

	DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES DIRECTORATE ANIMAL HEALTH
	PROTOCOL FOR THE SALE OF LIVE POULTRY
DIRECTORATE:	ANIMAL HEALTH

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to regulate and improve conditions relating to the sale and handling of live birds which may include culls during production, end of lay culls and live broiler sales.

2. GENERAL CONDITIONS FOR THE SALE OF LIVE BIRDS

1. The buying or selling of more than 5 live chickens for any purpose other than direct slaughter at a registered abattoir is subject to the following conditions that are designed to achieve the desired disease management outcomes and improve traceability.
2. The sellers of live chickens, including commercial farmers, as well as the traders who buy and resell these chickens must register with the Poultry Disease Management Agency (PDMA). The Director Animal Health, of the DAFF has authorised the PDMA to register and keep records of all parties selling and buying live chickens.
3. Only registered sellers and buyers are allowed to trade and it is the responsibility of both the seller and the buyer to ensure that their counterpart is registered.
4. Farmers may only sell live chickens certified as healthy by a veterinarian or Animal Health Technician.
5. Traders may only sell healthy chickens and must keep records as prescribed.
6. Sellers and buyers registering with the PDMA would have to sign an undertaking to adhere to the required control measures.
7. The conditions above apply to sellers of live broiler chickens, live spent layer hens, live spent breeder birds, point of lay pullets and any chickens that may fall into these categories. The conditions also apply to any buyers and traders who buy more than 5 live chickens that fall into the above categories.
8. Producers are required to complete the *REGISTRATION FORM – LIVE CHICKEN TRADE – LIVE CHICKEN SELLERS / COMMERCIAL PRODUCERS* prior to depletion of live birds through sale. This is a once of registration that will be reviewed annually

The Poultry Disease Management Agency is authorised by the Department of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries to register cull chicken traders and commercial producers in respect of the sale of cull chickens

9. Live Bird Traders are required to complete the *REGISTRATION FORM – LIVE CHICKEN SALE – LIVE CHICKEN TRADERS* for a once off registration that will be reviewed annually.
10. Live Bird Traders are also required to complete the *MONTHLY SALES RECONCILIATION FORM – LIVE CHICKEN SALE – LIVE CHICKEN TRADERS* provide on a monthly basis. This form must be submitted to the PDMA by the 15th day of the subsequent month or upon making the first purchase of the next month whichever comes first.
11. Should the *MONTHLY SALES RECONCILIATION FORM – LIVE CHICKEN SALE – LIVE CHICKEN TRADERS* form not be submitted as indicated in 1.11 above the Producers may not continue to sell to that trader.
12. Should a Live Chicken Trader have more than one supplier, the Live Chicken Trader only needs to submit the form to one of the suppliers and confirmation of the said submission will be sent to the other traders by the PDMA upon a telephonic or other request.
13. With each batch of birds the depleted bird buyer must receive a Removal Permit For Live Bird Sales (health declaration) by a veterinarian/state veterinarian/Animal Health Technician/Delegated Authority stating that the birds are free of visible signs of disease at the time of catching and they originate from a flock which conforms to the requirements for controlled disease which DAFF will specify from time to time. These include but are not limited to those relating to Newcastle disease control as well as Notifiable Avian Influenza.
14. The following conditions of the permit indicated in 1.13 apply to Live Bird Buyers and Sellers and are subject to the Conditions indicated in this protocol and those below:
 - a. Flocks must be removed within 36 hours of the date of this permit.
 - b. This permit does not constitute a movement permit across any provincial or international boundaries.
 - c. If any unusual mortality is experienced after removal, the Live Bird Buyer is obliged to STOP selling these birds and consult the nearest State Veterinary Authorities without delay.
 - d. Farmers wishing to have a flock depleted must contact a registered Veterinarian or Animal Health Technician or other delegated authority.
 - e. Live Bird Buyers/Traders will be audited to check that valid documentation was received for all removals.
 - f. Live Birds and eggs on farms within a surveillance zone may not be moved without the express permission of the State veterinarian or other Delegated Authority.

3. Biosecurity Measures

1. As a general bio-security condition, it is recommended that farm live bird sales take place from a dedicated sale area outside of the bio secure zone and that no live bird buyers are allowed into the production facilities.
2. Where the conditions set above in 3.1 cannot be satisfied fully, the producer must consult with the state Veterinarian or other delegated authority to ensure that the additional costs and welfare risks of multiple movements have been considered against the bio-security risks. These conditions are designed to apply to the sale of live broilers, culls during production, depleted broiler and layer breeders and depleted commercial laying hens.

3. When abnormal rates of mortality occur after receipt of birds, the local State Veterinarian, a consulting veterinarian should be requested to investigate the cause of the mortalities and to report to the original seller as well as the buyer.
4. All mortalities should be disposed of in line with local health regulations.
5. No mortalities shall be sold or made available for human consumption.
6. At lairages instant decapitation (or cervical dislocation if competent staff are on site) is accepted as a means of culling injured or sick birds.

4. Welfare Measures

1. It is advisable that all paperwork should be completed prior to catching and loading so that the vehicle may leave the premises immediately after loading is complete.
2. During hot weather, birds should be loaded and transported during the cooler parts of day either in the early morning, late afternoon or at night.
3. During the transport phase the birds must not be without food or water for more than 24 hours measured from the time of last feeding / drinking. This condition must be applied with discretion as the welfare implications of handling birds immediately post feeding must also be considered.
4. The birds are to be transported in clean and sanitised standard size crates (770mm long, 500mm wide, 300mm high), in trolleys or in the relevant containers that qualify for use. This applies to both the producer and the live bird buyer. Live bird sellers should not allow the loading of birds into damaged or otherwise unsuitable containers and are also responsible to ensure that stocking densities do not exceed the guideline limits.
5. The number of birds per standard sized crate should not exceed 6 broiler breeder birds and 10 layer birds. During hot weather the number should be reduced to 5 for broiler breeders and 9 for layer birds. If other containers are used a similar stocking density should be applied.
6. Birds are to be treated with respect and dignity.
7. Birds injured on the farm must be killed humanely, cervical dislocation being an acceptable practice, conditional to the farm having staff competent to carry out the procedure. Any birds injured during transport may not be sold but must be humanely disposed of.
8. Birds must be caught individually. Birds will only be handled by their legs and not any other part of the body. Not more than 4 hens may be carried per person at any one time.
9. The legs of the birds will not be tied as a measure of restraint when sold by any of the live bird sellers, live bird buyers or the retail live bird sellers.
10. The onus is on the live bird buyer to insist on healthy birds and not accept any visibly sick (or injured) birds. This must be supplemented by a declaration of health from a designated authority.
11. The live bird buyer must ensure that the containers are properly secured on the vehicle before it leaves the premises and ensure the birds cannot escape from crates/containers during transport.
12. The birds must be taken to a lairage where food, water and shelter is provided or to an abattoir.

13. All birds must be kept in similar conditions to those in which they lived their productive lives i.e. floor based birds must be kept on floor systems and caged birds must be kept in cages. If held for longer than 24 hours in a facility, broiler breeders must be allowed free movement in a pen large enough for the purpose, this being defined as 6 birds/ m² (ca. 27kg/m²). If layer hens are to be held for longer than 24 hours in a facility they should be kept in cages that ideally have 450cm²/bird floor space).