



MYTHBUSTING 101: Supply Management is NOT a Powerful Lobby

March 17, 2017 Aline Porrior

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You've heard it and we've heard it. "Supply management is a powerful lobby," they say. Nothing could be further from the truth, and our supply management mythbusting team is springing into action to explain why.

Supply management is a way of producing and marketing food to meet the demand for high quality chicken, eggs, turkey, milk, and dairy products. Consumption trends are studied in each province, and then farmers work together to produce enough to ensure there are no shortages in supply for Canadians.

Chicken Farmers of Canada has two primary mandates. Our main responsibility is to ensure that our 2,800 farmers produce the right amount of fresh, safe, high-quality chicken to meet Canada's needs. Our second responsibility is to represent the interests of chicken farmers and the Canadian chicken industry. This, along with our directions and policies are determined by a 15-member Board of Directors. Our Board is comprised of 11 farmers, appointed by the provincial chicken marketing boards, and non-farmer directors — which include one from the restaurant industry, another from the further processing industry, and two representing the processing industry — who are appointed by their respective national associations. This way, the stakeholders that

participate in every step – from farm to table – are involved and provide their expertise to Chicken Farmers of Canada, and work together on behalf of Canada’s chicken industry.

While Chicken Farmers of Canada does frequently meet with government, most of these meetings take place because politicians and public servants have invited us to participate. They do so because they respect the work we do and the results we get: results that create jobs in countless communities, large and small; results from scientific research we support; results that continually improve farming practices and results that benefit farmers, processors and consumers alike.

Let’s look at these results in a bit more detail.

Supply management creates stability by meeting consumer demand without creating wasteful surpluses and allows farmers to make a fair return on their investments. Around the world, governments strongly support farmers with subsidies, but thanks to supply management, Canadian farmers don’t need or use government subsidies to produce chicken.

In fact, supply management is a driving force in the Canadian economy. For example, Canada’s 2,800 chicken farmers and 191 processors create employment and wealth in every province. The chicken production sector contributes \$6.8 billion to Canada’s gross domestic product, pays \$2.2 billion in taxes and employs 87,200 workers. Because our farmers make a fair return, they are willing to invest back into their businesses and communities, and that helps future generations. In the last year alone, 20% of chicken farmers built or substantially upgraded operations.

Chicken Farmers of Canada has also successfully implemented programs in on-farm food safety and animal care, both based on science. It is a requirement that all of our farmers be on these programs thus ensuring chicken is produced according to strict food safety and animal care standards. Mandatory rules include top-notch requirements for disease prevention, animal health, cleanliness, biosecurity and feed and water management. Furthermore, we contribute to scientific research that is continually used to improve our on-farm practices.

Given the contributions that supply management and Chicken Farmers of Canada make to the economy, food safety, animal care and research, is it any wonder the government wants to consult with us on policies and programs?

LET’S REVIEW THE FACTS:

- Supply management is a system of agricultural production and marketing.
- Government officials respect our expertise in food production and the contribution we make to healthy local economies as well as the national economy.
- The government invites us to share our experience on food safety, animal care and research.

Chicken farmers are not a powerful lobby. Rather, they are doing exactly what they are supposed to be doing: using sound business practices to produce chicken according to science-based food safety and animal care standards.

Want us to bust some other supply management myths? Send us your questions via twitter using the hashtag #IHeartChickenFarmers – stay tuned to see if your myth gets busted!