

CHICK SEXER (Vent Sexer)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

There are three ways to distinguish the sex of a newly hatched chick, colour, wing feather length and sex organ (vent). Colour sexing and feather sexing are relatively simple procedures. Companies are unable to use colour sexing if their breeder chicks have white feathers and feather sexing is not an appropriate method for use by a broiler breeding company.

Vent sexing is a specialised occupation that requires a high degree of skill, precision, speed and concentration. Vent sexing involves examination of the inside of the vent opening of the chick to accurately identify the sex organ.

INDUSTRY REQUIREMENTS

The ability to accurately determine the sex of a day old chick by vent sexing can only be acquired by at least three years training. The initial training takes between two and six months but the whole training programme will take three years. This involves building up to an acceptable minimum speed of 700 chicks per hour whilst maintaining at least 98% accuracy. Proper training of sexers is essential to ensure that the welfare of the bird is not compromised and vital organs are not damaged.

The industry requires individuals capable of concentrating for long periods over consecutive days with additional emphasis on repeatable accuracy and the ability to determine sexes within different pedigree lines.

Training in vent sexing is not available at any educational establishment in the UK. The Association of British Chick Sexers has previously been carried out some training but it proved untenable due to lack of applications and a high drop out rate. It is not possible to recruit suitably skilled vent sexers in the UK.

REGISTRATION WITH A PROFESSIONAL BODY

There are no requirements for registration with a professional body.

WORK PERMITS (UK) TREATMENT

Chick sexers using the colour or feather sexing methods **do not** meet the criteria.

Vent Sexers meet the criteria where the job requires someone who has NVQ level 3 or above and at least 3 years full time experience of using their skills. LANTRA has confirmed that the skills of a fully trained vent sexer would be at least NVQ Level 3.

Additional skills required are:

- A familiarity with regulations and legislation covering the work practices of the poultry livestock industry;

- use of appropriate techniques for handling chicks to avoid injury or damage; and
- an understanding of the conditions necessary to support the welfare of day old chicks in the hatchery and farm environments.

Caseworkers should ensure that the post is for a salaried, employed person.

TWES training: This occupation is not suitable for TWES training.

TWES work experience: This occupation is not suitable for TWES work experience.

SALARY

A standard salary for a vent sexer would currently be around £30,000 to £40,000 p.a. Sexers are usually paid approximately £3 per 100 chicks examined and would examine around 1 to 1.5 million per year.

ADVERTISING

Posts would be advertised in an appropriate trade publication or website such as **Poultry World**.

FURTHER INFORMATION

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