

POULTRY RESTRICTIONS LIFTED

The Minister for Primary Industry, Mr Boyamo Sali, has lifted restrictions on the importation of poultry products from Australia.

The ban which was imposed following outbreaks of the disease Fowl Plague in poultry in Victoria, had meant that no chickens or poultry products had been permitted entry into Papua New Guinea between 23 January and 11 March.

Mr Sali said that it was fortunate Australian animal health authorities had been able to contain the outbreak to a few farms in Victoria.

"If the outbreak had spread it could have had very serious consequences for our

developing poultry industry in Papua New Guinea because we still rely very heavily on the importation of live chickens", he said.

Mr Sali said this recent crisis in Australia highlighted the need for Papua New Guinea to achieve self-sufficiency in poultry products, particularly poultry meat.

He said this could be achieved using smallholder farmers in the growing phase of broiler production.

Mr Sali said Papua New Guinean smallholder farmers had shown they were capable of producing a good quality product economically and therefore should receive every encouragement to take their rightful place at the centre of this rapidly expanding industry.