

'No deal exists to export chicken feet to China' – SAPA

By Annelie Coleman | 29 January 2024 | 3:27 pm

It is highly improbable that the recent and widely publicised plan to export chicken feet from South Africa to China will take place anytime soon.



According to the South African Poultry Association, the agriculture department has confirmed that there are no protocols in place for the exportation of chicken feet to China.

Photo: Wikimedia Commons

A Western Cape company recently announced that it had made a deal worth R300 million per year to supply chicken feet to China. The deal was apparently forged through a collaboration with Wesgro, the official tourism, trade and investment promotion agency for Cape Town and the Western Cape.

However, according to Izaak Breitenbach, CEO of the South African Poultry Association (SAPA), the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (agriculture department) had denied the existence of any official

protocols pertaining to the exportation of chicken feet between local producers and China.

“SAPA has been inundated by enquiries about the matter since the announcement was made. We immediately contacted the [agriculture department] to find out whether such protocols were in place as all agricultural exports need to be supported by official bilateral agreements at government level. The [agriculture department] confirmed that no such agreement exists,” he told *Farmer’s Weekly*.

According to a statement by Wesgro, the deal consisted of the delivery of 540t of chicken feet each month to China. These chicken feet would supposedly be produced by primarily women-owned poultry farms in the Western Cape and Mpumalanga.

Despite various attempts, *Farmer’s Weekly* could not get hold of any Wesgro official for comment on the matter.

However, in a statement, Wrenelle Stander, CEO of Wesgro, hailed the export agreement allegedly secured by the AskCarlaKote company as a significant achievement in South Africa’s poultry industry, while also showcasing the Western Cape’s growing role as a global agricultural exporter.

Standar said: “With its potential to create thousands of jobs and bolster the regional economy, this deal stands as a testament to the power of collaboration and innovation in driving economic growth. Our mission at Wesgro is to support businesses in driving economic growth and job creation across the city and province. This deal is a significant milestone towards achieving these goals.”

Meanwhile, Breitenbach also explained that Chinese consumers preferred feet from large birds that weighed at least 2,5kg.

“South African chickens are much smaller. The Chinese market also demands feet without skin. Any undertaking to supply 540t of chicken feet monthly, as announced in the Wesgro statement, is a mammoth undertaking that can’t be taken lightly,” he continued.

The agriculture department had not responded to *Farmer’s Weekly’s* requests for comment by the time of publishing.

