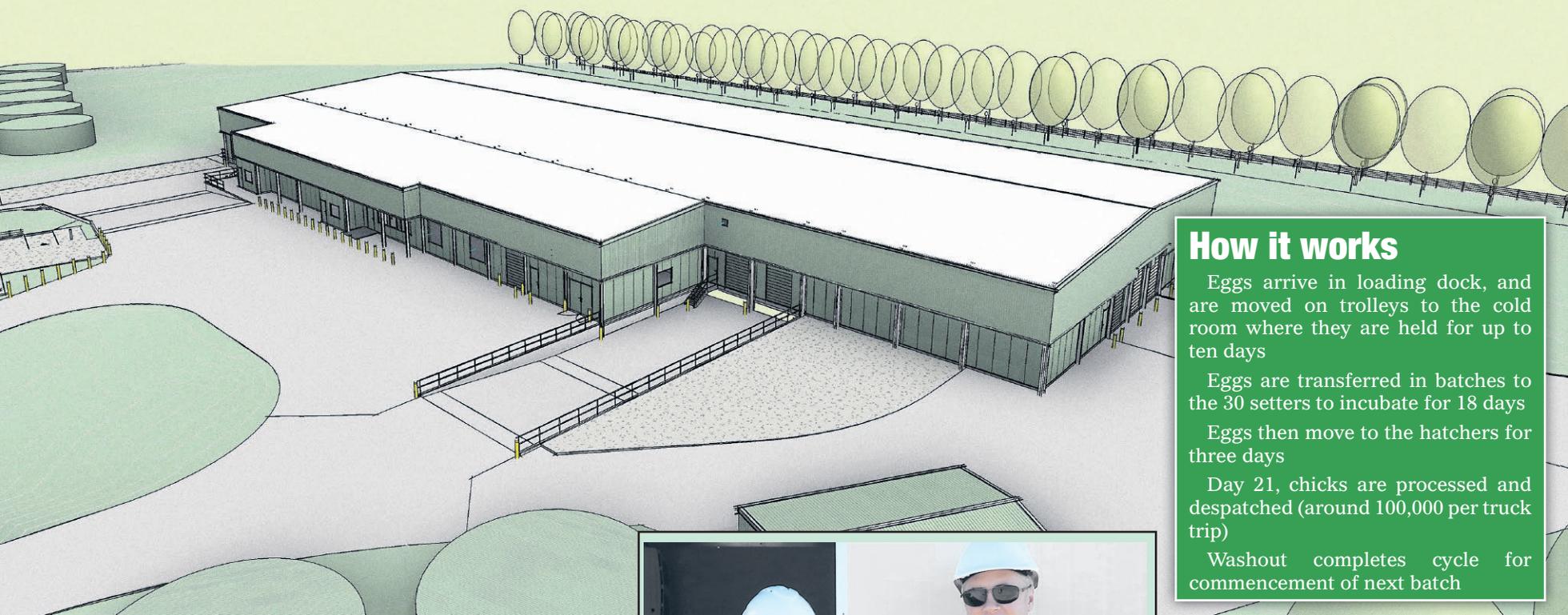


# Construction begins on state-of-the-art hatchery at Rochester site



## How it works

Eggs arrive in loading dock, and are moved on trolleys to the cold room where they are held for up to ten days

Eggs are transferred in batches to the 30 setters to incubate for 18 days

Eggs then move to the hatchers for three days

Day 21, chicks are processed and despatched (around 100,000 per truck trip)

Washout completes cycle for commencement of next batch

Specialised Breeders Australia's new hatchery on the outskirts of Rochester will safeguard the egg industry for a successful future. "This showpiece facility has been five years in the planning," chief executive Richard Rayner says. "When it's completed early next year, it will provide the Australian egg industry with world's best practice technology now and into the future. We are looking forward to opening this exciting addition to the region's agricultural industry."

Specialised Breeders Australia is the leading supplier of high-quality chicks to the layer industry. The company has Quality Assurance accreditation (AS/NZS ISO 9001) and Food Safety (HACCP) certification. Australian owned, the company has over 50 years' experience in breeding egg laying hens, importing the genetically superior Hy-Line and Lohmann stock. The new purpose-built Rochester hatchery can produce up to 13 million chicks annually, making this the benchmark

facility for the entire country.

"We are the suppliers of these sought-after international breeds for reliable, productive laying chickens," Mr Rayner says. "But we are a locally-owned company, operating for over 50 years with a strong reputation for investing in the best technology and infrastructure to ensure the safe growth of the egg industry," he says. "Our existing hatchery at Huntly is not suitable for expansion to include the new technology and it is very important to upgrade the bio-security element for the protection of the layer industry by establishing a new hatchery on an isolated site away from any other poultry operations. Our design for the four-hectare site on Railway Road has been fully endorsed following the extensive consultation and development process and we're ready now to begin construction."



SBA's CEO Richard Rayner and Derek Shotton, Projects and Procurement Manager pictured

## Green light

Mr Rayner has been involved in the development of new hatcheries both in New Zealand and South Africa.

He was attracted to the Specialised Breeders Australia project by the opportunity to be part of a design and implementation process that will set an international benchmark.

"The new facility is designed for maximum efficiency, and productivity, and will also have the capacity to incorporate new technology as it evolves," he said. "We're pleased that VCAT (Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal) has endorsed our plans, and we've now completed robust discussions with the community and planners to be absolutely sure this facility ticks all the boxes.

"That has encouraged us to move ahead."

## Rochester's advantages

When planning began five years ago, the company researched to find the best locality for a stand-alone self-contained facility. SBA's Projects Manager Derek Shotton said "We looked at sites in New South Wales including Dubbo and others in Victoria, but in the end, it was the overall advantage offered by Rochester in Central Victoria that outweighed the other locations. Close to existing farms, and also to national networks, there is a big distribution advantage for this location. We also have a reliable water supply, plus access to three-phase power, and a pool of potential staff. It's a very good place for a thriving and progressive company to locate."

## Planning for confidence

The hatchery building will feature state-of-the-art internal design, which means the facility will function with maximum efficiency. Mr Rayner says the building has been carefully sited on the land to utilise the existing house for a manager's residence and to landscape the entire block for aesthetic and practical advantage.

"This is our showpiece, and we are intending it to look good and function well, long into the future," Mr Rayner says. "That's why it's been designed on this site to provide us and the community with the confidence that our business is here to stay. The landscaping is comprehensive, with efficient access for the two or three trucks expected to enter and leave each day. Because we have worked so hard on the internal design of the hatchery, we have been able to create a super-efficient plan for the entire site. "Mr Rayner says the site will generate no machinery noise, with the building fully insulated. Because this is a hatchery only, there will not be any noise or odour often associated with growing chickens. We're the beginning of the process, supplying superior day old laying stock to farms right across the region and nationally."

## SUNNY SIDE UP FOR AUSTRALIAN EGGS

With this carefully-planned new facility for one of Australia's most dynamic and innovative farming districts, Specialised Breeders Australia is looking forward to the consolidation of this important food supply chain.

"It all starts with us," Mr Rayner says.

"We know how important it is to protect the entire egg industry, to ensure local production is maintained. Our new Rochester hatchery will give us bio-security assurance and allows us to make improvements in quality and performance. We are a viable company, going places, and this is a major step forward.

"Right across Australia, when someone buys an egg to enjoy for breakfast, there's a very high probability the chicken that laid that egg was sourced from Specialised Breeders Australia.

