



# Chick n' Chat

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## Avian Influenza Update:

Currently the index farm has completed C&D procedures and has received approval by the CFIA. This information indicates that the 21 day clock that would allow for restocking has begun. The second infected premises' C&D has commenced as of the 28<sup>th</sup> of February. One round of testing has been conducted in the second 3 km zone and no further infection has been discovered. The 21 day surveillance period has started on the second 3 km zone. Planning for testing of quarantined premises eligible for release in the initial 3 km during the third week of March is underway. Currently, 43 quarantine orders remain in effect. Discussion regarding the 90 day mandatory surveillance plan is also being reviewed. The concern regarding compensation still remains priority to all producers. More information will be released when a definitive plan has been issued.

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## The Mobile Barn: Poultry In Motion

Watch for the mobile barn hosted by Slow Food Vancouver at the Cherry Blossom festival on April 18, 2009. More dates and appearances to be announced.

For bookings for your upcoming events contact Margaret Duins 604-859-9332 or [bccga@telus.net](mailto:bccga@telus.net).

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## Manager's Report:

### **SUPPLY:**

Supply for the latter half of 2008 has been long as the chicken requirement didn't reflect the demand of the latter half of 2007. Subsequently, kill dates have been reduced to 56-57 weeks, and we are breaking eggs as needed to assist with keeping hatch rate high. The 2009 forecast does not show any increase in egg sets for the first half of the year, but may see slightly higher egg sets in the latter half.

### **ALLOCATION:**

The National Allocation set for 2009 in November shows no increase to the chicken industry. The chicken storage stocks are still high, 35.3 million kgs in storage. With the higher prices of chicken and the competition from pork, beef and turkey all indications show a slightly lower productive year. We are also experiencing larger birds being produced, higher eggs per bird (2-3 eggs), and a higher average hatchability. With all these factors to consider, the Commission has decided to roll back placements from 88% to 85% for the next two year cycle starting on April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009.

### **BALANCING OF PRODUCTION:**

Every year the Commission has the task of realigning production with hatchery demand. The Commission receives quarterly updates as to the market shares of chicken per processor/hatchery. We use these percentages to identify imbalances in hatchery supply accordingly. There has been resistance from the producer, or hatchery, as to who shall move to help balance egg flow. Under the direction of the Commission, we may require producers to move to an alternate hatchery to assist with over and under egg supply. This should help with surplus removal and kill age issues. We are requesting full cooperation from the producers and the hatcheries, if and when a move is required.

### **HATCHERY/COMMISSION SUPPLY MEETINGS:**

The industry attempts to meet at least one Wednesday each month to discuss the next 4-8 weeks' egg sets projected. That is the timeframe needed to schedule kill dates. This also assists in trying to balance domestic/import egg flows with the minimum amount of surplus. I do not anticipate a reduction in surplus sent to the breakers this year without tighter kill ages.

**Binder Reminder:**  
Get into the habit of confirming with your hatchery the details of your placements! Think 6-8 weeks ahead!

## Manager's Report:

### PRICING FOR A-90

The live chicken price for this period was set by the BCCMB at \$1.5016/kg. The hatching egg price was set at \$4.688/ dozen (44.8¢ saleable chick) and the day old broiler chick at 65.78¢. The cost recovery parity went from 90.53% to 96.19%.

### NEW ENTRANT PROGRAM:

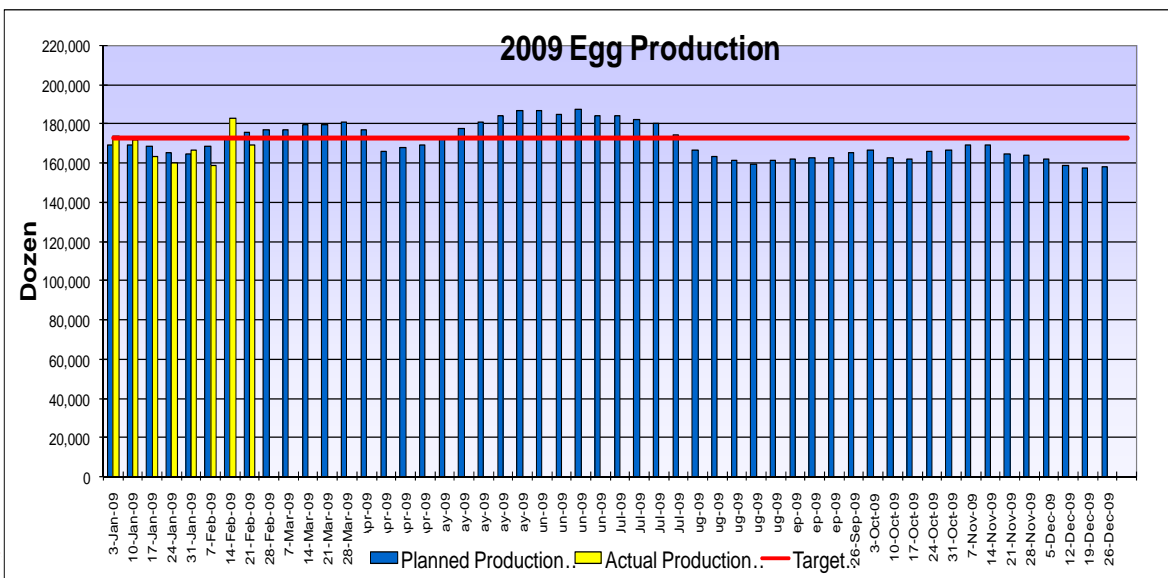
The Commission is close to issuing another new entrant. Upon accumulation of the amount of birds required, the Commission will be contracting an independent third party to advertise and draw, from a pool of applicants, our next 5 successful entrants. When the top candidate is identified, the Commission will issue the new quota.

### CONSOLIDATED ORDERS:

A complete review and update of all our current orders has been done and the draft has been sent to the industry and the FIRB for review and comments. After this process, the Commission will meet with the industry to address issues that may have arisen. Upon completion of the consultation process, the producers will receive their orders.

### STRATEGIC PLAN:

The Commission has retained the services of Bob Burden (Serecon) to facilitate and assist in developing a Strategic Plan for the hatching egg sector. We met in early January for a two day session of discovery and will be continuing on March 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>. We anticipate having a draft completed by the end of the month.



## Variable Kill Age Update:

The Commission has requested a 57 week kill age for the months of March and April. Please remember that while booking kill dates we anticipate a week plus or minus kill date sleeve with the processor to accommodate priority product. The variable kill policy is currently being reviewed by the commission as we are reaching the end of the 2007/2008 quota period.

## Biosecurity and CHEQ Update:

Our recertification year for both Biosecurity and CHEQ has begun. Stephanie is currently booking and conducting audits.. This year, before the audit, take a look at the checklist that is e-mailed out when the audit is booked. This checklist details what paper work needs to be present and what needs to be ready .This will help make your audit time more effective and usually cuts down on the amount of corrective actions.

**Binder Reminder:** Is your barn ready for Baby chickens? Your chicks need warm air, dry sawdust, feed and water upon their arrival. Start getting ready for their arrival the day before!

## Non-Hatching Egg Program

The Commission is getting very close to finalizing a non compliance penalty for all producers. As the difficulty with getting all producers to comply is still out there, this penalty will be enforced. As you all know, the regulation is in the standing orders and non compliance is just not an option.

## National - CHEP

Current issues at the National have been with the AI compensation, as we are awaiting an appeal to be heard with the compensation paid to the Saskatchewan producer.

WTO has and still is an ongoing issue. Animal welfare, Bio security, Allocation system, Federal/Provincial Agreement as Alberta and Saskatchewan are joining, as well as many other is-

## WTO

Due to the current world economic crisis, the WTO Talks are still ongoing with no knowledge as whether they will accomplish a draft modality for a mini ministerial meeting by the end of July. The negotiations cannot be picked up where they left off last year. Until all major participants (US, India, EU, etc) recognize the Round must provide reciprocity, balance, and ambition, they do not see how there can be meaningful progress. This is not yet the case and there is currently no basis for another Ministerial meeting, nor do we believe there should be a quick movement to schedule one. The Commission will keep producers informed as changes occur .



## “More Bucks From Your Cluck!”

Collecting eggs can be monotonous. Once the ipod is in the ears, or walkman when I was an egg collector, the little things blur together and can be easily missed. We are living in a time of financial hardship where every penny and every egg counts. Make more money without spending any!

**1.) Clean your belts:** Contamination can happen while the eggs are rolling down the belts. Feces, spills, and feathers collect there. Try a dry, hard bristled brush and run your belts at a slow speed, moving the brush back and forth. The bristles will remove any of the build up and create a clean place for your eggs.

**.2.) Collect slower:** While collection belts are moving, the eggs can bump into each other creating small cracks. These cracks can be invisible to the naked eye, but under the right circumstances, are a magnet to bacteria causing rot when they are transferred into the incubator.

**3.) Disinfect your Egg Cooler:** Most of the causes of rot are due to the bacteria that you cannot see. Cleaning the surfaces will not help eradicate these bandits from your cool room. Try a disinfectant like Virocide or Virkon, these products both contain properties that leave a cleaning residual even after rinsing, unlike bleach.

**4.) Limit Washed Eggs:** Rather than washing at the end of the collection, try gently wiping the egg as you collect. Use a dry or slightly damp cloth; this ensures that the egg is not submerged in water or agitated, making contamination less likely.

**5.) Disinfect The Egg Washer:** If you are going to use the egg washer ensure it is disinfected. Again, clean is not the same as disinfected. Egg washer nozzles, wash and rinse tanks can all harbor E.coli, coli forms, T. coli form and Pseudomonas.

These are easily managed with routine use of disinfectants.

### Watch For:

In future issues we will be exploring our industry . Fantastic farms is a new series that will feature a farm, a producer and their family and a few things that make their farm fantastic!



Binder Reminder: Watch for residue build up after the egg washer!

## Interesting Articles:

Excerpts from World Poultry Magazine No 12 Vol. 24 2008 pg 26-27 : Managing Males to Maximize Hatchability by Peter Casanovas, Technical Services Director, Cobb Europe  
“The male growth profile is the single most important factor affecting flock fertility and, in fact, the one we can greatly influence with proper management.”

Success in achieving good hatchability with modern broiler breeders comes through using feeding and management programs that allow the male's reproductive system to develop correctly while controlling the tremendous growth potential and capacity to deposit breast muscle. A good start in rearing is crucial for weight uniformity, as well as good organ and skeleton development, which are correlated with future male fertility. From 1-8 weeks of age, standard weights should be achieved, and at eight weeks the males should have developed 75% of their skeletal size. In brown or dark out houses, light intensity and duration should be sufficient for enough feed to be consumed during the first 4-week period. Excess weight at 4-6 weeks of age is, however, not good. Very heavy males will develop big skeletal frames and require more bodyweight and feed during production to maintain proper fleshing condition. Uniformity is increasingly important with the conformation males of today; it determines uniformity in testes growth and will ultimately determine persistency of fertility. This is helped by low stocking densities (4-5 males per square meter. From the age of 16 weeks, stimulate male birds constantly with feed to maintain bodyweight and testes development. It is important to ensure they reach standard bodyweights by the time they are light stimulated. Small males will struggle to compete and will not develop testes properly during the first four weeks after light stimulation, affecting their overall sperm production potential.

### **Transfer and Selection**

When transferring from rearing to production houses consider the following:

- During rearing select your males to leave a male/female ratio of 9.5 at transfer and continue selecting until achieving a mating ratio of 8.5% by 23 weeks.
- Select only healthy males with good skeletal development and no apparent faults.
- Males should also be graded by size at this point. Very small and under- conditioned males, as well as extremely heavy ones, should be selected out. If the population of small birds is significant (20-30%) it is best to place them into a separate house. Small males have the genetic potential to grow and have proper testicular development when placed in a less competitive environment.

- Cull poorly conditioned males regularly; otherwise the feed allocation of these males will be eaten by other males that will, in turn, become overweight.
- Males and females should normally be photo-stimulated at the same age, although it is possible to stimulate males 1-2 weeks earlier if the maturity looks clearly behind that of the females. The bodyweight differential goal from 20-40 weeks should be closer to 500-600 g and past 40 weeks the difference increases to finish between 800-900 g.

### **Male Weight Trends and Feeding in Production.**

One of the most important factors affecting testicular development is the male's growth from light stimulation until full sexual maturity at the end of the light stimulation period (20-28 weeks). A trial where different male weight profiles in production were studied demonstrated that the birds that achieved and maintained the highest testicular development were those grown similarly to the breed standard. In other words, promoting good growth rate from light stimulation to sexual maturity, but ensuring that male weight does not get out of control (not more than 4.1 kg at 30 weeks) and then managing the flock to continue with consistent positive growth (about 25 g/ week) from 30 weeks to depletion (approx. 4.8 kg. at 60 weeks). This type of growth curve will promote enough testicular development while maintaining the males active and physically able to mate. On the other hand, males that had higher growth rates than standard post 30 weeks did not show better testicular development (28.5 g). The worst growth profiles were those that did not allow the males to have sufficient weight from light stimulation to sexual maturity. The worst case scenario was that of males that did not have good early growth and then continued to struggle to grow properly post 30 weeks (final testes of 10.5 g). Therefore, males should never lose weight in production. Even a slight loss in bodyweight will translate in an immediate reduction in sperm quality. Interestingly, those males that did not achieve standard weights prior to sexual maturity did not show good testicular development even if they managed to attain standard weights post sexual maturity (14.4 g final testes weight).

Males should not go over 5.5 kg or mating efficiency begins to decrease, as they are not able to complete their matings. As males get too heavy their body profile becomes more horizontal, unbalanced and they become more inefficient in mating. Evaluating male breast shape by hand is a good way of estimating body condition. Aim to keep a V-shaped breast for as long as possible. The breast should be tight in consistency.

## Watch For:

In future issues we will be exploring our industry . Fantastic farms is a new series that will feature a farm, a producer and their family and a few things that make their farm fantastic!

## Important Dates:

Annual General Meetings located at the Ramada Inn:

The BCBHEPA meeting will be held on Friday May 8th at 11am.

The BCBHEC meeting will be held at 1pm.

Hosted lunch, served at noon.

Annual Banquet located at the Ramada Plaza and Conference Center. Invitations, and information to follow.

## Commission Member

Chair : Peter Whitlock-whitlock@one-name.org

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Member: Calvin Breukelman-cbreukelman@shaw.ca

Member: Brian Bilkes - bbilkes@telus.net

## Producer's Association:

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## Classifieds

Contact Lori at the office with your classified ads for this newsletter.