



Media Release

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Egg Group partners with Bio-Cogen to provide spent hen renewable energy solution

The Victorian Farmers Federation's (VFF) Egg Group has entered into discussions with Bio-Cogen Pty Ltd to explore the opportunities in designing, building, owning and operating a bio-energy plant to provide the Victorian egg industry with an environmentally friendly, cost effective and humane solution for the disposal of spent hens.

VFF Egg Group President Brian Ahmed said the Group and Bio-Cogen have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to work together exclusively in undertaking a feasibility study of the project.

"The Victorian egg industry is crying out for a contemporary and environmentally friendly manner of disposing of spent hens. Until recently there was a demand for boiler meat and producers had no problem in disposing their spent hens through a number of processors who in turn had markets for the end product," Mr Ahmed said.

"However the demand for boiler meat is steadily declining, while our industry continues to grow. With the number of spent hens increasing it is imperative that an alternative method of disposal is found, otherwise the cost of disposal of spent hens will eventually threaten the financial viability of egg farmers.

"Under the new agreement, Bio-Cogen will provide capable resources to conduct the feasibility assessment and manage project development. The VFF Egg Group will provide information to support development work, negotiate a feedstock agreement and determine the level of equity investment likely to be available.

"The feasibility study will research the disposal of spent hens through an anaerobic digestion process, which will produce energy and fertiliser, consequently earning renewable energy certificates. On completion of a successful feasibility study Bio-Cogen will construct the plant at a location determined by the study.

"The plant will have a 2MW capacity, will cost between \$12 - 15 million and will generate 50 jobs during construction and at least 6 full time jobs throughout the life of the plant. Bio-Cogen has access to multiple sites across regional Victoria including an industrial site in Bendigo.

"A number of VFF Egg Group members have indicated that they will take up ownership interest in the project by taking control of the problem and ensuring that we do not find ourselves in this position again.

"I encourage all egg producers to get behind this exciting project, recognise the need for appropriate disposal of spent hens, and help create a more sustainable industry into the future," Mr Ahmed concluded.

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