



The Poultry Club OF GREAT BRITAIN

Patron: HRH The Prince of Wales

PRESS RELEASE – IMMEDIATE: Poultry Club of Great Britain liaisons meet with DEFRA

The Poultry Club of Great Britain (PCGB) has hailed the results of a meeting with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), which took place in London yesterday.

The meeting followed the appointment of PCGB Council Members Jed Dwight and Lee Grant as liaisons to the Government Department last week, and was organised so that introductions could be made, a strong relationship sustained and answers to issues concerning Avian Influenza obtained.

Speaking afterwards, Lee Grant said:

“The PCGB has always had a strong relationship with DEFRA, and it was great to be able to ensure that that relationship continues to go from strength to strength, in the interest of all of the Poultry Clubs members, as well as poultry keepers more widely.

I feel that myself and Jed managed to gain important answers for the Club’s members at yesterday’s meeting, and a letter will be going out to all members soon.”

Adding, Jed Dwight said:

“On top of this important meeting, the PCGB has managed to build important bridges with the NFU, and as a result will be sending the following advice (<http://www.nfuonline.com/assets/81907>) – recently released by the NFU – out to all of our members together with the update from yesterday’s meeting.

We are also actively arranging to meet with the NFU team at Stoneleigh, and look forward to building upon this relationship, with both sides keen to work closely together in future.”

Important notes from the meeting held on the 20th January 2017 include:

1. Improved communication to poultry keepers:

DEFRA officials confirmed that communication to all poultry keepers has been difficult, namely due to many keepers having not provided their full details, including email addresses and phone numbers. The Department do not have the ability to write out in letter form to all of those included on the list. As a result of this, only those on the DEFRA register that have supplied an email or mobile phone will have received alerts. We therefore urge members to ensure that their details are up to date on the register, either by contacting DEFRA or their local Trading Standards. In addition, keepers can register for the SMS 'Disease Alert' and they will receive notifications of outbreaks at the earliest opportunity: http://animalhealth.system-message.co.uk/AH_subscribe_index.php

2. Protection of pure breeds of poultry in the event of a cull:

Unlike for previous outbreaks – such as Foot and Mouth – the Department has no appetite for, nor policy in place that would result in compulsory culling - in this case of poultry - within the surveillance or protection zones (only on infected sites/flocks). Should birds situated on an infected site – but not necessarily be infected themselves – be under threat, the Department Vet will properly take into account whether these birds are listed on the Farm Animal Genetic Resources Committee (FAnGR) ‘at risk’ list, in which case, should results confirm that these birds have not been infected, attempts will be made to assist in their preservation. If found to be in this position, breeders should strongly advise if their breeds are included within this list.



The Poultry Club

OF GREAT BRITAIN

Patron: HRH The Prince of Wales

3. Compensation in the event of a cull:

Although understanding, as breeders ourselves, that many PCGB members would not be interested in compensation, with the protection of the breeds that they act as guardians for being paramount, this concern had been raised, and so clarity was sought.

DEFRA officials confirmed that if a cull were to take place and healthy birds (not showing signs of AI) were culled - compensation will be paid in accordance with DEFRA's schedule for commercial birds. In the case of purebred poultry - birds will be valued before the cull. This valuation will take into account current values and information is likely to be sought from experts such as breed clubs. Having relevant Breed Club membership and PCGB leg-rung birds demonstrates a commitment that may be seen as favourable in this situation. For example, if a member were to seek compensation for a particular bird and was not a member of that breed club, it is likely only the commercial value will be paid.

4. The list of breeds included in FAnGR's 'at risk' list

The PCGB will be working closely together with both the Rare Breeds Survival Trust (RBST) and FAnGR to ensure that all relevant breeds are included on relevant lists, and will ensure that members and breed clubs are kept informed.

5. Shows involving eggs only:

Egg only shows continue to be permitted, but exhibitors and organisers are asked to consider proper bio-security measures. DEFRA will shortly be sending a letter to the PCGB more fully addressing egg shows in the event of an AI outbreak.

6. Important advice for poultry keepers:

It is important for keepers to acknowledge that they have a legal obligation to follow the policy instruction provided by the relevant authorities. These requirements can be seen by following this link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/avian-influenza-bird-flu-in-winter-2016-to-2017>. Further advice that DEFRA officials stressed during the talks included keeping birds away from water courses and ponds, feeding birds inside, and keeping species separate i.e keeping waterfowl separate from other species of poultry. Weight was also given to minimising the 'human risk' through sound bio-security measures when visiting flocks and related events.

7. Devolved Authorities:

DEFRA officials confirmed that management across the devolved authorities, particularly those in England, Wales and Scotland, are closely interlinked in terms of AI restrictions. Those in Northern Ireland addressed by DAERA can exhibit differences, and as such it was advised that a meeting between the PCGB and DAERA officials should be arranged. Northern Irish PCGB Council Member Neal Adams will take part in these talks, taking into account the advice included within this release.

8. Overview for all poultry keepers:

All current restrictions will be reviewed by DEFRA in mid-February, and advice will be provided to the PCGB as a major stakeholder at this time. This advice will be passed on accordingly.