



USER GUIDANCE

Title: Registration of technical advisors in the breed standards of the
Maltese Black Chicken

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Introduction

In accordance to the rules and provisions of the agri-environment-climate scheme of the Rural Development Programme 2014 – 2020 for farmers AECM 6A for the certification of Maltese Black Chicken, the certification of the Maltese Black Chicken breed must be done by a state-registered technical advisor who is in possession of a valid licence. For this aim, the Plant Protection Board receives and evaluates applications for the registration of technical advisors in breed standards for the Maltese Black Chicken.

Overview

The state registration of individual experts as technical advisors in the breed standards of the Maltese Black Chicken and the issue of a licence is one of the functions of the Plant Protection Directorate in consultation with the Access and Benefit Sharing Advisory Committee in its mission to ensure that advisors who are serving farmers and other operators are competent to do so.

The process of state registration and provision of an operating licence to registered advisors serves as a mechanism to ensure a fair and level market, by imposing barriers that protect the intellectual property of licence holders and safeguarding the interests of consumers making use of such advisory services.

The main aim of this service is to evaluate the competence of the individual expert to act as a state registered and licenced technical expert in the breed standards of the Maltese Black Chicken, by judging whether his/her qualification, experience, and capacity match the relevant requirements for the role.

The outcome and benefits of this service is the official recognition of a number of registered technical advisors who can serve farmers and other members of the business community in the certification of the Maltese Black Chicken breed, in normal operations, as well as in the event of required eligibility in terms of EAFRD funded scheme of the Rural Development Programme for Malta.

The primary objective of the agri-environment-climate measure is to promote the protection, maintenance and enhancement of autochthonous Maltese farm species encouraging an increased level of awareness and responsibility amongst animal breeders for native breeds.

Definitions

"Competent Authority" refers to the Plant Protection Directorate as the Access and Benefit Sharing Competent Authority referred to in LN 379 of 2016 Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits arising from their Utilisation Regulations, 2016.

Designated authority

The Plant Protection Directorate in consultation with the Access and Benefit Sharing Advisory Committee.

Eligibility

This service is restricted to individuals who can demonstrate relevant knowledge, expertise, and resources in the respective fields of interest, and who are in possession of a minimum of relevant

qualification at MQF level 5.

The applicant:

- must demonstrate that they are knowledgeable in the breed standards of the Maltese Black Chicken;
- are capable of certifying and establishing the purity of the Maltese Black Chicken breed on the general principles set out in Annex II;
- must demonstrate that they are in possession of, or have at their disposal, the required equipment and resources;
- must be in possession of a MQF level 5 qualification or higher directly relevant to agriculture. Relevant qualification shall include relevant modules in animal science. Qualifications which do not include animal science modules will also be considered if the expert has undertaken specialised studies/training in breed standards.

Procedure of application

Application options

Application form (Technical advisor registration form) may be:

- Requested by phone by calling freephone 80072310 or number 22926535.
- Requested by e-mail on: plantprotection.mafa@gov.mt
- Collected in person from 110, Annibale Preca Street, Lija.

Filled applications are to be submitted by post or by hand. Submissions by email of electronically scanned signatures will also be accepted, as long as these are followed by submission of the originals.

Application process

The application form is to be submitted to the Competent Authority, together with a curriculum vitae and a transcript of the credits which show evidence of the qualification and modules covered. Any other supporting documentation showing knowledge or specialised training in breed standards for the Maltese Black Chicken must also be attached to the application. The expert shall also provide a declaration indicating that there is no conflict of interest with his clients and he shall raise with the Competent Authority any potential conflict in the future, should such conflict occur.

Applications will be assessed by the Board, who will decide on whether the applicant meets the registration criteria. The Board shall prepare a list of all experts which, in the opinion of the Board, meet the requirements for registration and which therefore may be issued with a certificate of registration. The Board shall also provide reasons for its decisions.

The decisions of the Board to accept or to refuse an application for registration in the Register shall be notified in writing by the Competent Authority to the applicant within thirty days from the decision. The expert shall be registered following the payment of a registration fee of €50. This registration fee shall not be refundable.

Applicants who do not agree with the outcome of the registration process will have the right to appeal from such decision in writing to the Malta Arbitration Centre, within fifteen days from when the decision is issued. The decision of the Malta Arbitration Centre shall be final.

The Competent Authority shall be responsible for keeping the register and shall **issue** a certificate of registration in the Register, and shall also note therein all suspensions, cancellations and reinstatements of those certificates. The list of the registered entities shall be made public and

will be updated regularly with any changes therein.

Registered advisors shall be obliged to follow advice and recommendations given by the Competent Authority; moreover, the experts are bound to ensure that correlated work shall not be re-diverted to, or requested from the Competent Authority or any public entity. They shall take full responsibility for all the information provided and services rendered to their clients, and they shall provide a signed declaration to this effect, upon provision of such documents to the client.

|| Service availability

During normal opening hours:

Summer (16th June to 30th September):	07:30 – 13:00
Winter (1st October to 15th June):	07:30 – 15:30

|| Service delivery timelines

- In cases where the application form is requested rather than downloaded, it is sent to the customer within twenty-four (24) hours of request; in case of walk-ins, it is given immediately.
- For applications that are submitted by hand, an acknowledgement of receipt is issued immediately.
- Applications that are received by email or by post are acknowledged in the same method as received, within twenty-four (24) hours.
- Applications are processed and the applicant is notified of the decision to be accepted or rejected, via email, within fifteen (15) working days of receipt of application.
- In case of acceptance, the applicant shall be requested to pay a non-refundable registration fee within fifteen (15) days of notification.
- Upon payment of the registration fee the advisor is registered in the Register of Technical Advisors within twenty-four (24) hours of receipt of payment.
- A signed Certificate of Registration is sent to the advisor by post within twenty-four (24) hours of registration.
- In the case of a decision of rejection, the applicant may appeal the decision, by writing to the Malta Arbitration Centre, within fifteen (15) days from notification of decision by the Plant Protection Board.

The certificate of registration shall contain the following information:

- (a) the name of the expert or other means of identification;
- (b) the date when the certificate is issued;
- (c) the validity period.

|| Compliance requirements

Certificates issued to experts shall be valid for three years. Certificates may be renewed following the submission of a new application.

The Competent Authority may cancel any certificate granted when the holder of that certificate if the holder:

- is found guilty by a court of criminal jurisdiction of a crime committed through

imprudence, carelessness, unskilfulness in an art or profession, or non-observance of guidelines issues by the Competent Authority; or

- has, in the opinion of the Competent Authority following consultation with the Board, submitted substandard or deliberately misleading work in any advisory procedure; or
- upon failure to provide the necessary documentation and, or evidence as requested by the Competent Authority within one month from the request.

|| Other requirements

Certification of the Maltese Black Chicken breed must conform to the standards listed in the Annex of these User Guides.

| Related documents

Registration of technical advisors in breed standards for the Maltese Black Chicken Application Form.
User Check-list for the registration of technical advisors in breed standards for the Maltese Black Chicken.

Annex I

Breed Standards for the Maltese Black Chicken*

*Attard, G., Aquilina, P., Ceccobelli, S., Ridler, R., Castellini, C., & Lasagna, E. (2014). Origin and complete breed standard of Maltese Black breed. *World's Poultry Science Journal*, 70(02), 385-396.

Economic Qualities	A nervous and hardy dual purpose non-sitting chicken, noted for the production of large (56- 70 grams) chalk-white eggs; colour of skin white
Disqualifications	Red in ear-lobes, covering more than one-third of surface; red, yellow or positive white in plumage; shanks other than black or slate and featherless, combs that are beefy or loped in cocks; White toe nails
Standard Weights	Pullet: 2.0 kg Hen: 2.0 - 2.7 kg
	Cockerel: 2.5 kg Cock: 2.5 - 3.2 kg
SHAPE MALE	
Posture	Tall, busy and proud
Comb	Single; medium in size, smooth, straight and upright, firm and even on head, front end does not exceed the beak; evenly and deeply serrated, having five well-defined points being wide at the bottom and tapering towards the top, blade following slightly the curve of the neck without touching the head. Free from twists folds or excrescences
Beak	Medium length, strong, nicely curved, slate and horn in colour. Top beak overlapping bottom
Face	Full and smooth, fine in texture, free from wrinkles
Eyes	Large, prominent and amber red in colour
Wattles	Long and thin and fine in texture, well rounded smooth and free from folds and wrinkles
Ear-Lobes	Large ears, round, smooth, white and free from folds, fitting close to head
Head	Moderately long and deep, inclined to be flat on top. Smooth fine proportions
Neck	Rather long, well-arched, with abundant hackle flowing well over shoulders
Back	Wide on the shoulders with a rather long back sloping towards the tail, moderately broad its entire length, high at shoulders, sloping slightly to tail. Saddle Feathers -- long and abundant
Tail	Large and full well spread, carried at an angle of 45 degrees above horizontal, (80 to 90 degrees with the slope of the back)
	Main Tail Feathers -- broad and overlapping
	Sickles - long, even, well curved
	Coverts - abundant
Wings	Large, well-folded, carried without drooping held close to the body
	Primaries and Secondaries - broad and overlapping in natural order when wing is folded
Breast	Broad/wide, deep, well-rounded, carried well up and forward, straight keel or breast-bone
Body and Fluff	Body -- long, well-rounded, slightly broader at front than rear
	Fluff - short
Legs and Toes	Tall on legs. Legs set well apart, straight when viewed from front
	Lower Thighs - medium size, rather long: hock joints showing well below body line
	Shanks -round in shape, strong and thin, free from feathers
	Toes -- four on each foot, long and straight, well-spread

SHAPE FEMALE	
Comb	Single; medium in size, evenly and deeply serrated, having five distinct points very similar to the male, the front portion of comb and first point to stand erect and the remainder of comb drooping gracefully to one side without covering the eye; fine in texture, free from folds or wrinkles
Beak	Medium length, nicely curved, slate or horn in colour
Face	Large and smooth, fine in texture
Eyes	Large, full and prominent. Amber red in colour
Wattles	Moderately long, thin, well-rounded
Ear-Lobes	Medium size, round-shaped, smooth
Head	Moderately long and deep
Neck	Rather long, gracefully arched
Back	Rather long, moderately broad its entire length, elevated at shoulders, sloping slightly downward at rear, then rising with a short, abrupt curve to tail
Tail	Long, full, well-spread. carried at an angle of 45degrees above horizontal Main Tail Feathers - broad and overlapping
Wings	Large, well-folded and carried without drooping Primaries and Secondaries - broad and overlapping in natural order when wing is folded
Breast	Broad, deep and well-rounded, carried well up and forward, straight keel or breast-bone
Body and Fluff	Body - long, well-rounded, slightly broader at front than rear Fluff - short
Legs and Toes	Legs set well apart, straight when viewed from front Lower Thighs - of medium size, rather long; hock joints showing well below body line Shanks - long and featherless Toes -- four on each foot, straight, well-spread
Colour Comb, Face& Wattles	MALE AND FEMALE Bright red
Beak	Horn
Eyes	Amber red
Ear-Lobes	Enamel white
Shanks & Toes	Black or dark slate and featherless
Plumage	Surface - absolute black silk like feathers with lustrous greenish sheen Under-colour -- Pure dull black feathers

