

USDA Releases Small Enterprise Chicken Study

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has released its first-ever national report on poultry operations with 1,000 to 19,999 chickens. Entitled *Small Enterprise Chicken Study 2007*, the report was produced by the National Animal Health Monitoring System (NAHMS) and takes an in-depth look at biosecurity practices and bird movement in this segment of the U.S. poultry industry. A total of 1,789 operations responded to the study's survey. Of those responding, 1,191 completed the questionnaire and had chickens present from October 2006 to September 2007. Here are a few highlights of the *Small Enterprise Chicken Study*:

- Nearly all large operations (10,000-19,999 chickens) and over one-half of small operations (1,000-9,999 chickens) operated under a contract with a poultry company (95.8 and 54.1 percent, respectively).
- More than half of the operations (55.2 percent) were contract farms with breeding chickens, and 27.4 percent of operations were contract farms without breeding chickens.
- Independent (noncontract) operations accounted for 17.4 percent of operations.
- More than two-thirds (68.6 percent) of independent (noncontract) operations had chickens for table-egg production compared with less than 10 percent of contract operations.
- Two-thirds of contract operations (66.9 percent) had breeding chickens compared with only 18.3 percent of independent (noncontract) operations.
- Nearly half of independent (noncontract) operations (46.5 percent) had multiple types of birds on the premises, while nearly all contract operations (97.0 percent) were limited to a single bird type.

- About half of independent (noncontract) operations allowed birds outside access, while about 3 percent of contract operations did so. About two-thirds of operations with any birds other than chickens allowed birds outdoor access, compared with less than 10 percent of operations with chickens only.
- Live birds were permanently removed from the operation at some time during the year on 8 of 10 small operations and 9 of 10 large operations.
- The most common channels for removing live birds were directly to slaughter and returning birds to the contractor (50.8 and 42.7 percent of operations that removed birds, respectively).

The Small Enterprise Chicken Study 2007 is available at the NAHMS Web site: <http://nahms.aphis.usda.gov>.

Note to Stakeholders: Stakeholder announcements and other APHIS information are available on the Internet. Go to the APHIS home page at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov> and click on the "Newsroom" button. For additional information on this topic, contact Brad Doty at (970)494-7244 or by e-mail at brad.c.doty@aphis.usda.gov.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.