

Dutch Debeaker will increase animal welfare and lead to higher productivity for Indian poultry breeders

An Interview with

PIETER VERSCHUUREN Owner of Verschuuren Poultrycare, the Netherlands

Q: Could you please tell us something about your company in brief, its market share, and its international presence if any?

A: Verschuuren Poultrycare (VPC) is a Dutch SME. We yearly treat 10 to 12 million chicks in the Netherlands which is around 40 % of the market share, making us the biggest player on the Dutch Market.

Already in the eighties we started with treating beaks of 1 week old chicks, while it became only compulsory in the Netherlands in 1996 to treat chicks before day 10. So we already had a lot of experience and a lead of almost 15 years on our competitors. Earlier treatment was between 6 and 8 weeks.

In the beginning of the nineties we also started building the equipment and started the sales, training and service of our products outside the Netherlands, mainly in the European Union. In 2004 we started working in Russia where our debeaking machine is now used in many companies, including Roskar one of the big Russian players, who produces both eggs and chickens and processed egg and poultry products. We also have an excellent relation with Lohmann Tierzucht in Germany which is one of the largest breeding farms in the world, who use our V-method for many years on all their animals.

Q: Could you provide your analysis of the Global Poultry Industry, its strengths and weaknesses?

A: Our vision has always been to focus on animal welfare. And that is why the V-form treatment was developed. World wide there is now more and more discussion on animal welfare and health.

Without the debeaking treatment there is the risk of a 30% loss due to cannibalism. We also notice that chicks and chickens are less stressed in the hatcheries and layers after debeaking which leads to better productivity and more eggs. With our debeaker the client only needs to cut the beaks once, which also leads to higher productivity and so reduces time and costs.

Q: With your European and Russian experience, what do you see as a way forward for developing the Indian poultry market?

A: The possible development for our debeaker and services in the Indian Market is a new challenge for us,



one that we are confident entering with the partnership with Dutch Business Partners India Pvt. Ltd. who are already promoting other services and products from the Netherlands in India. We see that each year India is becoming more professional and technologically advances and our products and services fit this trend..

Q: Why do you think India is a promising market for your product?

A: I think that the main challenge for us in India is that it is the poultry market is growing rapidly, and India will be a big poultry country, we already did research here on the poultry industry and made some good contacts with different breeders. I believe that we can contribute of the welfare of the chicks but also the welfare of the working environment since we don't only look to the treatment of the chicks but also to efficient treatment, with the least amount of stress for the operator. We look at how the chicks are delivered to the operator and removed after treatment but also at ergonomical aspects for the operator. If people can work in a pleasant way and environment then the quality of their work will be better, which is better for the chicks.

Q: Could you please brief us about your product and how it works?

A: Our concept goes beyond what most producers of debeaking machines deliver: many of them sell a machine and then it is up to you to figure out how to use it. That's the easy way, but that is not our vision. We think it is important to get the most optimal performance from treating beaks and the best way to do that is to locally train the operators, on location. This allows us to directly react to problems, queries





and the added advantage is the one on one interaction and communication. As far as i know we are the only company that works this way and due to our experience of over 30 years we are able to deliver as one of the few companies remaining since then.

Q: What are the advantages of your "Debeaking Machine"?

A: The advantages of V-form debeaking is that the beaks become nicely rounded and the top and bottom part of the beak are not completely closed so that it is (more) difficult for the chicken to pluck feathers from the other chickens. The top part completely heals while we see that with many other methods the top layer remains soft and causes blisters. Our system works with a blade and template that are exactly matched and the template is water cooled. These templates increase with 0.01 mm to create the perfect treatment in accordance with the wishes of the client. Most other debeakers use a straight knife so the beaks return to a less natural form, or the lower beak grows too far out and ends in a sharp point, like a bayonet on a rifle, which is dangerous. And in many cases there is no water cooling so the beaks can burn.

Q: What do you think is the scope for such equipment in Indian market?

A: There are always opportunities for quality products on the Indian market. But due to global regulations and legal frameworks we believe that animal welfare will become even more important, and India can not remain behind. Our product fits such an animal centric focus and with India becoming more and more an export country (exporting to America, Europe but also Middle-East and Africa) the export requirements and production demands will also become stricter.

Q: How does your company differentiate itself from the others in the Indian market?

A: We will enter the Indian market through Indian partners en make our products and services tailor-made for the Indian market.. Also we continue to innovate and research our products and services.

Q: What kind of support do you think government should offer the industry?

A: As in most countries around the globe, governments become more and more involved in the welfare of animals. We believe we are an excellent partner to enable Indian breeders to reach a higher level of efficiency, taking into consideration the welfare of the animals as well as the working conditions of the operators.

Q: What are your future plans for your company?

A: Our plans are to be as successful in India as we already are in Europe and Russia and as a company we will continue to look for new initiatives and challenges.

Q: Can you please give some comments about poultry world magazine India.

A: We were pleasantly surprised to see such a high quality magazine dedicated to the poultry industry in India and it is a good platform to be informed about the status and development in the Indian Market.

For more information on the Products and Services of Verschuuren Poultrycare, contact Dutch Business Partners India Pvt. Ltd. contact@dutchbusinesspartnersindia.com or call +91 (079) 26446888

Below are some images of Treated Beaks



Burnt Beak

The beak of this young chick is burnt.



Badly Cut Soft Beak

This beak is so badly cut that it does not allow the chicken to drink and eat correctly



8 day Old Perfect Cut

This eight day chick has a perfect V-Shaped cut beak.



Long Lower Beak

This long and sharp lower beak still allows the chicken to pick and hurt other chickens.



Without Protective Horn Layer

Due to the wrong debeaking process, this full grown chicken does not have a protective layer of horn on the top part of its beak anymore.



Perfect Beak

This perfectly cut beak, debeaked by our product, allows the chicken to eat and drink without being able to pick or even pull out feathers. It still has a natural looking beak without sharp points.

