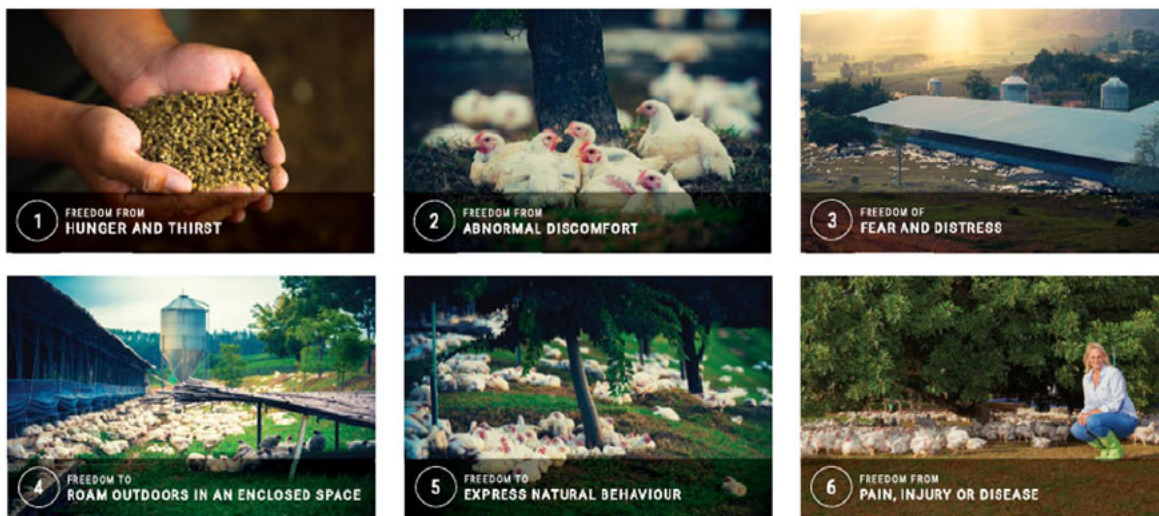


## Animal welfare at Elgin Free Range Chickens

Welfare is our business purpose.

A contented state of well-being, being healthy and prosperous in service to our people, animals, customers, suppliers and our planet to positively change the world for the benefit of all.

We remain committed to the Six Freedoms below, which is based on a framework that was set by the Animal Welfare Council (FAWC). This guides our overall approach to animal welfare through the supply chain.



This framework is based on science, with outcome measures to evaluate progress. *Refer to Page 4 - Welfare outcomes and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).*

### Breed selection

We select breeds that are suited to our local environment. Breeds that demonstrate higher welfare outcomes regarding leg strength, mobility, health and welfare.

### Animal health

All farms aim to minimise premature mortality and improve animal health. Broiler monitoring is based on programs with strict biosecurity controls, hygiene measures, regular house monitoring, staff training and visits from veterinary poultry specialists. Health information such as mobility, injuries and lesions are recorded and analysed per cycle.

### **Housing and diet**

The stocking density inside our barns will not exceed 32 kg/m<sup>2</sup> on slaughter weight and is managed in combination with well controlled environmental conditions. The external range outside our barns is greater than 200% of the total floor space of the barn.

All chickens have access to suitable ventilation, dry litter, clean water and a nutritionally balanced all-grain diet that does not contain animal by-products or antibiotic growth-promoting medicines. The feed is supplemented with outdoor dust bathing, scratching at the dirt and foraging on insects, bugs, greens and seeds.

### **Brand integrity testing**

The environment, feed, water, blood, organs and chicken product are routinely tested at independent SANAS accredited and DALLRD registered laboratories as per Brand Integrity testing schedule. Laboratory tests are done for microbiology, serology, mycotoxins, antibiotics, pesticides, heavy metals and animal by-products amongst other. We hold all testing records in our Food Safety Management System for traceability referencing and auditing purposes.

### **Darkness and sleep**

Chickens are naturally active during the daytime and rest and sleep at night when it is dark. It has been shown that continuous lighting is detrimental to chicken welfare. From the date of placement, our farms follow a 24-hour lighting programme to allow for full rhythm development of chickens. From 7 days of age, we provide 7 hours of continuous darkness, and from 14 days of age onwards until slaughter this is increased to 8 hours continuous darkness.

### **Stress reduction and avoidance of pain**

Our chicken does not undergo physical alterations such as caponization, de-spurring, toe clipping, de-beaking, beak trimming and dubbing. Lameness evaluations are done daily and chickens that are unable to stand or walk normally (Gait score 4 and 5) shall be humanely culled. *\*Lameness Evaluation guidelines below, as outlined in the Global Animal Partnership 5-Step™ Animal Welfare Rating Standards for Broiler Chickens (2009)*

### **Transportation**

Transport data is monitored to ensure that transport times are as short as possible to minimise stress on chickens. Cases where chickens do not survive a journey are recorded as dead-on-arrivals (DOAs) and investigated. Long distance transport in our supply is kept to below 70 km. The total time, per truckload, from loading the first broiler on the farm to unloading the last broiler at the abattoir may not exceed 8 hours. Broilers received in crates must be slaughtered within 4 hours of arrival at the abattoir and may not be kept overnight.

**Responsible use of medication**

This will only be done to prevent suffering amongst diseased chickens and will only be administered on prescription from a veterinarian and with the approval from the CEO and MD. A double withdrawal time will be applied if medication is prescribed.

**Employee training and monitoring**

Each chicken farm has formal training programmes with structured modules that include animal welfare, broiler management guides, culling (Humane destruction of sick or injured chicken), and emergency response procedures. We have 10 certified Animal Welfare Officers at the abattoir, trained by independent UK animal welfare specialist, Paul Whittington.

**Slaughter practices**

We systematically practice electrical stunning prior to slaughter, including slaughter for religious certification. Our practices are based on South African regulations, religious slaughter guidelines and EU animal welfare laws. Certified animal welfare officers conduct monthly animal welfare and slaughter validations. We adopted the latest technology on humane slaughter and constantly seek to improve techniques and infrastructure in this area.

**Compliance**

We meet all local laws, regulations, and supplier codes. We demonstrate compliance with regular internal audits and external third-party independent audits by Animal Welfare Experts or Senior Technical Auditors from: FAI Farms, LTL Group, National Council of Societies for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (NSPCA), Agency for Food Safety and Quality (ASFQ), the Muslim Judicial Council (MJC) and the South African Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development.



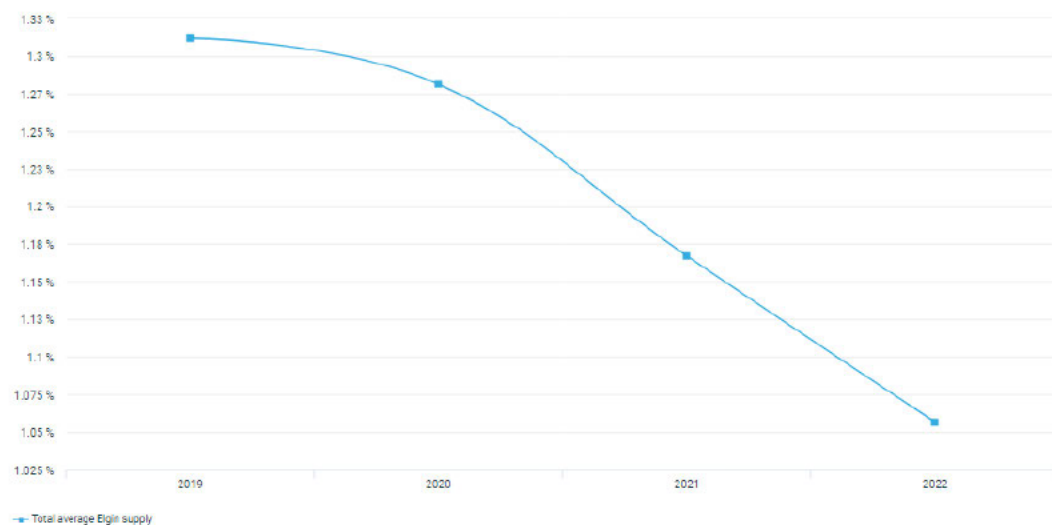
## Welfare outcomes and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

KPIs are monitored daily in our supply chain and allow us to see trends. It highlights areas of achievement and areas where improvement is needed. This means the continuously improve on sustainable production, develop animal welfare, and to evaluate whether our commitment to the Six Freedoms is met.

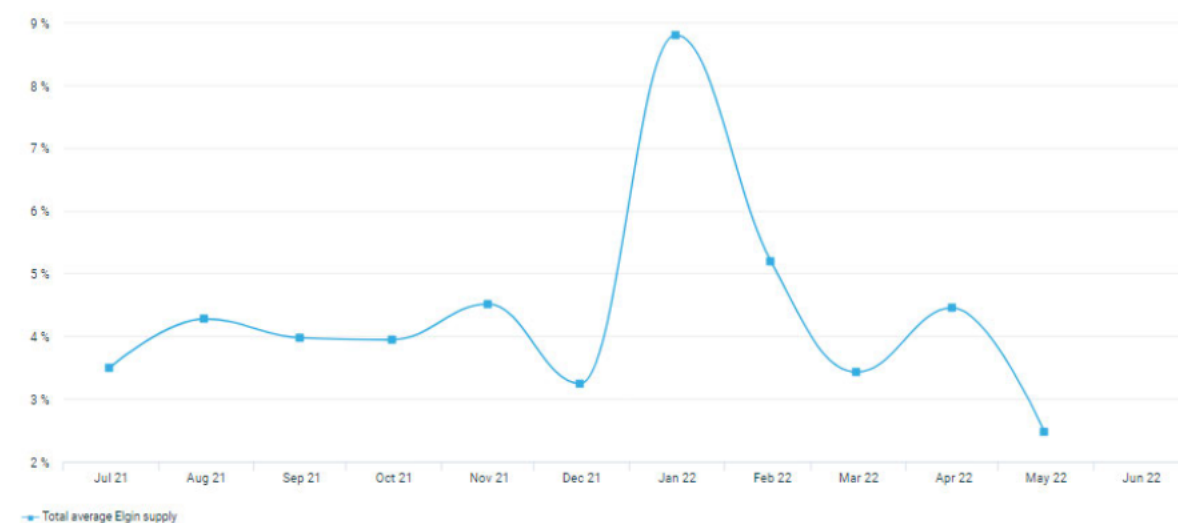
KPIs are illustrated below.

### Mortality data

Mortality rate represents the proportion of chickens that die on the farm due to disorders, diseases, injuries or unexplained causes. This is displayed as a percentage (%) of the total chicken population placed on farms.



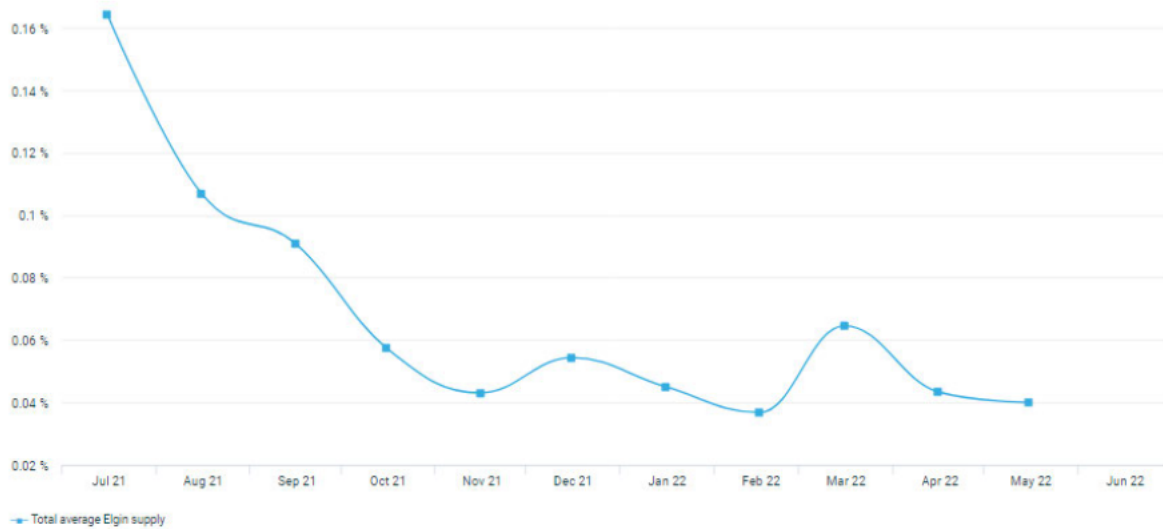
**7-day mortality (%) 2019 to 2022** This is a standard data measurement on 7-day chicks in the poultry industry, reflecting the health status of the Breeder flocks, Egg Quality and Hatchery management systems. Data show a reduction in the 7-day mortality data the last 4 years. The 7-day mortality average to date is 0.78%.



**Total farm mortality (%) 2022** Our Total Farm mortality (%) to date is 2.48%. Spikes in mortalities in January and February were attributed to extreme heat waves that we experienced on two of our farms. Preventative measures were put in place to improve on the responses to extreme heat wave conditions on the farms.

## Transport data

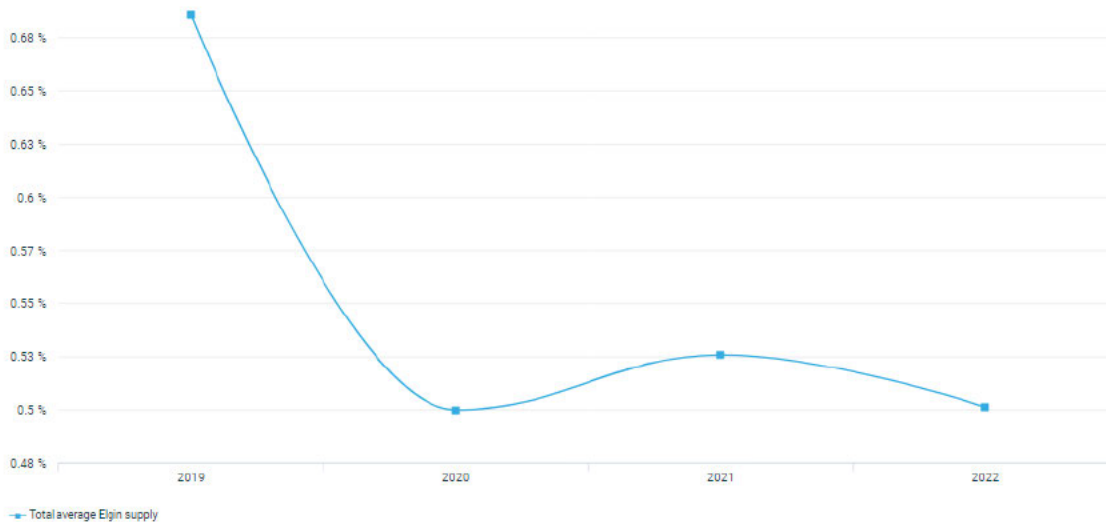
Dead-on-arrivals (DOAs) in our supply are very rare and all incidents are investigated.



**Total DOA (%) 2022** The total DOA (%) to date are 0.04%. A spike to 0.16% in July were due to due to wet weather conditions. Continuous initiatives and plans are set in place to limit the effect of wet weather on live chickens during transport.

## Chicken data

Lameness Evaluation data show a reduction in chicken culls due to mobility concerns.



**Leg cull Gait Score 4 & 5 (%) 2019 to 2022** Data show an improvement on chicken culls due to mobility issues. To date the percentage culled due to mobility issues is 0.5% of total supply.

As part of our welfare commitment, we aim to stock birds below 32 kg/m<sup>2</sup>. The stocking density inside our barns are to date on Ave 32 kg/m<sup>2</sup>. Taken into account that the external range outside our houses are greater than 200% of the total floor space of the inside of the house, the stocking densities in our free-range systems are at 10 kg /m<sup>2</sup> (5 chickens per square meter).

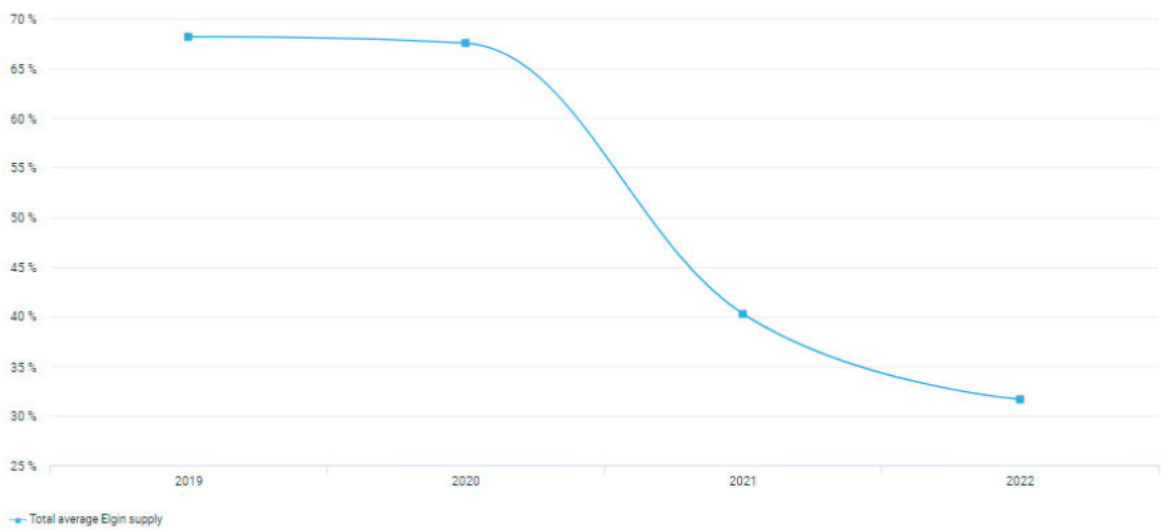
Our chickens rarely suffer breast blisters (0%).



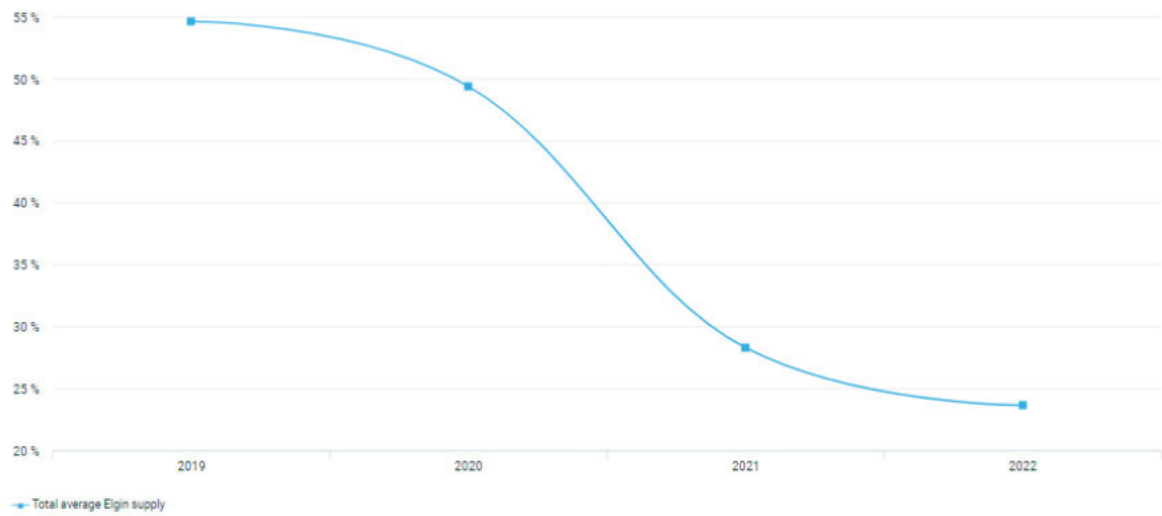
Although vast reductions are noted from 2019, we acknowledge that our prevalence of pododermatitis (*a marking on the sole of the chicken foot*) and hock markings (*a marking of the hock of the chicken's leg*) are above acceptable levels internationally.

It is important to note that the South African broiler diet contains high levels of soy, which has a twofold effect on litter quality and bedding. Soy has lots of indigestible elements that cause manure to be very sticky. It is also high in potassium, causing higher intake in water, causing wet litter.

Reductions in foot and hock burns seen below can be attributed to focus being placed on poultry house management and litter quality. In addition, we have done a lot of work on feed with poultry nutritionist specialists to improve on gut health. This will remain a key focus area in our business to improve on.



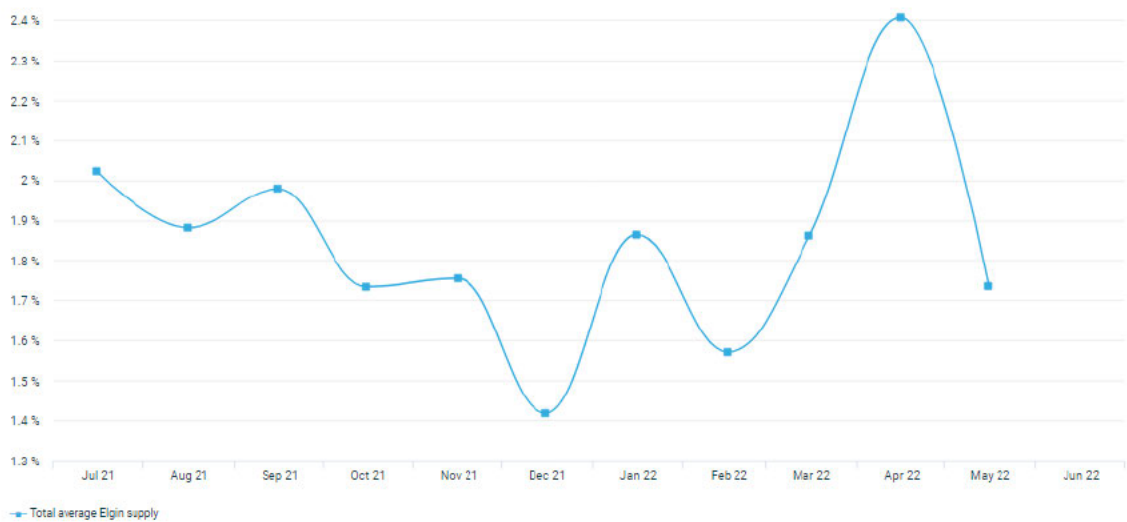
**Total Pododermatitis prevalence (%) 2019 to 2022** The prevalence of pododermatitis reduced from 68% to 32% (acceptable levels for this outcome measure is 30%).



**Total hock burn prevalence (%) 2019 to 2022** The prevalence of hock burns reduced from 55% to 24% (acceptable levels for this outcome measure is 10%).

We also monitor welfare indicators on wings and legs for breaks (*Any break or dislocation with signs of bleeding (red or old e.g., purple/yellow, dark coloured)*) and bruises (*Bruises which are deep red in colour or old e.g., purple/yellow; dark in colour*).

The incidence level of breaks and bruises are low in comparison with industry, which is mainly attributed to the initiative for individual bird catching in our business (birds are caught using two hands around the body).



**Bruised legs Group 1 (%) 2022** The spike noted in April links to two of our farms where investigations were made into the occurrences.



**Bruised wings Group 1 (%) 2022** The increase in wing bruising over the summer months could be attributed to the natural behaviour of flapping of wings to allow airflow through their feathers for cooling.