

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

23 March 2020

### **AVI AFRICA 2020 POULTRY CONFERENCE CANCELLED**

As South Africa battens down the hatches to contain the spread of the global Covid-19 pandemic, a great many organisations face difficult decisions. It is impossible to predict what the outcomes and timelines of the pandemic will be, as things are changing daily.

In the light of the uncertainty around travel and in consideration of the stringent measures put in place by the Government regarding public events, the SA Poultry Association has decided to cancel the AVI Africa Poultry Conference and Expo 2020, which was to have taken place from 9 to 11 June 2020 at Emperors Palace in Gauteng.

The bi-annual event, which was last held in 2018, will skip the year, and the situation will be reviewed at a later date to determine when the next AVI Africa will be held.

SAPA is committed to following best practices with respect to the containment of Covid-19, and although we are disappointed to cancel, health and safety come first. Says Chairman Aziz Sulliman: "The decision was not taken lightly; however, the wellbeing of around 2 000 visitors, exhibitors, producers, suppliers, sponsors and speakers from around the world who were scheduled to attend AVI Africa is of paramount importance. While we hope that the pandemic will be under control by June, it may not, and therefore we will rather refocus and look ahead towards 2021."

AVI Africa is the biggest poultry conference in Africa and brings together all sectors of the industry to network, learn about new developments and share vital knowledge. "This year's conference was to have been of particular importance, given the implementation of the new Poultry Sector Master Plan which could have far-reaching effects in stabilizing the industry," said Sulliman. "We will be investigating alternative ways to disseminate the crucial information across the industry over the coming months."

The South African Poultry Association will remain vigilant and continue to adapt forthcoming plans and responses in line with the developments around COVID-19. "This national crisis will truly test our resilience and our ability to work together. The approach of summer offers hope to the stricken countries in the northern hemisphere, but we are entering the immune-system challenges of winter and it is imperative that we all collaborate now to flatten the curve so that our health system is not overwhelmed all at once," said Sulliman. "Our theme for AVI Africa 2020 was 'Strong today, stronger tomorrow, strongest together'. That slogan should carry us in the coming months, until we come out the other side of this crisis stronger than before." ENDS

Chairperson  
Mr Aziz Sulliman