



Press Release

UPDATE ON SECOND OUTBREAK OF AVIAN INFLUENZA AT ASTRAL POULTRY BREEDING FARM

24 August 2017: Astral Foods Limited (Astral), a leading Southern African integrated poultry producer, reported an outbreak of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) H5N8 in June 2017 affecting one of its poultry breeding farms in Villiers. Despite extreme measures taken to reduce the risk of any further infections on any other Astral farms, a second outbreak of H5N8 was confirmed on 1 August 2017 on an Astral poultry breeding facility known as *Welbedacht*, situated on the banks of the Grootdraai dam just outside Standerton in Mpumalanga.

Astral would like to update all stakeholders on the situation regarding the HPAI infection reported on the *Welbedacht* farm. It was previously reported that the outbreak on *Welbedacht* was isolated to a single poultry shed, and that the outbreak was being managed in an effort to contain the spread of the infection to the rest of the farm. Astral can report that notwithstanding a huge effort and numerous measures implemented to contain the infection to the one affected shed, the infection spread to other poultry sheds on the farm. The farm remains under quarantine and Astral has depopulated the affected sheds.

Gary Arnold, Managing Director Agriculture, commented: "As HPAI viruses can be airborne it has proven very difficult to control the spread of the infection to neighbouring poultry sites in close proximity to the original outbreak on the farm. Numerous measures were implemented in an attempt to control the infection. Such measures included disinfecting the immediate environment in and around the poultry sheds with chemical solutions and other agents that could limit the spread of the virus. In addition strict people movement protocols on the farm were implemented".

Notwithstanding the two outbreaks experienced by Astral, all the contingency plans have ensured continued supply of hatching eggs and broiler day old chicks to the broiler farms, and as such will not have any impact on broiler supply to Astral's poultry processing plants or the supply of chicken to the market. All stakeholders are reminded that this infection has impacted breeding stock and not broiler birds destined for meat production.

Arnold, stated that: "The H5N8 infection in South Africa has spread rapidly impacting commercial producers, captive hobby birds, backyard poultry, ostriches and wild birds. At least 22 confirmed outbreaks have been recorded across the country, with the latest outbreaks affecting commercial laying hens in the table egg industry. One of the latest confirmed cases has affected a farm located in KwaZulu-Natal near Vryheid, and over the

past 48 hours a new infection has been reported in the Western Cape in commercial layer hens, with a further suspected case in commercial ducks in the same region. The virus has now been detected in Mpumalanga, Gauteng, North West, KwaZulu-Natal and the Western Cape. Astral continues to actively engage with Government to regulate the use of vaccination programmes against the virus, as well as short term measures that will ensure continuity of broiler supply to our markets. Vaccination to protect high value breeding stock in South Africa has large scale support in the local poultry industry, and this will go a long way to ensuring food security, and to curb job losses as a result of production capacity losses in this industry. Technical teams from both industry and within Government are engaging actively on this topic”.

Contact: **Astral Foods Limited**
Gary Arnold (Managing Director: Agriculture)
Tel: 082 779 8358

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Company background

Astral Foods Limited (Astral), a leading South African integrated poultry producer, with key activities in animal feed pre-mixes, manufacturing of animal feeds, broiler genetics, production and sale of day-old chicks and hatching eggs, with integrated breeder and broiler production operations, abattoirs as well as sales and distribution of various key poultry brands. The brands in the Astral stable include:

- County Fair
- Festive
- Goldi
- Earlybird
- Mountain Valley
- Ross Poultry Breeders
- National Chicks
- Meadow Feeds
- Tiger Animal Feeds (Zambia)
- Tiger Chicks (Zambia)
- Meadow Feeds (Mozambique)
- Mozpintos (Mozambique)
- CAL Labs
- Provimi SSA