



EFFAB
European Forum of
Farm Animal Breeders

FABRE • TP
Farm Animal Breeding
& Reproduction
Technology Platform



Poultry breeding and alternatives to live animal transport

Poultry breeding

European poultry breeding companies and associations are working at a local, regional and global level. The poultry breeding structure is mostly organised in a pyramidal way, with maternal and paternal lines being selected by breeders in pedigree farms, under the framework of balanced and responsible breeding.

These pure lines are afterwards crossbred to select what we call the commercial lines (to live at the farm level). In order to preserve the genetic resources, pedigree farms are also isolated from other farms to minimize the risk of disease introduction (avian influenza).

Why do we need transport?

The breeding programme starts at the pedigree farm, where the genetic improvement is done. Modern breeding programs take into account animal health and welfare, robustness, longevity and other traits in addition to the quantity and the quality of meat and eggs. The commitments of poultry breeders for responsible and balanced breeding programs are explained in Code EFABAR. The “commercial lines” for farming must afterwards reach the farmers. The genetic progress goes down to the farmers by first transporting animals to the multiplication and/or reproduction level. This translates into the need to transport animals, including day-old chicks.

When the transport of live animals is needed, the animals are cared for and monitored during the entire journey. Day-old chicks require more attention and their welfare is closely watched. Before transport, newly hatched chicks are also vaccinated according to farmers and country needs. Chicks are kept secure and throughout the journey. Logistics experts secure the best and quickest route and that the chicks health and welfare are protected throughout the whole journey. Upon arrival the chicks are reared on local farms.

Proper preparation, monitoring, a strong contingency plan and training for farmers, veterinarians and transporters all contribute to the ultimate success and welfare of the animals.

To achieve this, it is also needed to adhere and implement welfare regulations (RE 1/2005) and constant communication throughout the journey between experts and authorities.

Alternatives to the transport of live animals

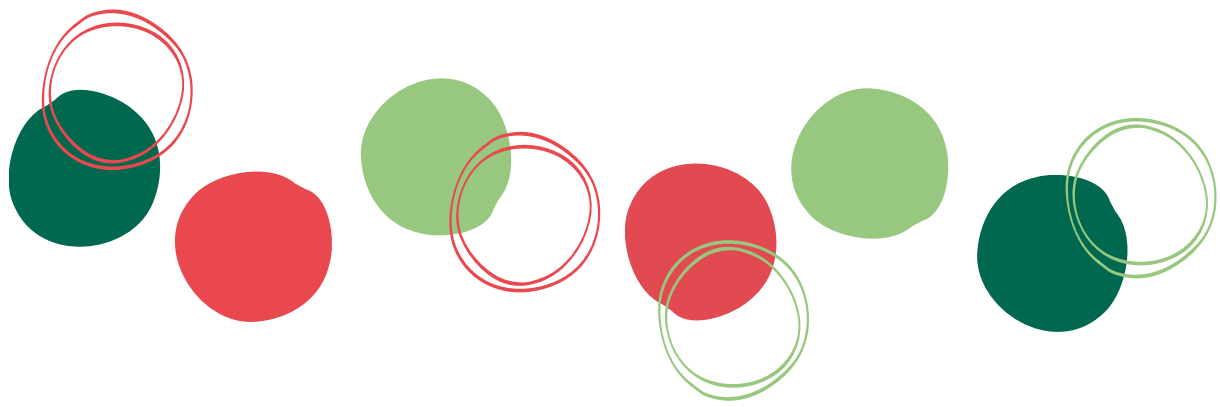
Two alternatives could replace or are being studied to replace the transport of live animals in the poultry sector: the transport of hatching eggs and semen. Semen is collected and used in very specific breeding contexts but cannot be used in routine practices for technical and practicability reasons. Thus, semen in poultry is not a workable alternative in the field to spread genetics. The transport of hatching eggs is sometimes possible and performed.



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Biosecurity and animal comfort

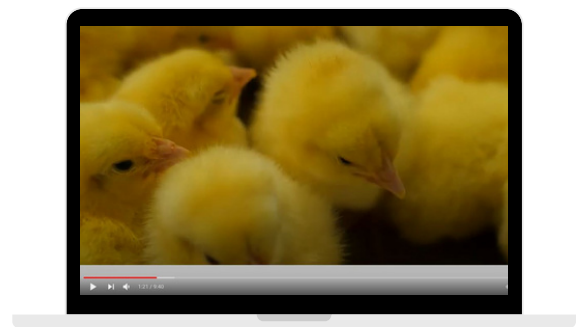
In addition, poultry and hatching eggs are reared and kept under very strict biosecurity conditions to fulfil legal animal health requirements (AHL RE 2016/429). Biosecurity is a set of procedures designed to protect birds from diseases and potentially harmful germs (e.g. avian influenza). Biosecurity is key priority when it comes to breeding and transportation of poultry.

It is also important to highlight that the sector has skilled experts on animal welfare who collaborate frequently with external experts and national authorities, to ensure the best conditions for live animals in farms and during transportation.

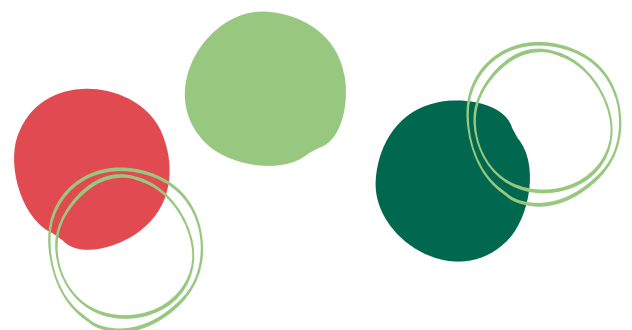
Watch how the transportation takes place

Do you want to see an example on how poultry transportation is done? We have selected a video from one of our members that are available to watch online. The video illustrates an example of a journey and modern poultry transportation. Do you want more information about animal breeding in general? You can also visit the EFFAB YouTube channel.

Poultry transportation



**Click on the screen to watch*



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