

FROM FARM TO TABLE

Farm Stories



Clarendon Farm

Could you tell us a bit about yourself and your organic farm?

My name is Ian Littleton and I am from Clarendon Farm, 20-hectares of land situated in Pitt Town near Sydney, New South Wales.

What do you do?

I am an Australian Certified Organic poultry farmer, and I have more than 10,000 hens on our farm. I deliver eggs directly to Sydney so that consumers have access to good quality fresh eggs, 1-2 days after the eggs are laid.

Tell us a bit about the processes you use to farm organically.

My chickens roam freely all day, every day, on pastures of clover, rye and lucerne (amongst other naturally grown grasses), and use sheds to roost. Their diet is also supplemented by a certified organic mix that includes a variety of seeds and grains. There is no genetically modified feed or anything of that nature introduced into their lives.

We find the colour of our egg yolks to be more intense or darker because of the amount of fresh grasses, grains and sunlight each chicken has access to, and the eggs themselves vary in size and colour. The younger chickens lay about one egg per day, less as they get older, but in total the layers produce about 5,000 eggs per day. That's a lot of eggs! They stop laying eggs at about three or four years of age and then spend the rest of their lives just hanging out around the farm.

Describe a problem that you have had to face or tackle.

Predators can be a problem for all farmers. I have Maremma Sheepdogs living alongside my free range chickens in the fields. As puppies they grow up alongside the chickens, and will bond with the chickens to help keep them safe from foxes and other predators.

Do you have an interesting fact or story to share?

Maremma Sheepdogs have been used for thousands of years by the mountain shepherds of central Italy to guard their flocks from wolves. You might also see Maremma dogs on other farms with livestock like alpacas, as they bond really well with animals.

What is the best part about your job?

I am proud to be a part of local food production, helping ensure that customers get the freshest ingredients possible.