

INFOSheet

Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
www.omafra.gov.on.ca

Ontario Hatchery and Supply Flock Policy

Babak Sanei, Lead Veterinarian, Disease Prevention – Poultry

The Ontario Hatchery and Supply Flock Policy can be traced back to 1928, when blood testing was first carried out to identify Pullorum and Fowl Typhoid reactor birds in breeder flocks. There were 193 flocks registered in 1928.

By the 1980's, Ontario was declared a "Pullorum-Typhoid free zone" and Pullorum Disease and Fowl Typhoid were placed on the "reportable diseases list" under the Health of Animals Act of the federal government. The last positive Pullorum isolation in Ontario was in 1971.

The main objective of the Ontario Hatchery and Supply Flock policy is to assist in ensuring that Ontario hatchery supply flocks continue to serve as a reliable source of poultry hatching eggs and Ontario hatcheries maintain high standards of sanitation and disease prevention. This policy was developed jointly by industry, provincial and federal governments in order to establish standards for the valuation of poultry breeding flocks and hatchery products. The Ontario Hatchery and Supply Flock Policy is supervised by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. The policy provides monitoring and testing of Ontario poultry breeding flocks to establish flock status for *Salmonella Pullorum* / typhoid under the regulations of the Federal Health of Animals Act.

All new poultry breeder flocks must be registered and mortality records of the first 14 days provided. If this two-week mortality exceeds 3% for chickens or 5% for turkey flocks, then at least 20 of the dead birds must be submitted to the Animal Health Laboratory for culture. All hatcheries with a setting capacity of 1,000 eggs or more must be registered and fluff samples at six-week intervals must be submitted to Animal Health Lab for the detection of *Salmonella* and *pseudomonas* bacteria. This is outlined in the Health of Animals Regulations, sect. 79.16.

Salmonella Pullorum is no longer the only *Salmonella* serotype of concern to the poultry industry. The so-called "paratyphoid" salmonella have become important from a public point of view, even though they may not cause mortality and/or sickness in poultry flocks. With these "paratyphoid" salmonella, culturing the environment of the poultry house has become more common and is considered more efficient and less invasive to detect possible infection or colonization. Environmental sampling provides a good predictive evidence of possible infection, however, it is considered only as an indirect indicator.

In Ontario, breeder supply flocks are also monitored for detection of salmonella through collecting environmental samples from poultry houses at certain age(s).

Bringing the Resources of the World to Rural Ontario