POULTRY CRC PROGRAM 3B - MINIMISING THE IMPACT OF POULTRY PRODUCTION ON THE ENVIRONMENT

I. FARRAN¹,²

This is a wide reaching research program to minimise the environmental impacts of poultry production on public amenity and health while also providing industry with the knowledge and tools to manage and minimise odour and dust emissions. The program will also investigate ways of adding value to poultry farm (egg and chicken meat) waste products. Initial work will involve an extensive review of Australian and overseas developments and technologies for measuring, modelling and controlling odour and dust emissions. A review of the public health risks identified with the use of poultry farm waste products will also be conducted. The Australian Poultry Industries at a farm production level have received considerable scrutiny with respect to environmental impacts in the past decade. The environmental impacts of most concern are the community amenity issues of dusts and odours, and public health aspects of pathogens in the food chain from the use of poultry manures as organic fertilisers. The Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation Chicken Meat Program and the Australian Egg Corporation Ltd have funded a number of short term projects in environmental management over the past ten years. The farming managers in each state of the national integrated chicken meat companies in recent years have had to become more involved in the management of environmental issues at a state and local government level, within communities and at individual farm levels. The Australian research capability in poultry environmental issues is not well developed with previous project work done on an ad hoc basis and at this stage no industry champions have been identified. There are research groups who have the expertise from other industries to make a significant contribution to the CRC program, these researchers need to be identified and assessed for the program. The development of this Poultry CRC gives the poultry industries the opportunity to develop an environmental research program over a five to six year time period with a multidisciplinary approach. This project is about developing such a program in consultation with poultry farmers, poultry processing companies, planners, industry regulators and a team of multidisciplinary researchers and “change” consultants. The alternative is a program of short term projects of single discipline approach, with little integration and a hit and miss outcome. There is a need to objectively review the previous environmental research projects carried out in Australia and overseas in the areas of odour and dust measurements, odour and dust reduction technologies, odour and dust dispersion modelling, pathogen transfer and risk assessment, issues around adding value to the waste products, and the use of environmental management systems to drive change in the industry and improve environmental performance.

¹ Australian Poultry Cooperative Research Centre; ² Agribiz Engineering, Geelong, Vic 3220