



DEPARTMENT: AGRICULTURE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

OSTRICH PROTOCOL – Edition: 01

According to Section 9 of the Animal Diseases Act (Act 35 of 1984), the Minister of Agriculture prescribed control measures relating to ostriches as published in the Government Gazette No. R.29155 Government Notice No. R.864 of 1 September 2006 as amendments to regulation 20 and insertion of regulation 20B.

The following guidelines do not substitute but are to be read in conjunction with the above-mentioned government notice. The current edition of the ostrich protocol with the requirements for the registration of farms, testing for avian influenza and movement control measures will remain in place until the end of the current outbreak as declared by the director. Thereafter it is envisaged to relax the testing and movement control measures for ostriches. Until further notice, the following **control measures** are in place:

1. **The application of the gazetted control measures in regulations 20 and 20B, and this protocol is limited to ostriches that fall into the definition of 'poultry'** according to the Terrestrial Animal Health Code of the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE). This includes all ostriches that are 'reared or kept in captivity for the production of meat or eggs for consumption, for the production of other commercial products, for restocking supplies of game, or for breeding these categories of birds'.
 - 1.1 **Free-ranging wild ostriches** that are kept in officially recognized nature conservation areas are thus excluded from the provision of the gazetted control measures in regulations 20 and 20B, and this protocol, but all domestic or wild ostriches kept for breeding or the production of meat or eggs are included.
 - 1.2 Ostrich **breeder birds** used for the production of eggs and **incubating facilities** used for the production of **hatchling ostriches** are excluded **only** from the requirements for routine serological testing and have to comply fully with all requirements for registered compartments.
2. **According to regulation 20B, all farms and facilities housing ostriches** that fall into the definition of poultry have to be officially **registered by the Director: Animal Health, National Department of Agriculture** as **approved compartments for the purpose of keeping ostriches** according to the requirements listed below under 7.
3. **According to regulation 20(1)((a)(v), no ostriches may be moved** from any registered compartment to another registered compartment or to an abattoir for slaughter purposes, **except under the authority of a state veterinary movement permit OR accompanied by a state veterinary declaration** in accordance with the exemptions detailed below.

slaughter purposes AND only provided they are accompanied by a state veterinary movement permit issued by the state veterinarian responsible for the area of origin within the last 28 days certifying that

4.3.1 the premises of origin hold a **current registration as an approved compartment** according to the requirements listed below under 7.

and

4.3.2 the registered compartment of origin OR the group of slaughter birds has been **tested negative for the H5 and H7 avian influenza infectious agents** (as detailed below under 5.2), with the provision that the movement to the abattoir occurs within a maximum of 28 days from the date of sampling.

5. The principles for all laboratory testing for the purpose of certification of freedom from avian influenza are as follows:

5.1 All domestic ostrich farms have to register as compartments for this purpose and have to be **tested serologically every 6 months as well as within the last 28 days prior to the movement** of any ostriches off the premises. All mandatory 6-monthly and pre-movement serological testing has to be designed to detect the presence or absence of the exposure of ostriches to H5 or H7 avian influenza subtypes at >10% prevalence with 95% confidence in every **epidemiological group (including all ostrich sizes and ages except for chicks younger than 6 weeks and ostrich breeder birds)** on each farm; i.e. the number of birds to be tested depends on the size of each group on every farm as follows:

Size of the epidemiological group	No. of ostriches to be sampled
≤ 10	10
≤ 20	16
≤ 50	22
≤ 100	25
≤ 200	27
≤ 900	28
> 900	29

All serological testing of ostrich blood samples are to be conducted by either of the three state veterinary laboratories designated for this purpose, namely Stellenbosch Veterinary Laboratory, Allerton Veterinary Laboratory or Onderstepoort Veterinary Institute.

All serological testing is to be conducted by the Haemagglutination Inhibition (HI) test to detect antibodies to avian influenza of H5 and H7 subtypes according to international standards (OIE Manual of Standards for Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines, 2003)

5.2 Every farm that yields positive results on any mandatory 6-monthly and pre-movement serological test (as detailed in 5.1) must undergo immediate **testing for detection of the infectious agent**. This initial testing for detection of the infectious agent has to be designed to detect presence or absence of H5 and H7 avian influenza subtypes at >5% prevalence with 95% confidence in every epidemiological group on each farm; i.e. the number of birds to be tested depends on the size of each group on every farm as follows:

Size of the epidemiological group	No. of ostriches to be sampled
≤ 10	10
≤ 20	19
≤ 50	35
≤ 100	45
≤ 200	51
≤ 300	54

Services for recommendation and then to the National Director: Animal Health (the 'director' referred to in Section 2 of the Animal Diseases Act 35 of 1984) for official registration. The owner / manager of a registered compartment is required to abide by the following:

- 7.1 All **movement of ostriches onto the premises** may occur only from other registered compartments as supported by a **state veterinary declaration** issued by the state veterinarian responsible for the area of origin within the last 28 days prior to the movement. **All movement of ostriches onto and off the premises** are subject to the guidelines in this protocol. Accurate records of all movements, including copies / originals of all state veterinary declarations and movement permits accompanying all such movements are to be kept for at least 2 years.
- 7.2 The guidelines as set out in this protocol for **6-monthly and pre-movement laboratory testing** will be complied with. The owner / manager undertakes to organize such required testing at **his / her own cost** and under conditions of **official state veterinary notification / control**. This implies that the state veterinarian responsible for the area will be notified in writing of the date and time of all proposed sampling of ostriches for test purposes at least one week in advance to afford for the opportunity of official auditing. The samples shall be submitted to an official laboratory with the costs to accrue to the owner and the state veterinarian's details included as the recipient for the results.
- 7.3 Accurate records will be kept of all **morbidity and mortality** and shall be available for auditing. The state veterinarian responsible for the area will be notified immediately of any unusual clinical cases. The owner / manager shall undertake to cooperate fully with any state veterinary animal disease investigations and control measures that may be implemented on the farm.
- 7.4 The owner / manager undertakes to comply with all **biosecurity measures** as outlined in the Annexure to this protocol and to establish and maintain written up-to-date standard operating procedures for each of the requirements – as well as written management records demonstrating compliance with the standard operating procedures for auditing purposes. A copy of the standard operating procedures shall be forwarded to the state veterinarian of the area for inclusion into the records of the registered compartment.
- 7.5 It should be noted that all registered ostrich compartments that wish to qualify for export purposes, have to abide by the export requirements as set out in the relevant Veterinary Procedural Notices (VPN/04/2004-08 and VPN/04/2003-09), over and above the requirements set out in this protocol.

ANNEX 1 BIOSECURITY and TRACEABILITY (3 pages)

ANNEX 2 APPLICATION FORM FOR THE REGISTRATION OF APPROVED COMPARTMENTS FOR THE PURPOSE OF KEEPING OSTRICHES (2 pages).



Director: Animal Health

11 Sept '06
Date

BIOSECURITY AND TRACEABILITY

Biosecurity and disease monitoring in particular are an important aspect of disease control that need to be addressed in future to prevent further disease problems, especially avian influenza. The following applies to all domestic ostrich facilities that fall under the definition of 'poultry' according to the Terrestrial Animal Health Code of the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE).

According to Government Gazette Notice R864 of 1 September 2006 and the accompanying latest edition of the 'Ostrich Protocol', the following requirements are a prerequisite for the registration of a farm or facility as 'approved compartments for the purpose of keeping ostriches'.

1. Traceability

- (a) All **movement of ostriches onto the premises** may occur only from other registered compartments as supported by a **state veterinary declaration** issued by the state veterinarian responsible for the area of origin within the last 28 days prior to the movement. **All movement of ostriches onto and off the premises** are subject to the guidelines in the Ostrich Protocol. Accurate records of all movements, including copies / originals of all state veterinary declarations and movement permits accompanying all such movements are to be kept for at least 2 years.

(b) Proper identification

All ostriches on the farm/holding have to be identified. This is essential to facilitate good record-keeping. The tag may be located under the wing or in the neck. It must be clearly readable once the ostrich has been caught and restrained. All ostriches above the age of 3-4 months have to be tagged, but definitely before any movement occurs. If ostrich chicks at a younger age are to be moved, they have to be tagged at a younger age, prior to movement.

A unique ostrich tag (4 months and older) with a unique identification number must be used. It is applied by an official vaccinator and the numbers with the designated registered farm details submitted to the central database of the SAOBC.

(c) Movement control

All movements of ostriches must abide by the legislation of the Animal Diseases Act (Act 35/1984 and Government Notice No. R. 864) and the latest edition of the Ostrich Protocol.

Over and above the requirements of the latest edition of the ostrich protocol, all ostriches destined for slaughter at an export abattoir must move with a passport with a permit number as allocated by the SAOBC where the number will also be kept in the central database. All movements [origin, destination, permit number etc.] must be kept on record by the producer

(d) Records

All producers must keep the following records which must be available for inspection or auditing by an official of the competent authority.

- Monthly stock record [to be submitted at the end of the month to the SAOBC]

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- Records of all movements of ostriches onto and off the farm with copies of all permits/declarations and SAOBC passports.

2. Surveillance

The guidelines as set out in the latest edition of the Ostrich Protocol for **6-monthly and pre-movement laboratory testing** must be complied with. The owner / manager must undertake to organize such required testing at **his / her own cost** and under conditions of **official state veterinary notification / control**. This implies that the state veterinarian responsible for the area will be notified in writing of the date and time of all proposed sampling of ostriches for test purposes at least one week in advance to afford for the opportunity of official auditing. The samples shall be submitted to an official laboratory with the costs to accrue to the owner and the state veterinarian's details included as the recipient for the results.

3. Morbidity and mortality

Accurate records must be kept of all **morbidity and mortality** and shall be available for auditing. The state veterinarian responsible for the area must be notified immediately of any unusual clinical cases. The owner / manager shall undertake to cooperate fully with any state veterinary animal disease investigations and control measures that may be implemented on the farm.

4. Biosecurity

The owner / manager undertakes to comply with all **biosecurity measures** as outlined below. The owner/manager also undertakes to establish and maintain written up-to-date standard operating procedures for each of the requirements – as well as written management records demonstrating compliance with the standard operating procedures for auditing purposes. A copy of the standard operating procedures shall be forwarded to the state veterinarian of the area for inclusion into the records of the registered compartment.

(a) Separation of species:

There should be no other domestic bird species kept in close contact with ostriches. These include ducks, geese, free range/backyard fowl and turkeys. Pigs should also not be kept in close contact with the ostriches.

(b) Wild birds, especially wild water birds should be discouraged from having contact with the ostriches. Ostriches should not be kept in camps where there are open pans or vleis areas. Such an area should be properly fenced off to prevent access by ostriches.

(c) Workers should be prohibited to keep their own poultry, either at dwellings on the farm itself or at houses away from the farm.

(d) Feed:

(i) Supply

Feed troughs should consist of structured troughs lifted from the ground to discourage visitations by wild birds.

Sufficient and regular feed should be supplied to ensure there is no unnecessary left over feed to attract wild birds.

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- (e) Water:
- (i) Supply
The supply of water for ostriches should consist of structured water troughs in properly constructed and dedicated areas that supply water without attracting wild water birds.
Water trough should be cleaned and disinfected on a weekly basis at least or as determined by risk factors.
- (ii) Disinfection
Drinking water should be disinfected with a suitable disinfectant to inactivate any possible influenza virus without harming the ostriches. Registered disinfectants that could be used include: F10, Virukill, Virkon or standard water chlorination methods (1-3 ppm).
- (iii) Irrigation canals
In areas where camps are linked by means of irrigation canals these canals have to be fenced off. This will prevent faecal material from ostriches from being transported to neighbouring camps along the route of the canal system.
- (f) Access control must be implemented and the farm must clearly display the production unit function (e.g. Breeder, hatchery, grower etc.), access control requirements and farm registration.

Records on all of the above must be available for auditing by the competent authority.

5. General

It is highly recommended that producers make use of a herd health veterinarian to supplement their health program and assist in early disease surveillance and control. It is essential that all ostrich farmers and their veterinarians liaise closely with their respective State Veterinarian. Transparency is essential and any outbreak of disease, or suspected outbreak of disease has to, according to the Animal Diseases Act (Act 35 of 1984), be reported to the State Veterinary Services. This will ensure that the presence and nature of the disease is established without delay and necessary measures can be instituted by the veterinary authority to control losses and prevent the potential spread of the disease.

6. Export farms

It should be noted that all registered ostrich compartments that wish to qualify for export purposes, have to abide by the export requirements as set out in the relevant Veterinary Procedural Notices (VPN/04/2004-08 and VPN/04/2003-09), over and above the requirements set out in the Ostrich Protocol.

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APPLICATION FOR THE REGISTRATION OF AN OSTRICH ESTABLISHMENT(S) AS AN APPROVED COMPARTMENT FOR THE PURPOSE OF KEEPING OSTRICHES

For attention: Dr. Julia Panné-Reeves Fax: (012) 329 6892

According to Government Gazette Notice R864 of 1 September 2006 and the latest edition of the Ostrich Protocol

- 1) Name of establishment: _____
- 2) Owner: _____
- 3) Postal address: _____
 _____ Code: _____
- 4) Tel no: (_____) _____

- 5) Farm name(s) & number(s) & co-ordinates according to magisterial district map (1:50 000 scale map): (Attach separate signed sheet for additional records)

Farm name:	Farm number:	Geographical co-ordinates:
_____	_____	____° ____' ____"E ____° ____' ____"S
_____	_____	____° ____' ____"E ____° ____' ____"S
_____	_____	____° ____' ____"E ____° ____' ____"S
_____	_____	____° ____' ____"E ____° ____' ____"S
_____	_____	____° ____' ____"E ____° ____' ____"S

- 6) Old Magisterial / New Municipal district: _____ Code (current OIE report code): _____

- 7) Type of establishment:

Breeder Hatchery Rearing Slaughter

I, _____ (full name and surname), OWNER OF THE ABOVE MENTIONED FARM(S), HEREBY CONFIRM THAT:

- (1) ALL THE INFORMATION SUPPLIED BY ME ON THIS APPLICATION FORM, IS TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE TRUE AND CORRECT.
- (2) I ALSO UNDERTAKE TO ABIDE BY ALL THE REQUIREMENTS AND KEEP ALL THE RECORDS AS STIPULATED IN THE GOVERNMENT GAZETTE NOTICE R 864 OF 1 SEPTEMBER 2006 AND THE LATEST EDITION OF THE OSTRICH PROTOCOL.
- (3) I ALSO UNDERSTAND THAT, SHOULD I WISH TO EXPORT, I HAVE TO ABIDE BY THE EXPORT REQUIREMENTS AS SET OUT IN THE RELEVANT VETERINARY PROCEDURAL NOTICES (VPN/04/2004-8 AND VPN/04/2003-09).
- (4) I HAVE RECEIVED A COPY OF THE OSTRICH PROTOCOL.

Signature of the owner: _____ Date: _____

- 1) Name of establishment: _____
- 2) Owner: _____
- 3) Postal address: _____
 _____ Code: _____
- 4) Tel no: (_____) _____
- 5) Farm name(s) & number(s) & co-ordinates according to magisterial district map (1:50 000 scale map):
 (Attach separate signed sheet for additional records)

I, DR _____, THE STATE VETERINARIAN OF _____
 HEREBY CONFIRM THAT ALL THE INFORMATION SUPPLIED TO ME ON THE APPLICATION FORM BY
 THE OWNER OF THE FARM(S), IS TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE TRUE AND CORRECT AND THAT:

(1) I HAVE AUDITED THE TESTING PROCEDURES AND RESULTS FROM THE ESTABLISHMENT(S) AND
 FOUND THEM TO COMPLY WITH THE OSTRICH PROTOCOL FOR AN APPROVED COMPARTMENT
 FOR THE PURPOSE OF KEEPING OSTRICHES

(2) I HAVE INSPECTED THE ESTABLISHMENT AND FOUND IT TO HAVE BIOSECURITY MEASURES IN
 PLACE TO PROVIDE AN APPROPRIATE LEVEL OF PROTECTION, AS SPECIFIED IN THE LATEST
 EDITION OF THE OSTRICH PROTOCOL.

(3) I HAVE SUPPLIED THE OWNER OF THIS FARM WITH A COPY OF THE OSTRICH PROTOCOL.

Remarks: _____

Signature of Provincial State Veterinarian: _____ Date: _____

I, DR _____, IN MY CAPACITY AS THE HEAD / DIRECTOR OF VETERINARY
 SERVICES IN THE PROVINCE: _____ HEREBY CONFIRM THAT SUFFICIENT
 RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE TO MONITOR THE CONDITIONS ON THE ABOVE MENTIONED FARM(S)
 ON A REGULAR BASIS AS STIPULATED IN THE LATEST EDITION OF THE OSTRICH PROTOCOL FOR AN
 APPROVED COMPARTMENT FOR THE PURPOSE OF KEEPING OSTRICHES

Remarks: _____

Signature of Provincial Director: _____ Date: _____

Official National Reg. No: _____ Date: _____