

Site Operation Report

Introduction

The objective of the activities to be carried out on this farm are: the rearing of birds in a free range system, specifically bred for efficient poultry meat production, from day olds until they are removed off site to the processing facility. This must be carried out as efficiently and economically as possible. In poultry production, this is achieved by the efficient use of inputs (especially feed) and the best housing and management to sell the maximum output of lean carcass meat to the processing factory. To achieve this objective requires:

1. *Have efficient food conversion ratio (feed to lean meat conversion)*
2. *Have fast growth rate to slaughter weight.*
3. *Operate according to current Environmental Legislation.*

To maximise output the following are essential elements for the success of the enterprise;

1. *Genetic potential of the stock*
2. *Minimal disease status*
3. *Good quality buildings and environments.*
4. *High quality feeds.*
5. *Good management and stockmanship.*

Size of Development

The layout of these yards is shown on the layout plan.

The activity on the site is to be the rearing of poultry in a licensable installation. The farm is located in a rural area. The installation will comprise animal houses, ancillary structures and equipment necessary for the accommodation, management and husbandry of the animals, and the administration of the enterprise. The structures and equipment on the site were designed and installed for the purpose of rearing poultry for sale off the site. This poultry farm has received planning permission to operate as a 75,000 place free range broiler farm and planning permission has recently been applied for to increase this to operate as a c. 90,000 place free range broiler farm.

While production on the site is to be continuous, the presence of operative staff and deliveries / collections will normally be between 06.00 and 20.00 hours. Ventilation and feeding operations to operate continuously on site.

The principal inputs will be feed which is supplied by the processor (e.g. cereals, soya protein), water, veterinary medicines and a modest amount of energy (electricity and gas) for heating. Water for stock and for washing is to be acquired from the Stranooden Scheme. Animal houses are insulated to minimise use of heating fuel. The outputs are chickens (primary product) and animal manure (secondary product).

Some animals die of natural causes before maturity. Dead animal carcasses are to be placed in a closed skip on the farm before being transported off site by College Proteins. There will be a programme in place for the control of vermin and pests in the site. There will be no significant pollution caused by the activity. It will be policy to minimise waste accumulation and to recycle as much as possible, but the recyclable volume is small.

Storm water from roofs and paved yards is not / will not be permitted to flow over soiled areas and is to be discharged via land drainage to the adjoining watercourses. There will be no process effluent discharge from the site. Normal respiration gasses and odours will emit from the houses and from manure, particularly during movement of the manure. Odours emitted from the site will not interfere with amenities outside the site boundary.

The practices and technology used in the site for the rearing of stock and for the control of emissions from the installation are the best available that the enterprise can afford.

Poultry manure is a rich source of plant nutrients and is a valuable fertiliser for farmland. In certain situations the organic manure from this site may be utilised as a fertiliser source in accordance with the regulations set out in Statutory Instruments S.I. No 605 of 2017 as amended for the purposes of efficient grass/crop production. All of the required information to be maintained as outlined in S.I 605 of 2017 as amended will be kept by the licence applicant. The licence applicant/contractor will also provide all required details to the farmer receiving the organic fertiliser.

Alternatively organic manure from this site will be removed from the site for composting and used in the mushroom industry. Should this occur all the relevant records will be maintained.

If activity on the site were to cease, arrangements would be made so that the cessation would be integrated with normal production. The house would simply not be refilled after the last batch of birds was removed. At this stage all litter/organic manure would be removed as per normal practice. It would be organised so that at this stage the minimum amount of inputs are present on site. All remaining inputs will be returned to the supplier where possible; otherwise all materials will be disposed of from the site in accordance with licence requirements.

Minimal Disease Status

The day old chicks are to be delivered from the hatchery where they have been hatched under clean hygienic conditions. The birds are to be moved into a clean house and all hygiene and bio-security measures are taken to maintain this in so far as possible.

All stock entering the Unit will be free from all major diseases as the day old chicks are sourced from specialised supply farms. To minimise the risk of personnel bringing infection into the poultry farm all visitors are banned with the exception of essential personnel such as veterinarians and servicemen. All visitors must sign a register.

Designated lorries are used to deliver feed to the minimal disease units.

The final part of maintaining health within the unit is the necessity to fully clean out after each batch is removed. This avoids the build up of bacteria and viruses which challenge the incoming stock and which may affect their growth efficiency. On these units special emphasis will be laid on providing a system that ensures adequate time for cleaning, disinfection and resting between successive batches. The cleaning of the houses is a three stage process, whereby;

- 1. The houses are physically emptied of all of the litter and the house is brushed/blown down to remove as much of the litter and dust as possible, so as to minimise water use hereafter.*
- 2. The house is washed down and disinfected. Soiled water collection facilities are available to collect any soiled water arising from this process.*
- 3. The houses are left to dry out before the next crop/batch of birds, up to 2 weeks after emptying. They are then bedded immediately prior to restocking.*

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