



OIA20-0099

17 April 2020

Rebecca Ong
fyi-request-12296-19ee7bc1@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Rebecca Ong

OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT REQUEST

Thank you for your email of 24 February 2020 requesting information relating to fast-growing broiler breeds. You specifically requested the following:

I would like to make a request regarding the research you've done regarding the detrimental effects of using fast-growing broiler breeds on meat chicken health and welfare, including what scientific literature you've reviewed in relation to this topic. I would also like to know what actions MPI plan to take on the issue of fast-growing broiler breeds and if MPI plans to take no action, then why they are taking no action?

Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA) and is refused pursuant to section 18(d) of the OIA, as the information requested is publicly available.

The link to the meat chickens code of welfare, developed by the National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee (NAWAC) is below. This code sets the minimum standards that everyone in charge of meat chickens needs to meet in New Zealand.

<https://www.agriculture.govt.nz/protection-and-response/animal-welfare/codes-of-welfare/>

At this link you can also access the code report which outlines the key deliberation that NAWAC had and the relevant literature that NAWAC considered when developing the code. The code and report contain information regarding the selective breeding of meat chickens for growth and the effects on their welfare.

In addition NAWAC has also released an opinion paper on selective breeding entitled 'NAWAC opinion on animal welfare issues associated with selective breeding' which can be found at the following URL:

<https://www.agriculture.govt.nz/dmsdocument/17053-nawac-opinion-on-animal-welfare-issues-associated-with-selective-breeding>

In this paper, NAWAC discusses and makes recommendations on the issues relating to selective breeding of poultry, including meat chickens. NAWAC was established to provide independent advice to the Government minister responsible for animal welfare. The recommendations will be considered at the next review of the Code of Welfare.

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The above link also provides information about NAWAC, clarifies the distinction with MPI and why NAWAC published these documents and not MPI.

This paper represents the collective opinion of NAWAC. It has been published because selective breeding was one of several issues identified by NAWAC for which, in order to fulfil its advisory function, development and documentation of a formal Committee position was needed.

You have the right under section 28(3) of the OIA to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of our decision.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Stephen Cobb', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Stephen Cobb
Director Animal Health & Welfare (Acting)