

Poultry Farmer interview questions

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What to expect

Interviews for poultry farmer roles focus on practical flock management, biosecurity, and your ability to work independently and as part of a team. Employers want to know you can handle the physical demands and early starts.

- **Technical:** Questions about flock health, biosecurity, and equipment operation.
- **Behavioural:** Questions about past experiences handling disease outbreaks or team leadership.
- **Scenario:** Questions about responding to sudden changes in bird behaviour or environmental conditions.
- **Safety:** Questions about WHS compliance and farm safety procedures.

Typically a phone screen followed by an on-farm interview with the farm manager or owner. You may be asked to walk through a typical day, then answer behavioural and technical questions. Some employers include a practical component, such as identifying signs of illness in a bird.

1. Walk me through your daily routine when managing a flock. What do you check first and why?

Why they ask

This process question reveals your practical knowledge and prioritisation.

How to structure your answer

Use a chronological walk-through: start with the first task, explain what you look for, and why it matters.

Example answer

"I start by checking the shed environment before entering. I look at temperature and humidity readings on the climate control system, then listen for any unusual sounds from the flock. Next, I walk through the shed slowly, observing bird behaviour and checking for signs of illness or injury. I check feed lines and water lines to ensure they are working, then collect any dead birds for post-mortem if needed. After that, I collect eggs and grade them. Throughout the day I monitor ventilation and adjust as needed. At the end of the day I record all observations and any actions taken."

2. Tell me about a time you detected a health issue in a flock. How did you respond?

Why they ask

This behavioural question assesses your problem-solving and ability to act quickly.

How to structure your answer

Use STAR: Situation, Task, Action, Result.

Example answer

"Situation: I noticed a drop in feed intake and some birds showing respiratory distress in one shed. Task: I needed to identify the cause and prevent spread. Action: I isolated the affected birds, informed the farm manager, and submitted samples to a vet. I increased biosecurity measures, including footbaths and restricted access. I monitored the flock closely and followed vet advice on treatment. Result: The issue was contained to one shed, and the rest of the flock remained healthy. I also updated our health monitoring checklist to catch similar signs earlier."

3. A sudden heatwave is forecast. How would you prepare your sheds and flock?

Why they ask

This scenario question tests your judgement under pressure and knowledge of climate control.

How to structure your answer

Outline a step-by-step plan: pre-emptive actions, monitoring, and contingency.

Example answer

"First, I would check that all fans and cooling pads are working and clean. I would pre-cool the sheds early in the morning and adjust ventilation to maximise airflow. I would ensure water lines are delivering cool water and add electrolytes if advised. I would reduce any handling or movement of birds to minimise stress. During the heatwave, I would monitor temperature and bird behaviour hourly, and be ready to use backup generators if power fails. If birds show signs of heat stress, I would mist them gently and increase ventilation further."

4. How do you ensure biosecurity is maintained across the farm, including with visitors and staff?

Why they ask

This process question checks your understanding of disease prevention, a critical part of the role.

How to structure your answer

Explain your routine: entry protocols, cleaning, record-keeping, and training.

Example answer

"I follow a strict biosecurity plan. All visitors must sign in and declare any recent contact with other poultry. They must use footbaths and wear clean boots and overalls. I ensure staff follow the same protocols, and I regularly clean and disinfect equipment and sheds. I keep records of all movements and report any signs of disease immediately. I also train new staff on biosecurity procedures during their induction."

5. Describe your experience with automatic feeding and climate control systems. What maintenance do you perform?

Why they ask

This technical question assesses your ability to operate and maintain essential farm equipment.

How to structure your answer

Describe the systems you have used, then outline your routine maintenance and troubleshooting.

Example answer

"I have worked with automatic chain feeders and pan feeders, as well as climate control systems that manage fans, heaters, and cooling pads. I perform daily checks on feed lines to ensure they are not blocked and that feed distribution is even. I calibrate feed weights and check sensors for temperature and humidity. I clean fans and cooling pads regularly, and I test backup systems. If a fault occurs, I troubleshoot basic issues and call a technician if needed."

6. Give an example of how you have trained or supervised staff to follow animal welfare standards.

Why they ask

This behavioural question reveals your leadership and commitment to welfare.

How to structure your answer

Use STAR, focusing on your actions and the outcome for the team and birds.

Example answer

"Situation: We had new staff who were not familiar with our welfare protocols. Task: I needed to ensure they understood and followed standards. Action: I ran a hands-on training session on bird handling, shed checks, and recognising signs of distress. I paired them with experienced staff for their

first week and checked their work daily. I also created a simple checklist for daily welfare tasks. Result: The team became confident and compliant, and we saw fewer incidents of poor handling. The checklist is still used today."