



## AUSTRALIAN CHICKEN MEAT FEDERATION INC.

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## Industry Position Statement on Animal Welfare

### Definitions and Scope

High standards of bird welfare and strong economic performance go hand in hand.

**Ensuring that chickens are well fed, healthy and comfortable is in the best interests of both birds and growers.**

### Situation Analysis and Background

**Meat chickens are never raised in cages.**

Commercial meat chickens are raised in large, clean, temperature regulated sheds. Free range chickens have access to barn yards as well as their shed.

Standards are in place for bird welfare, including:

- Government/industry endorsed **Codes of Practice**, which set out how meat chickens are cared for throughout their lives, including housing, feed, transportation and processing.
- An industry-developed model welfare audit program covering hatchery, breeder rearing, breeder laying, growing, pick-up, transport and processing. Companies are encouraged to incorporate relevant elements in their own quality plans.
- All companies incorporate elements of good practice for bird welfare in their standard procedures.

Standards ensure that the consideration of the birds' health is of paramount importance. This includes keeping them in comfortable conditions by managing factors such as temperature, humidity and air-flow and quality. It also covers ensuring that they are provided with water, shelter, and a high quality diet that exactly matches their physiological needs. These factors have an important effect on the welfare of the birds as well as on the overall efficiency of the farming operation.

## **Policy Statements on Animal Welfare:**

The industry meets three primary objectives by caring for livestock in a welfare-friendly manner:

- To maintain respect for the birds, so they do not suffer.
- To ensure flocks grow as efficiently as possible and they are not damaged in the process.
- To recognise and respect consumer, retailer and general community attitudes and expectations regarding the humane treatment of livestock farmed specifically for consumption.

Birds must receive prompt and appropriate attention to prevent and treat disease. Sick or injured birds that cannot be adequately or successfully treated are culled quickly and humanely so that they do not suffer. Members must ensure that their birds do not suffer any unnecessary pain, distress, fear or physical injury.

### **Meat chickens are never raised in cages.**

While broiler or meat chickens are reared and processed specifically for human consumption, the industry is committed to ensuring that this is done humanely.