

***** MEDIA RELEASE *****

THURSDAY, 5 JUNE 2014

Australian Chicken Meat Industry Participates in the Development of Global Environmental Guidelines for Poultry

5 June 2014 - World Environment Day

The Australian chicken meat industry and the Rural Industries R&D Corporation (RIRDC) have partnered with the International Poultry Council and International Egg Commission to bring Australia's expertise and experience to the table in the development of guidelines for assessing the environmental burdens of poultry production. The industry's expertise in Life Cycle Assessment methodology, conducted previously at a local level, was of great benefit to the development of the global Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) draft guidelines, which have recently been released for public review.

The international guidelines provide a consistent approach for assessing the environmental impacts of livestock supply chains. The guidelines for poultry are one of three guidelines developed as part of the FAO led LEAP (Livestock Environmental Assessment Performance) project, the other two covering animal feed and small ruminants.

As the largest supplier of meat for domestic consumption in Australia, the chicken meat industry recognises the significant responsibility it has for ensuring its environmental impacts are minimized, while at the same time ensuring that food security is not compromised. In responding to this challenge, the industry undertook a project to quantify the environmental impacts of Australian chicken meat, using a Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) approach. The project was funded by the RIRDC Chicken Meat Program.

The research quantified the greenhouse gas emissions, and energy and water use from chicken meat production in Australia. It thus provided the industry with an understanding of where it could make the biggest difference in terms of reducing impacts in the future.

This background research, published two years ago, placed the Australian chicken meat industry in a prime position to contribute to the development of global guidelines for the assessment of environmental impacts in the sector.

Integral to the Australian LCA research and a member of the Technical Advisory Group for Poultry on the FAO project, is Australian based Stephen Wiedemann, an agricultural scientist with FSA Consulting.

Mr Wiedemann comments, "LCA is a method to calculate environmental burden of a whole system, for example, poultry production, and so far there has been no consistency globally in the way that assessments have been conducted. The FAO project has significant benefits. Firstly it provides guidelines that will underpin future research and allow harmonisation within the poultry sector in terms of how environmental impacts are conducted. Secondly, these guidelines provide a framework

that can underpin possible future product environmental footprinting of food products, and for monitoring improvements in industry performance in terms of its environmental impacts.”

Commenting further Mr Wiedemann says, “The collaboration and funding provided by the RIRDC Chicken Meat Program, the International Poultry Council and the International Egg Commission for the international project, together with the collaboration of experts from a range of countries, has been invaluable in helping to advance research methods in this complex area. Furthermore, the direct involvement of Australian experts has ensured maximum comparability between Australian and global research methodologies.”

Resources:

- Visit <http://www.chicken.org.au/page.php?id=249> to hear Stephen Wiedemann comment on chicken meat production and its environmental impact.
- "Using Life Cycle Assessment to Quantify the Environmental Impact of Chicken Meat Production", G Poad, S Wiedemann and E McGahan, RIRDC, April 2012
<https://rirdc.infoservices.com.au/items/12-029>
- “Greenhouse gas emission and fossil energy demand from poultry supply chains – Guidelines for quantification”, draft for public review, Livestock Environmental Assessment and Performance Partnership (LEAP), FAO, 2014 <http://www.fao.org/partnerships/leap/public-review/en/>

The ACMF is the peak coordinating body for participants in the chicken meat industries in Australia and recognised as the industry representative by the Australian Government.

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For more information visit www.chicken.org.au/media

To arrange an interview with;

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or
- Stephen Wiedemann, Agricultural Scientist, FSA Consulting

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