

Southend Poultry Farm
Charfield
GL12 8LL

Email:

Direct line:

Date: 24th March 2017

Dear Producer / Member,

Following several conversations today, both at home & abroad, I would like to put my position as Chairman of Eggs & Poultry Meat Copa Cogeca over the future of Free Range and the Marketing Standards.

My number one position is that the Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO) of the Country or Region should decide when hens should be housed and when they should be released. His order should null and void the Marketing Regulations. If the hens stay in longer than 12 weeks this is being ordered because the CVO believes the danger to the national flock is still real, it is 'NOT THE PRODUCERS DECISION' – the producer is doing it because he has been ordered to do so. So the farm should, and must, maintain to its FREE RANGE STATUS and not be reduced to BARN status and hence potential loss of premium. The above is the logical solution but no one is listening – so for this reason we have been discussing the addition of Verandas because at a meeting on Tuesday with the Commission, they asked the industry to do so as a preferred option. This we are doing. As it is, I believe, better for us to work with them and keep talking rather than walking away and ending up with an imposed solution.

I know the downside which may lead all back to the first option. Verandas will add cost, will take time to be built, especially if planning is required, and will certainly not be in place by next winter.

I trust this clears up any misunderstanding that as Chairman of Copa Cogeca I had forgotten my roots!! If we are to achieve the first option we need you to lobby M.E.P, Ministers and your local Member of Parliament.

Kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

Charles Bourns
Chairman of Eggs & Poultry Meat, Copa Cogeca