

**PRESS STATEMENT ISSUED BY:
POULTRY INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION OF NEW ZEALAND
&
EGG PRODUCERS FEDERATION OF NEW ZEALAND INC.**

RE: AVIAN INFLUENZA H5N1

Thursday 27 October 2005. Auckland, New Zealand. The Poultry Industry Association of New Zealand (PIANZ) and the Egg Producers Federation of New Zealand (EPF) are keen to include a domestic perspective in respect to news reports of 'bird flu' incidents around the world. Countries that are experiencing incidents of the pathogenic H5N1 strain have issued precautionary health warnings over the treatment and consumption of poultry products such as meat and eggs,

New Zealand industry spokesperson Michael Brooks says it is "important to place the global story in context of our domestic situation as many members of the public may not differentiate from international warnings such as those issued this week by the World Health Organisation (WHO) and their own situation at home".

In response to recent WHO warnings to "avoid raw eggs" and ensure that "poultry meat is cooked thoroughly", Mr Brooks says that such warnings whilst relevant to specific 'at risk' countries, New Zealander's do not need to change their current consumption or treatment of poultry products.

Mr. Brooks says that industry together with New Zealand Food Safety Authority have championed campaigns about the need to cook poultry thoroughly, especially during the summer barbeque season. "New Zealander's have no need to treat their poultry consumption any differently than they have in the past. We do not import raw poultry or egg products and to date enjoys the unique position of being free from the three major poultry diseases which includes Avian Influenza. This position is protected by stringent biosecurity measures and import barriers" says Mr Brooks.

##END##

Regular updates on the New Zealand response to 'bird flu' issues can be viewed at: www.pianz.org.nz and www.epfnz.org.nz

Further information and comment:

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