, as well as being an effective platform for conveying the industries positions to fellow Parliamentarians.”

The All Party Group for Pigs & Poultry was established in July 2012. The group is a cross-party body for Members of the House of Commons and House of Lords with an interest in the egg, poultry meat and pork sectors. The group was established to raise issues of concern to the industries concerned. The group has the support of the National Pig Association, the British Poultry Council, the British Egg Industry Council and the National Farmers Union.

Comments should be sent no later than 31st January 2013 to Neil Parish MP, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA or to [neil.parish.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:neil.parish.mp@parliament.uk)

## EFFP’s Annual Conference review

Amy Gray is an Assistant Adviser in the Science and Regulatory Affairs department at NFU HQ. She recently attended the EFFP Annual Conference at the St Pancras Renaissance Hotel in London. Meetings like these are important: not only do they allow employees like Amy to keep on top of the mood of the wider industry, abreast of the key topics and pose questions to industry experts across the food chain, but they also allow employees to make new contacts in related

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sectors to influence and lobby for the needs of NFU members across the country. To read Amy's blog on the day please [click here](#).

## Shape Standards, Win Hamper

Lantra, the Sector Skills Council for land based industries, is currently consulting on an update and revision of the National Occupational Standards (NOS). The NOS describe the skills, knowledge and understanding you need to perform your job to the standard required.

As part of the consultation Lantra are looking for feedback from those working in the industry. Making sure NOS are correct and fit for purpose is important to the future of the industry, its training and development. Those taking part in the consultation can win a Christmas hamper from Box Clever. The consultation can be found on [www.consult-on.com](http://www.consult-on.com) and will close on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2012. To view the consultation and leave comments you will need to register and log-in to the Lantra consultation tool.

## FAWC Report on Farm Animal Welfare: Health and Disease

The Farm Animal Welfare Committee has today published its landmark Report on Farm Animal Welfare: Health and Disease. The aims of the Report are to highlight the welfare issues that arise out of animal disease and the opportunities for improved animal health in the major species of farm animals, and make recommendations for improvements.

Professor Christopher Wathes, Chairman of FAWC, said "By focusing on the direct impact of disease on farm animal welfare and understanding the interactions (positive and negative) between physical and mental health, the Report highlights the potential to reduce individual animal suffering." To read the full article please [click here](#).

## Labelling could include stunning details

The European Commission are to launch a study next year into the inclusion of stunning details on meat labelling. Denis Simonin, animal welfare chief at DG SANCO (health and consumer protection) spoke about the proposals at a European Meat Forum event last week. The study will ask consumers whether they would like labelling to include information on stunning methods prior to slaughter. The study and the publication of the results are expected next year.

## Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza H7 in Australia

Australia has reported an outbreak of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) H7 (N unknown) in a commercial free-range layer farm in New South Wales region. Five thousand of 50,000 hens died. The property has several dams nearby which attract wild fowl and this is possibly the source of infection.

Disease control measures are in place although vaccination is not allowed and tracings continue. Control zones have been put in place in line with OIE guidelines and the Australian Veterinary Emergency Plan. To read more please [click here](#)

## EFSA releases final opinion on French GM study

The European Union's food safety watchdog has identified "Serious defects in the design and methodology" of a study by researchers from Caen University, working under Professor Gilles-Eric Seralini, which found rats fed on a diet of GM maize developed cancer at a higher rate than control animals.

EFSA requested more background information from the research team in October; in response, Professor Seralini made

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a request for all available information on NK603, the GM maize used in his study. On Wednesday (28th November), the EFSA released its review of the study, in which it concluded "It does not meet acceptable scientific standards and there is no need to re-examine previous safety evaluations of genetically modified maize NK603." To view the full press release please [click here](#)

## High feed prices put pressure on Brazilian poultry processors

High feed costs and falling profit margins are creating serious problems for Brazilian poultry processors according to Agra Europe. The price of feed is 45 per cent higher than it was just four months ago and there has been no comparative increase in the retail chicken prices, industry trade association UBABEF reports that 20 companies are facing financial difficulties and processors, have already laid off more than 10 000 workers this year.

There is little improvement in the retail chicken prices expected before early 2013, by which time feed prices are expected to have eased and the supply of chicken to have fallen close to demand.

## Save the date - Pig and Poultry LIVE 2013

Pig and Poultry LIVE 2013, the dynamic one day industry event organised by the Royal Agricultural Society of England and partnered by ABN, will take place on Wednesday 15th May 2013, at Stoneleigh Park.

Running in the interim years between the Pig & Poultry Fair, this conference style event will bring together those at the forefront of the industry to tackle key issues of the day and provide a unique insight into how the sector needs to prepare for the challenges of tomorrow.

The headline debate, technical content, and networking opportunities with speakers, delegates and exhibitors combine to ensure this is a thought provoking and valuable business day not to be missed. Put the date in your diary now, and see press in the new-year for details of how to get involved!

## Events

Tue 4<sup>th</sup> Dec

**Depopulation of Poultry at end of Lay** – Best practice and regulation for depopulation of laying hens at the end of lay as required by Freedom Food – Colliton Barton, Broadhembury, Devon EX14 3LJ. Contact Rachael Watkins Tel 07966558386, email Rachel.watkins@duchy.ac.uk

Tue 8<sup>th</sup> Jan

**Anglian Turkey Association post mortem meeting**, Prested Hall, Feering, Essex, Contact Len Goodman Tel 01621 815740

Thur 17 Jan

**Lancashire Poultry Club meeting**, Wellington Park, Leyland, Lancashire: Contact Jonathan Mason, Tel 07714 429 697, Email thelanchashirepoultryclub@hotmail.co.uk

Wed 23<sup>rd</sup> Jan  
2013

**Yorkshire Egg Producers Discussion Group** -Tibor Cserep- Merck animal health discussing practical vaccination programs for free range producers - Burn Hall Hotel York, YO61 1JB  
Contact Harry Atkinson – Tel 07557159341, Email -harry@thompsons-feeds.co.uk

Wed 17<sup>th</sup> Apr  
2013

**Yorkshire Egg Producers Discussion Group** - Dr Maureen Bain from Glasgow University – composition and factors affecting egg shell quality - Burn Hall Hotel York, YO61 1JB  
Contact Harry Atkinson – Tel 07557159341, Email - harry@thompsons-feeds.co.uk

Wed 3<sup>rd</sup> July

**Yorkshire Egg Producers Discussion Group** - Louis Hurdidge – Probiotic use in poultry  
Burn Hall Hotel York, YO61 1JB. Contact Harry Atkinson – Tel 07557159341, email [harry@thompsons-feeds.co.uk](mailto:harry@thompsons-feeds.co.uk)

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Wed 31<sup>st</sup> Oct

**Pullet Rearing Course** - Workshop looking at the best practice for Pullet Rearing - Colliton Barton Farm, Colliton Barton, Broadhembury, Devon EX14 3LJ contact Rachel Watkins Tel: 07966558386 or Rural Business School 0845 458 7485 Email: rachel.watkins@duchy.ac.uk

## National Poultry Board dates

23 January 2013

27 March

22 May

17 July

18 September

20 November

22 January 2014

## Egg-celling links:

[http://vla.defra.gov.uk/science/sci\\_salmon.htm](http://vla.defra.gov.uk/science/sci_salmon.htm) - Salmonella guidance and control in poultry flocks information

[www.nfuonline.com](http://www.nfuonline.com)

[www.ukturkeys.co.uk](http://www.ukturkeys.co.uk)

[www.greatbritishchicken.co.uk](http://www.greatbritishchicken.co.uk)

[www.farmingdelivers.co.uk/](http://www.farmingdelivers.co.uk/)

[www.britishpoultry.org.uk/](http://www.britishpoultry.org.uk/)

[www.britishpoultry.org.uk/?page\\_id=2052](http://www.britishpoultry.org.uk/?page_id=2052) – BPC Careers in the Poultry Industry pages

[Link to Local Food Directory & Accreditation Scheme](#)

[www.nfuonline.com/x17049.xml](http://www.nfuonline.com/x17049.xml) (Finding local food producers near you).

[www.hgca.com/markets](http://www.hgca.com/markets) (Up dated cereal prices).

[www.worldeggday.com](http://www.worldeggday.com)

[www.britegg.co.uk](http://www.britegg.co.uk)

[www.theranger.co.uk](http://www.theranger.co.uk) British Free Range Egg Producers Association

[www.fwi.co.uk/poultry](http://www.fwi.co.uk/poultry)

<http://randd.defra.gov.uk/Default.aspx?Menu=Menu&Module=Detail&Completed=0&FOSID=3>

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