

Have your say on draft guidelines for the poultry industry

The South African Bureau of Standards (Sabs) has called for comments on the draft South African Standard (DSS) 1758 that focuses on the welfare of chickens.



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"Chicken is one of the most consumed proteins in South Africa and it is important that there are national specifications that guide the breeding, rearing and production practices of chicken farming, especially in commercial enterprises," said Sabs lead administrator Jodi Scholtz said on Thursday.

The South African poultry industry is estimated to be worth R1.7bn annually, with several large commercial enterprises and hundreds of local small-scale farmers making up the sector.

The Poultry Master Plan, which was signed in 2019 during the second inaugural South African Investment Conference in Johannesburg, expresses the commitment by the government to drive local production, grow export and to implement regulatory reforms in the industry.

"Sabs 1758 provides guidelines for the adoption of good agricultural practices, quality management of the chicken through its life stages and is cognisant of the contribution that the poultry industry makes towards food security.

"The Sabs foresees that once the standard is published, where the welfare of the chickens becomes a priority – then the risk for disease, injury, pain and suffering of the poultry reduces," said Scholtz.

As part of efforts to support the industry, the Sabs, through its Technical Committee (TC) has developed a draft South African Standard (DSS) 1758 that focuses on the welfare of chickens.

This locally developed draft standard is currently at the public enquiry stage and comments close on Monday, 22 March 2021. The public is welcome to review the draft standard and submit their comments via the www.sabs.co.za Sabs website.

All comments will be reviewed and considered before the draft standard is published. The publication date of the standard will be dependent on the volume and nature of the comments.

The draft standard was developed by Technical Committee 1094, which is responsible for the drafting of standards regarding the welfare of all livestock.

The draft standard is a 53-page document that covers the following areas:

- Production performance against breed standards
- Condition of the chicken (behaviour, body and plumage condition, eggshell condition, mortality and morbidity rates, bone and foot problems, genetics, chicks and hatcheries)
- The environment of the practice
- Management practices
- Daily care of the poultry
- Euthanasia
- Live bird sales
- Health controls

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