

New disease control solutions for an evolving world

At Ceva's recent symposium entitled New Disease Control Solutions for an Evolving World, there were two presentations that focused on vaccination services offered by Ceva to their customers.

In the first of these, Dr Paola Cruz-Dousdebès, the company's global vaccination services manager, reflected on the quality recognition Bureau Veritas has brought to their activities.

Ceva's Hatchery Vaccination Services ensures that qualified professionals visit customer hatcheries on a regular basis. On these visits they run a number of checks to assess the quality, storage, preparation and administration of vaccines so that the hatchery can have all chicks properly vaccinated before they are sent to the farms.

C.H.I.C.K. program

This is all encompassed in Ceva's C.H.I.C.K. program (Chick Hatchery Immunisation Control Keys) that focuses on vaccine care, vaccination techniques, equipment care, auditing and monitoring and expertise and education. The overall objective is to ensure 100% of the chicks are properly vaccinated.

Table 1 shows the number of hatcheries by region where Ceva's C.H.I.C.K. Program hatchery services is implemented.

However, Ceva felt this was not enough and they decided their approach needed a new quality management system that incorporated international standards for services and one that was recognised by a third party auditing organisation.

Table 1. Number of hatcheries with Ceva's C.H.I.C.K. Program by region.

| Region | No. of hatcheries |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Europe | 82 |
| Africa (Inc. Middle East & Turkey) | 242 |
| Asia | 365 |
| North America | 25 |
| Latin America | 198 |
| Total | 912 |



For this important role they needed a leader in testing, inspection and certification services. Bureau Veritas, leading provider of ISO 9001 and ISO 14001 quality management and environmental certifications, fitted this role perfectly.

Leading in good vaccination practices

The C.H.I.C.K. program quality code of practice became the quality standards and Ceva produced SOPs (standard operating procedures) for all aspects of hatchery vaccination, including vaccine storage, handling and preparation; vaccine administration by spray, subcutaneous injection or by in ovo administration; equipment set up, operation, calibration and cleaning and the monitoring and auditing of all of these.

These, in turn, are all monitored by Bureau Veritas.

Ceva has an overall control plan and their basic philosophy behind this is 'say what you do, do as you say, and document it!'

The company has over 150 dedicated, qualified teams for monitoring vaccination quality. Their members attend international technical schools and receive specific training on in ovo audits, equipment, Egginject and automation.

This is all under company control and Bureau Veritas audit a knowledge of the SOPs in the hatchery.

Continuous on the job training is given to customer's staff and Bureau Veritas verifies the efficacy of this training during hatchery audits.

Ceva commit to a regular number of hatchery visits per year and issue a report on each visit.

During their audits, Bureau Veritas verifies that issues highlighted in these reports have been correctly followed up with corrective actions.

Finally, the equipment needs to be managed and subjected to appropriate preventive maintenance programmes with appropriate registers being kept. Here again Bureau Veritas has a verification role.

Experience in the hatchery

In the second presentation, Jaco Viljoen, CEO of Opti Chicks in South Africa, shared some of his experiences with the C.H.I.C.K. program from the other side of the fence.

Opti Chicks, who are located in the North West Province, supply day-old chicks to integrated and non-integrated chicken meat producers and small farmers.

In South Africa Newcastle disease and Gumboro disease are common and their high frequency of occurrence and negative financial impact on the poultry farmer prompted Opti chicks to assist their customers in countering these diseases.

To this end, Jaco and his management team have found day-old vaccination with Vectormune ND and Transmune to be highly effective in combating Newcastle and Gumboro diseases, but they also appreciated that the proper administration of these vaccines in the hatchery was a key prerequisite to their success on the farm.

So, when they heard about the C.H.I.C.K. program, they had to evaluate it. Jaco

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highlighted how the C.H.I.C.K. program has five areas of expertise that the hatchery can utilise to improve their vaccination capability. These are:

- Vaccine care.
- Vaccination techniques.
- Equipment care.
- Monitoring and auditing.
- Expertise and education.

They found that keeping control of the correct storage of vaccines helped to reduce stock losses and made traceability easier. In addition, the good handling of frozen vaccines ensured staff safety, maintained vaccine efficacy and minimised vaccine contamination.

The importance of correct vaccine preparation was also highlighted as this ensures that the chicks are vaccinated with a vaccine of the highest viability.

Equipment maintenance

Problems with equipment can cause delays. Well cared for equipment is more reliable and enables chicks to be processed at optimum speeds with no delays. In addition, the hygiene of equipment is a key factor in producing healthy chicks.

Thus, the importance of having staff who have been well trained in equipment maintenance and who do a top quality job



The Bureau Veritas quality stamp of approval.

in front line maintenance is critical in keeping all equipment 100% operational.

Today, preventative maintenance of all equipment is undertaken every two months and this has reaped benefits in terms of minimising downtime to virtually zero and maintaining the smooth operation of the hatchery.

Jaco is a strong believer in having quality systems in place to maintain the delivery of quality chicks and he appreciates the regular monitoring and audits that continually evaluate the system and identifies areas for improvements.

He has also found that the C.H.I.C.K. stamp of approval gives his customers real confidence in the quality of their vaccination. In fact, this has now become an important sales tool.

He has found the auditing to be extremely valuable as it has found issues before they became problems and enabled rectification and appropriate staff (re)training to be initiated.



Finally, regular training has added to staff skill sets and improved the overall efficiency of the hatchery. The end result is happy customers, a happy workforce and less stress for managers and supervisors. ■