



Chick n' Chat

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ISSUE 2

November 2009

Important Dates:

Producer General Meeting: February 1, 2010 at 7pm in the Valley Room at the Ramada.

Commission Members:

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

Vice-Chair: Brian Bilkes-bbilkes@telus.net

Member: Chris den Hertog-chris@trine-enterprises.com

Member: Calvin Breukelman-cbreukelman@shaw.ca

Member: Peter Van Hemert-petevanhemert@caylix.com

Producer's Association:

President: Brian Ens-riversidepoultry@shaw.ca

Secretary: Sandra Jansen-association@bcbhec.com

Director: John Wisse-ejwisse@shaw.ca

Director: Hester Mulder-foghorn@netscape.ca

Please Remember

Our Office is closed on Wednesday November 11th for the statutory holiday.

Manager's Report:

SUPPLY:

Supply for 2009 has been long as the chicken demand didn't show the demand we projected. So, we've had to reduce kill dates to 55 /56 weeks, as well as send eggs to the breakers. In forecasting for 2010, we do not see any improvement or increase in egg sets.

ALLOCATION:

The National Allocation was set for 2009 in July with no growth or increases to the chicken industry. The chicken storage stocks were still high making any increases tough. With the higher prices of chicken, the competition from pork, beef and turkey for protein all indications are showing a status quo to a slightly lower productive year. We are also experiencing larger birds being produced, higher eggs per bird (3-4 eggs), as well as higher average hatchability. With this all said, the Commission decided to roll back placements from 88% to 82% for the next two year cycle which started on April 1st, 2009.

Balancing of Production:

Every year the Commission has the task of realigning production with hatchery demands. The Commission receives quarterly updates of the market share of chicken per processor/hatchery. We then use these percentages to realign hatching egg production accordingly. Over the past we have been experiencing resistance from the producer or hatchery as to who shall or needs to move to help balance egg flow. So, under the direction of the Commission, we will be asking producers to move from hatchery to hatchery in assisting over supply for some and undersupply for others. This should help us with surplus removal and kill age issues. We are asking for full cooperation from the producers and the hatcheries, if and when a move is needed.

HATCHERY/COMMISSION SUPPLY MEETINGS:

The industry tries to meet on Wednesday's to get the next four to six weeks egg sets projected, as that is the timeframe needed to schedule kill dates. This also assists us in trying to balance domestic/ import egg flows with the minimum amount of surplus.

COP update:

The Commission and the BCCMB have decided to move forward with our COP updates which are part of our pricing linkage. We should have Serecon complete a new COP survey by mid 2010.

NON HATCHING EGGS:

The Commission is still working with the breakers and our producers regarding acceptable product. We have been seeing fewer and fewer rots since we've been monitoring and sorting through all eggs before shipment to the breakers. We are not paying for poor quality eggs picked up from producers who are repeat offenders of poor quality. The Commission will be penalizing all producers that are non compliant with the non hatching egg program, as soon as we have a penalty in place. The regulation will be in the standing orders and non compliance will have no options.

NATIONAL:

CHEP - Current issues at the National have been with the **AI** compensation appeal to be heard regarding the compensation paid to the Saskatchewan producer. Some of the issues that are being worked on are: **Animal welfare, Bio security, Allocation system, Fed/Prov agreement, CFIA surveillance**, as well as many other issues.

WTO – **Pascal Lamy, Director General** is still pushing very hard for a completion of the **DOHA Development Agenda** with a warning that the **2010** deadline could not be met if the talks maintain the current slow pace. He stated that the current speed with which they are advancing is too slow to arrive at modalities early next year as they need to do to be in a position to wrap this round up next year. So it is going to take some very serious commitments from all countries to reach an agreement by the end of **2010**. The Commission will keep producers informed as changes occur.

Consolidated Orders:

All sent out to producers and industry stakeholders. Please get familiarized with the changes and updates.

Salmonella on farm testing –

The Commission has had meetings with **Bill Cox** and **Mira Leslie** from **MAL**, hatchery managers, and veterinarians on a program to have complete swab tests done on all registered producers barns. These swab tests will be done by our Commission inspectors over the next while. Your complete cooperation would be much appreciated when you get the call.

Association President's Report:

How many of you know what was special about October 28 & 29? As farmers, you should all know the importance of these dates, especially October 29. October 29 was Ag Day in BC. I had the privilege of being in Victoria for these dates, representing BC Hatching Eggs.

On Wednesday, there was a meet and greet hosted by BC Agriculture Council that all the MLA's were invited to. Member groups had both displays and individuals talking about their specific industry. Everything from BC potatoes to cattle; cranberries to mushrooms; blueberries to ornamental trees; chickens to dairy all had representation. Larger groups had larger displays and more people, and smaller organizations had fewer individuals in attendance.

On Thursday, we had breakfast with our provincial agricultural minister, the Honorable Steve Thompson, who talked about what we can do to get the ear of government. Then I was off, with a group, to meet with the Deputy Ministry of Agriculture and a couple of staff. They talked about how their ministry has been restructured and how budget cuts have affected them. One major effect of the government's budget cuts was the loss of advertizing and promotion of Buy BC - a significant loss for all agriculture in BC. My second meeting was with the Agriculture critic, who was very interested in learning more about our sector. I came away from the two days having had my fill of meetings, but learning a number of lessons.

First lesson – we are in the Hatching Egg business. We produce hatching eggs, that is what we need to focus on and not get distracted from. We have a number of side products that also generate some income, but realistically our farms survive or are profitable because we sell hatching eggs. It helps financially to have a small egg program, to get paid for our spent fowl and maybe one day even generate revenue with manure sales. I cannot think of a single hatching egg producer who focuses solely on getting more eggs to go to the breakers, or feeding his birds more so that he can sell more manure. We are hatching eggs producers and that is what we need to focus on.

Second lesson – other ministries have a stake in our business as we have input into their areas. Most of us are now vaccinating for salmonella. The goal is to reduce the number of salmonella cases that are a result of people eating chicken. Ministry of Health is concerned about this and is working with Ministry of Agriculture to minimize the risk to British Columbians. We can also have a positive impact on the health of British Columbians as we have a part in producing world leading healthy chicken. Ministry of Health is also very concerned with where our non-graded, non-hatching eggs are showing up. Their comment was, "If you are hatching egg producers, why are your eggs being sold to and being used in restaurants, and grocery stores?" To bring this point home all one has to do is look at the budgets of Ministry of Agriculture compared to that of Ministry of Health. Agriculture is but a drop in the bucket compared to the ministry of Health's budget. We also have to continue to be good stewards of the environment. Our farms impact land (manure), drinking water (manure), and people around us (dust). There are rules that protect us but we also need to do our best to be good neighbors and good stewards of our environment. We need to focus on being the best hatching egg producers, all the while taking into consideration these other factors.

If you would like to talk more about these things, Ag Day, or anything concerning our industry, please feel free to contact me or another director.

Brian Ens – riversidepoultry@shaw.ca

Inspector's Report:

Crackless Egg

We have a brand new tool that would be a great asset to each and every producer. It is called the Crackless Egg. The Crackless Egg is designed to mimic the size, shape and weight of a "large" egg.

It is designed to be placed anywhere in the egg gathering, conveying or packaging systems, traveling among the eggs as they move along. All the while, the unit is recording the magnitude and direction of all the impacts it receives, and transmitting all information instantaneously to a graphic display on a remote Palm handheld device. Impacts are instantly recorded visually and simultaneously saved in memory. Any location showing impacts of a magnitude capable of damage can be identified and remediation measures taken immediately.



When asked what potential benefits that this device might provide to you the hatching egg producers:

- Identification of points in the lines with impact levels, which can cause breakage. Once identified, remedial action can be quickly and effectively taken.
- Increased income by sending less cracks to the hatchery.

We can run the Crackless Egg through your barn with or without birds. If you would like to take advantage of this excellent tool please call me to set up a time.

Non Hatching Eggs

Everyone has received their identification stickers for non hatching eggs. Thank you to everyone who has cooperated with the improved quality of eggs. All eggs with toe holes, cracks and punctures which are no longer accepted by the breaker will not be paid for. These eggs will be sent for disposal to a mink farm.

Inspections

I am inspecting hatcheries on an ongoing basis for verification of saleable chicks, embrex transfers and cull egg inspections. As you are aware the new orders have a maximum standard of 1% cull eggs. Cull eggs are defined as having one or more of the following characteristics: soft shelled, cracked, rough shelled, misshapen, too large, stained or dirty. The new orders state that if the eggs don't meet the maximum 1% standard they may be shipped back to the farm for re-grading. Please be vigilant on your farm with respect to standards for eggs.

If you have any questions on hatchery inspections or any other matter please don't hesitate to call.

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Poultry In Motion:



Bookings of the Poultry in Motion Barn have increased since 2007, including shows on the Island and in the Interior. Just recently the barn was at the BC Primary Teachers Conference. The focus is on education and school visits. The barn does not have any current bookings through the winter but is tentatively booked in the Spring. Those dates and locations will be included in our next issue!

Steph Stuff:

Our recertification year has been very successful, we currently have 40 farms recertified for both Biosecurity and CHEQ. Some reoccurring corrective actions are water tests and Standard Operating Procedures. Your water test must be done every year for recertification, it does not matter whether you are on municipal water or a well, both programs require an annual passed water test. Your Standard Operating Procedures also must be reviewed with the applicable changes of the program documented. Please keep both of these important standards in mind when preparing for your audit.

2010 will be our full audit year which means we have successfully completed the full audit cycle. A checklist will be e-mailed out to you when you book your audit detailing the requirements of both audits to ensure that you are prepared when I arrive.

There are some changes coming. Animal Care will be introduced to our Producers in the new year along with some changes to our CHEQ program. I will continue to work at making these changes with as little disruption as possible. As required, I will explain all the details and requirements to you. Your patience with these upcoming changes is appreciated. Any questions or concerns please call.

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